Perth and District Union Public Library

Community Needs Assessment
October 2025

The Perth and District Union Public Library undertook a community consultation and needs assessment process in 2025, as part of its evaluation of future library needs.

This is certainly not the first community consultation, nor is it the first research undertaken by the library. In September 2022, the library commissioned a Building Condition Assessment Report. As part of the 2022-2023 Agility Plan, the library completed a community survey from September to October 2021. The library continually evaluates its program offerings through feedback and written evaluation forms. The library is very good at collecting library use statistics, both for the required *Annual Survey of Public Libraries* and beyond. They provide an annual statistics report for the community, the latest of which covered statistics for 2024 but included several points of comparative statistics, for example on library visits between 2020 and 2024. Based on usage patterns and travel flow observations, the library has shifted the collection, the meeting rooms the computers and the seating. The library is certainly very agile in their approach to library service.

This present Community Needs Assessment, prepared by Library Consultant, Peggy Malcolm, is focused on a community survey undertaken from April to July 2025. This report presents the results of the community survey (Part 1 of the report), but it goes beyond that summary to provide comparative information and an analysis of the survey results in the context of future planning for the Perth and District Union Public Library.

- Part 2 provides an analysis of the library's current services against the guidelines and present practices as outlined in the ARUPLO (Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries) on the Ontario-based *Guidelines for Rural/Urban Public Libraries*, 4th edition (2023).
- Part 3 provides an analysis of the library's current services against public libraries serving communities of a similar population size and number of sites using the Government of Ontario's *Annual Survey of Public Libraries* for 2023 (as reported in June 2024 and the most recent published comparative statistics).
- Part 4 analyses the results of the community survey, aligned with the comparative information, to identify what library services and resources are most valuable to the community.

Note that throughout the report, if we use "Perth" when referring to a library, we are referred to the Perth and District Union Public Library, which has a formal agreement to serve the three communities of the Town of Perth, Tay Valley Township and Drummond/North Elmsley Township.

A note about population figures for the Perth & District Union Public Library

In the 2019 and 2021 *Annual Survey of Public Libraries*, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) designated the resident population served by this library at 22,330. In the 2023 *Annual Survey of Public Libraries* (which would be for data submitted in mid-2024 and represents the most current published data, MMAH designated the resident population served by this library at 16,758. In the 2021 Census of Canada, the three municipalities in the Perth & District Union Public Library showed the following resident population figures:

•   Town of Perth – 6,469
•   Drummond/North Elmsley Township – 8,183
•   Tay Valley Township - 5,925
•   Total 2021 Census of Canada population for the municipalities - 20,577

For the purposes of this report, the total population of 20,577, as recorded in the 2021 Census of Canada will be used when discussing per capita information for the library. Throughout the survey, we acknowledge that there are many seasonal residents of the community and visitors and will use the census resident population where appropriate in the comparative statistics.

Part 1: Results of community survey

The survey was posted in April 2025 and a deadline of July 21, 2025, was given. A total of 202 responses were received, 16 of which were hard-copy responses which were manually entered into the survey database. With a resident population for this union public library of 20,577, and using that number, the response rate was just slightly under 1%.

Location (Question 1)

As the library is located within the Town of Perth, but serves the town and two neighbouring township through a union library agreement, we asked if the respondent lived in one of those 2 municipalities on a full time or seasonal basis and 86.6% of respondents were year-round residents of those municipalities within the Union Library – Town of Perth, Drummond/North Elmsley or Tay Valley. 15 respondents to the survey (7.5%) were year-round or seasonal residents of Lanark Highlands, Rideau Lakes, Westport or Mississippi Mills, all of which enjoy reciprocal borrowing privileges with the Perth and District Library.

I am a....
202 responses

- Year-round resident of Perth, Drummond/North Elmsley or Tay Valley
- Seasonal resident of Perth, Drummond/ North Elmsley or Tay Valley
- Year-round or seasonal resident of Lanark Highlands, Rideau Lakes, Westport, or Mississippi Mills (with reciprocal borrowing privileges with the Perth & District Library)
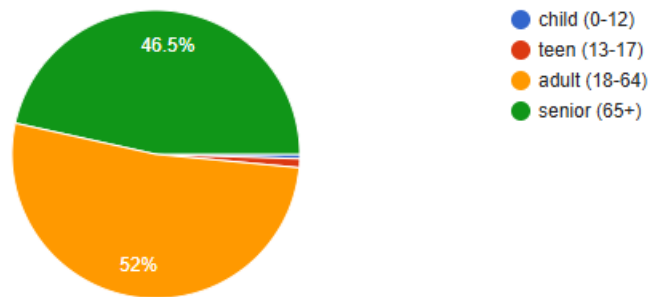- Visitor
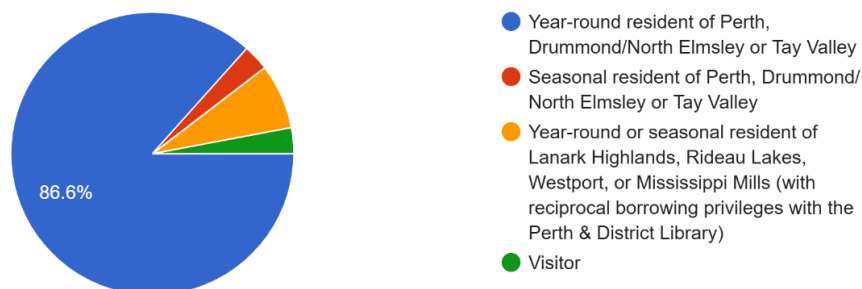
Age of respondents (Question 2)

Only one response was from a child (aged 0 to 12) and one response was from a teen (aged 13-17). The responses were primarily from adults (aged 18 to 64) – 52% and from seniors (aged 65 or more) - 46.5%.

I am a(n)....

202 responses

- child (0-12)
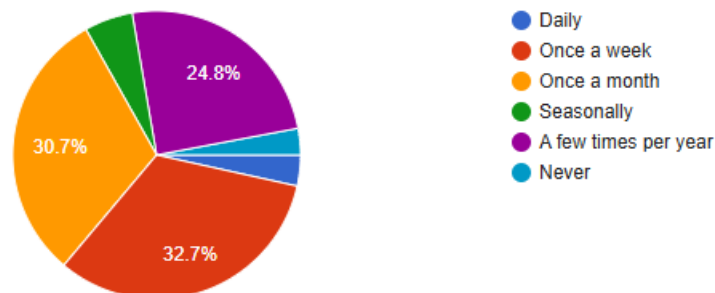- teen (13-17)
- adult (18-64)
- senior (65+)

Frequency of physical library visits (Question 3)

Of the respondents – 32.7% visit the library once a week, 30.7% visit once a month with 24.8% visiting a few times per year.

How often do you visit the library in-person?

202 responses

- Daily
- Once a week
- Once a month
- Seasonally
- A few times per year
- Never

Transportation to the library (Question 4)

70.9% of the respondents get to the library in a vehicle, which does illustrate the importance of parking to the library users. At the same time, 26.1% of the respondents reported that they walked (or ran) to the library and 6 (3%) reported that they rode a bicycle to get to the library.

Questions with respect to the library services

Finding materials (physical books and DVDs) (Question 5)

When asked how the books and DVDs are chosen, people often provided multiple answers but by far, the preferable method was to browse the shelves

Method used to select books or DVDs	Percentage of the 202 who answered with this choice	Number of responses
Browse the shelves	**77%**	**157**
Library displays	48%	97
Family/friend recommendations	47.5%	96
Online catalogue search	44.1%	89
Staff recommendations in person	32.7%	66
Media reviews	30.7%	62
Online resources such as Goodreads	27.7%	56
Book covers face out	22.8%	46
Book Club selections	15.3%	31

One of the difficulties with a book or DVD collection is to keep enough books on the shelves to ensure that there is a sufficient variety of titles for those who like to browse the shelves while handling the volume of holds that people place on popular books. Some libraries have a policy when there are 7 to 10 holds on a title, that they will purchase a second copy of that title. While this has a positive impact for those waiting to read the book, it can have a negative impact on the collection budget when too many second or third copies of the same title are purchased for the collection, leaving the library with less money to purchase unique titles for the collection.

Using the library's online resources (Question 6)

When asked how often the library's online resources are used, there was a split, with 11.9% never using online resources but a similar percentage of respondents (12.4%) using the online resources every day. Interestingly the highest percentage of respondents (26.7%) indicated that they rarely use the online resources. Looking from a different perspective, 88.1% of respondents had used the library's online resources at some point. It should also be noted that some library users, in any library, never use the library's electronic resources primarily because they do not want to use electronic resources.

Frequency of use of online resources	Percentage of the 202 who answered with this choice
Daily	12.4%
Weekly	22.8%
Monthly	26.2%
Rarely	26.7%
Never	11.9%

Hours of Operation (Question 7)

In the survey, the actual hours of public oepration were provided (it serves a double purpose of reminding people of the hours and making sure that they are answering based on fact). It read: "The library is currently open to the public on Monday and Friday from 10am - 5pm; Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10am - 7pm.; and Saturday from 10am- 4pm for a total of 47 hours per week."

81.2% of the respondents felt that the present hours suited their schedule. Of course, one could say that they are regular users of the library and so the hours would suit their schedule.

Several respondents provided a write-in answer as to why the hours do not suit them and these responses have been grouped by theme. Sunday opening, even for a few hours, garnered the most responses. In the survey, we provided the hours, and a few responses asked for hours after 5, but the library is already open until 7 pm on three days in the week, which may reflect an awareness issue. One person admitted that "other than never being able to remember which day has what hours and needing to look up if you're open 'now', it is a good mix".

Themes/Comments	Comments on theme
Sunday-related Sunday/ Sunday openings would be great/ a few open hours on Sunday/12-5 would be appreciated, with specific reasons as: • As a non-Christian it would be nice to use the library on Sunday • for working people, the current hours are limiting • as [Sunday] is a depressing day for some people • give those folks who work more opportunity to visit • when everyone mostly is off work & school would be good	17
Earlier opening - 9am open/ No, would love an earlier open /Earlier for parents	3
Later hours -Needs to be open later/ Any day before 5 is inconvenient /later in the evening on Saturdays /It would be nice if they were open later on Fridays / It can be tricky to make it out after bedtime because it closes at 7	5

Value of the Library (Question 8)

People were asked what they valued most about the library. Five examples of common services were provided (public space, staff assistance, collection, computers, wi-fi) and so these appeared numerous times, but not exclusively.

183 of the 202 respondents provided an answer to this question. In the chart below, the respondent's comments have been grouped to show the most common themes. Please note that if someone added a comment on more than one theme, the comments were separated and added to the appropriate theme. For example, one person wrote, "Public space, staff assistance, art exhibits, collection, Libby/online books I can read on my Kobo" and another wrote "Community hub that supports families and teens. Great selection of books, good events and amazing staff". For this question, the wording used by the respondents has been left in the chart – some of them show a nuance that may form an important part of the results.

Themes/Comments	# of comments
Staff-related comments	**94**
• The staff *x21*	
• Staff (friendly, helpful and knowledgeable) *x23*	
• Staff (wonderful/amazing/excellent) *x14*	
• Staff (kind/welcoming/supportive/knowledgeable/professional/friendly) *x5*	
• Staff assistance (with tech or selection) *x27*	
• The staff are fantastic. So above all -THEM.	
• The staff who greet me by name	
• [Staff] are also the reason we have seeds and plant giveaways, which I love.	
• *[staff] She's spectacular with the kids. I can't sing her praises enough. She's not only exceptional at her job but even the kids and teen consider her a friend. X2*	
Collection related comments (Physical collection)-	**74**
• Collection (book and DVD) *x50*	
• Book selection is great/ good/books I'm looking for *x9*	
• Quality of resources/ collection of high-quality books both newer and older/recently published books *x4*	
• Great selection of movies/DVD *x3*	
• Movies, audio books all free!/ Free access to resources I want *x2*	
• Like the experience of browsing for books I might not expect but interesting	
• love that there are so many paper copies of books as I abhor reading books from a computer/e-reader/etc.	
• the collection, even though it is quite limited	
• the interlibrary loans *x2*	
• Book for every reader - you don't ban books, let readers decide what they want to read	
• Book Club bags	
Collections and Resources Online/Electronic	**16**
• E-books/ I only use Libby *x7*	
• Access to online audiobooks *x3*	
• Many resources that I use for free like Kanopy, Paper of Record/Press Reader *x3*	
• Online services *x2*	
• Borrowing library materials, especially having online access to electronic resources since we live outside of Perth (Tay Valley). Libby is in daily use in our house. The staff are awesome lovely people, but it's the collection I use every day.	
Computers/Wi-Fi/Technology	**18**
• Computers *x10*	
• Wi-Fi/ outside tables in the garden with wi-fi *x5*	
• Computer/internet/email access and staff assistance with same *x2*	
• Printer	
Programs	**17**
• Workshops/programs/events/book clubs/lectures/language classes/groups *x9*	
• Children's programming/ Extra programs for children in the summer/Storytimes *x4*	
• Special programs & efforts for different ages/so many programs for so many members of the community x*3*	
• Courses offered, e.g. quilting	
• Extras such as tech tutoring, author visits, displays of local artists	

Themes/Comments (continued)	# of comments
Library areas (General) • Outdoor space/gardens/outdoor chairs *x4* • Comfortability/Atmosphere *x2* • Quiet nooks with natural light to review books I've found on the shelves/Quiet *x2* • Ambience and freshness of displays, art/ Art exhibits *x2* • Places to sit • Open space/easy to find books	**12**
Library areas (Children/Teen) • Children's area/outstanding children's area *x13* • The community space with the kid's library upstairs is fantastic. We need more spaces to have young people learning in an engaging and social environment • Space to hang out with my kids • Cute children's space, literacy program, having an elevator, clean bathrooms with change table/resources • The "Teen" zone	**17**
Library areas (Meeting rooms) • The meeting rooms are available and free. *x5* • Using space for groups and training *x2* • Meeting rooms available for private work	**8**
Library as a public space • Value of public space (general) *x25* • Welcoming community space/public space/inclusive *x11* • Safe space for families feeling isolated/safe and inviting *x5* • Last public space to exist in without the expectation on having to spend money/ free *x2* • Public space for special events during the year • That it exists! A public space where everyone is welcome. The bike pump outside.	**45**
Community Asset • Central Location *x4* • Resource for the community/sense of community /Commitment to the community, always seeking to support the community needs/activities/serve different demographics / Community hub that supports families and teens *x7* • Community hub - notice board/information at a glance/great source of local goings on/ poster space *x3* • Community service (traditional library offerings, but great for youth literacy programs, printing service, museum passes, etc.) • bringing my children to the library/ child-friendly • Bounty of wisdom and knowledge shared through books, both online and physical	**16**
Other items which are 'valued' by respondents • Free passes to places/museums x3 • Seed library x3 • Local history • Ability to self check out books • Puzzles x2 • Good used books at great prices	**11**

Themes/Comments (continued)	# of comments
General comments about the value of the library in Perth	**4**
• I deeply value every aspect of the Perth Public Library. The staff could not be more helpful or friendly; the atmosphere is grand. The "new" layout seems to work very well -- opening up the space in a welcoming way. • Everything • Folks who run the best library ever! …community spirit they encourage and support… environment physically they maintain… afterhours programs they provide… all-encompassing accessibilities and the obvious love they, the best library peeps, give us. • Have used and valued everything the library has offered over the years from live children's activity groups to film and guest speakers upstairs, books, computers and desks to work at. It's all been helpful and valuable to me, even though I am currently an infrequent user, I think the library is a very important aspect of our life here in Lanark County. Thank you all!!	

Of the 183 individuals who provided a response, 13 of them **only** listed 'collections and staff' as the things they value at the library, 14 only listed 'collections (books/DVDs)' and 26 only listed 'staff or staff assistance' as the thing that they value about the library. Respondents were allowed to 'write-in' as many things as they wished but only listed one thing. *Staff and physical collections are valued here.*

Interestingly, 82 of the comments related to the physical space. While some stated that they valued the public space available in the library, there were specific comments about the welcoming atmosphere and the outstanding children's area as well as comments about the meeting rooms being available, free and that could be used for private work.

What would make the library better for you? (Question 9)

With this survey question, a list of 14 items was provided. These items were changes or additions which are commonly noted in surveys completed for other libraries. We were not sure if they would apply to the Perth situation but included them as a starting point for the question on 'what would make the library better for you'. Respondents could check all or any of the 14 items that apply to them, or they could select "other" and write in an answer. 202 people answered this question. These are the responses selected from the list provided in the question in order from most popular answer to least popular.

With this question, we begin to see changes that could be made in the library. When tied with the responses from Question 8 on what user's value in the library, the significance of the library's physical collection is apparent – within the responses, 39.69% of respondents stated that 'more books' would make the library better and 21.8% indicated that a 'greater variety of materials to borrow' would make the library better for them. The lowest response was for staff to be more helpful, and it likely received this level of response because, as noted in other responses, the respondents really like the staff and already appreciate their assistance (so how could they mark 'more help'). Two of the mid-responses were interesting as 16.8% of respondents marked both 'more places to sit' and 'quiet reading/study spaces' within the library. This library already has plenty of chairs – but as one reads through the survey responses, it is clear that using the library as a 'place to sit and/or to read/work' is an important aspect of this library's contribution to the community.

Addition/change suggested in the survey	Percentage of respondents who marked this idea	Number of respondents who marked this idea
More books	39.69%	80
More or different programs held in the library	29.7%	60
Greater variety of materials to borrow	21.8%	44
More places to sit	16.8%	34
Quiet reading/study spaces within the library	16.8%	34
Longer or more convenient hours	16.3%	33
More magazines, movies	15.3%	31
More staff	6.9%	14
Stroller parking	6.4%	13
Additional meeting rooms	6.4%	13
More materials in languages other than English	5.4%	11
Library located closer to where I live	3%	6
A regular home delivery	2%	4
Staff more helpful to my needs	0.5%	1

Under 'other' the following responses were added. Except for the first four (4) responses, all those responses were included only once. The actual responses are included here so you can see the range of responses to this question.

- Nothing/library is fine/everything is great/ happy with the way it is!/Suits my needs as is/ It's all good to me right now/ It is perfect as it is/ Ok the way it is/ Almost perfect the way it is/ already doing an AMAZING job/ I think the library is great and all the staff seem to meet the needs of every age group Keep up the good work.   x13
- more availability of e-books/ More books on Libby x2
- More books in French/ More French books, music x2
- Coffee bar… more social interacting x2

- should have more Canadian magazines and promote Canadian authors
- more copies of popular titles
- more non-fiction
- complete series of books, many are missing
- keep collection current
- more new "adult" books on New Titles list on website
- The collection has been stifled by stagnant funding for years; the non-fiction collection could be broader, with newer materials available. Having library copies of e-books (instead of just the general Libby collection) is also very important, particularly for popular items and series. Harder to find e-books in nonfiction as well.
- More info on inter-library loans
- I find the materials sparse and often have to order books I want to read.
- more audiobooks with longer loan times
- more physical audiobooks. I know we can borrow items on Libby for use on our smart phone, but I am usually using my devices while listening to an audiobook… and in my rural community I lose power relatively often…if I lose power I can't listen on my phone or computer, whereas I have batteries for my CD player. It is also a good reason to visit the library where I will look at what's new,

or look at the art on display that month, or check out other categories of reading I don't normally look at.

- displays are uninteresting and do not pique one's reading interest. The atmosphere is cold and businesslike.
- library is really cramped for space.
- more places to sit with access to plug in a laptop.
- it's noisy. Inter-staff conversation & interaction with guests can be heard over the whole ground floor.
- more space for children
- meeting rooms available when library is closed…
- room where I could practice singing/playing guitar along to internet or personal instructions
- more nature-related workshops/speakers, e.g. how to identify & remove invasive plant species & why
- crafts taught by locals
- always have a puzzle out
- reading challenges are always fun and expand exposure to different resources
- more staff to manage and provide wider programming & execute creative ideas then come up with
- more tech lessons
- more courses for seniors, especially computer courses/ I am a senior and would appreciate technical help with operating a phone or tablet. Access to Ancestry.ca website.
- 3D printing
- computer for kids again with kid games not needing a login
- family friendly environment
- staff do a great job now but more would be better for all.
- maybe Sunday afternoon opening hours
- maker space like Mississippi Mills
- greater outreach and space for local artists, especially youth.
- children's activities
- community partnerships
- scooter parking
- really love our local library. Our head librarian leads excellent programming and seems to have a pulse on community need. The staff are always friendly and helpful. My family and I enjoy attending
- nothing could make it better, other than paying staff more, because they are outstanding.
- have you checked out the incredible library in Helsinki? It has everything, including places to eat and grab a coffee

What type of programming interests you? (Question 10)

As with the previous question, respondents were provided with a list of eight (8) choices on the type of programming would be of interest to them. They could check all that apply and/or they could write in an answer under 'other'. 171 people of the total 202 responded to this question.

| Program suggestion	Percentage of respondents who marked this idea	Number of responses who marked this idea
Authors/Speakers	54.4%	93
Movie night	36.3%	62
Games night (e.g. Scrabble, board games)	33.9%	58
Book club	31.6%	54
Craft club (e.g. knitting)	30.4%	52
Musical program	30.4%	52
Children's story time	18.1%	31
Teen program	10.5%	18

Respondents were able to write in a response. Five people wrote that they do not participate in programs, one said they lived too far, another that they just borrow books and another that they were not interested in programs but appreciate all the programs that are offered to the community. One person mentioned that "a lot of the programming takes place during weekday hours when I am at work and unable to attend, e.g. knitting group, FOTL meetings". These are the program suggestions offered by respondents in the survey. Each suggestion was only offered by one respondent:

- Computer and tech. Courses for seniors, e.g. photo shop
- Raspberry pi/Arduino with literacy with programming
- Tech support
- Technology classes - Cricut, Libby, photo management, social media platform, streaming/tv products
- Robotics
- Workshops
- "Handyman workshops" or "how to build workshops"
- Teaching/learning experiences
- Skill-share/skill learning
- A speaker series would be awesome - a place to learn/info/engage
- Movie night, Adult oriented activities
- Suggest: old B&W or other movies (rather than the ones I've seen offered)
- More education on Indigenous traditional knowledge (local plants, medicines, arts and crafts, etc.)
- Travel presentations regularly
- Discussion groups like a dad's group
- Trivia night
- Playing cards
- Teen program, Games night (e.g. Scrabble, board games), Teen book club, teen tutoring
- Children's craft workshops, preschool craft/activities, children's active play activities
- Baby time, PA Day events, summer holiday things for kids, museum passes
- Anything that brings kids to the library

Rate the quality of your experience, where 5 is excellent. (Question 11)

Rate the quality of your experience at the library from 1 to 5.
202 responses
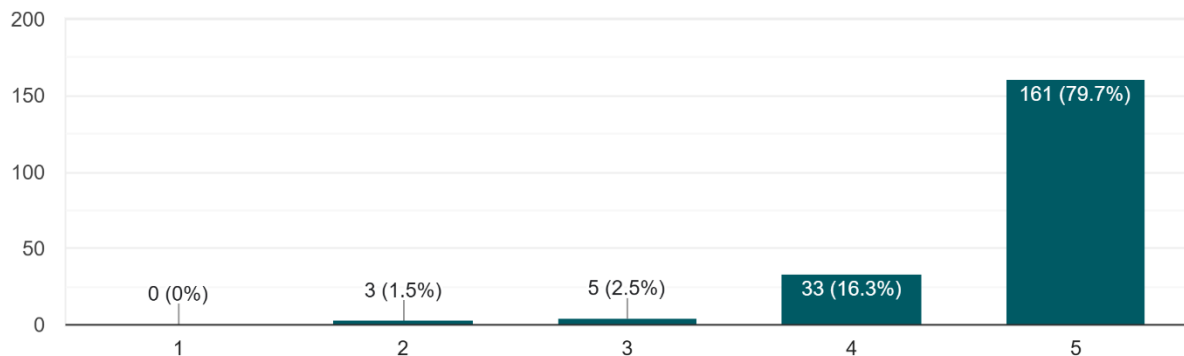
Based on earlier responses, the number of respondents who provided a rating of 5 was no surprise. The respondents have had good experiences at the Perth & District Union Public Library.

If the library was able to expand its physical space, respondents were asked if they would use any of the following. (Question 12)

The respondents were given ten (10) choices in a list and could check as many of the responses on the list as applied to them. Some people only listed one item that could be used but, of those who responded, the average number of responses was 3 areas that they might choose to use. Only 147 respondents provided an answer to this question. While there was not a 'runaway' winner, additional seating at 39.5% of the responses was important, with more than 1/3 of those who answered the question marking that idea. While the library already has 5 meeting rooms in sizes ranging from a capacity of 4 people to 90 people, 32% of the respondents indicated that they might use additional meeting rooms if the library was to add such a feature. Given that 46.5% of the respondents were seniors, the response of 26.5% for additional 'children's space with play space' is a strong answer as well.

Suggestion for changes to the physical space	Percentage of respondents who marked this idea	Number of respondents who marked this idea
Additional seating	39.5%	58
Meeting rooms (in addition to those provided)	32%	47
Children's space with play space (in additional to that already provided)	26.5%	39
Additional worktables	23.1%	34
After hours business workspace (bookable)	19%	28
Indoor wi-fi counter space	19%	28
Additional computers	18.4%	27
Tutoring rooms (bookable)	15%	22
Teen space	12.9%	19
Group study rooms	10.2%	15

Respondents were able to write in a response under "other". One person commented that the options provided were important but that they would not use them or need them. Four respondents added more space for books as their option and provided suggestions about larger selection of Canadian and International fiction, large print titles and of 'Christian' fiction. These are the suggestions offered by one of the respondents in the survey. Note that the library does have a 'library of things' and so these items seem to be additional items, not already in that collection.

- Lending library for tools
- Lending library for things like dehydrators and irregular use but helpful items
- Fishing and outdoor gear and licenses
- I work for Language Express. We are sometimes looking for community space for group programs.
- I have issues with noise, so I don't generally stay in the library once I get the item that I need as there is no separate quiet area.
- Seating most useful in library if conversation volume is low.
- Makerspace
- Arts/crafts space with independent learning access
- Cafe, sewing room, music room
- Room where I could sing along to computer instruction and learn to play guitar and violin.
- Designated puzzle area, an area to craft with others such as knitting, crocheting and chat
- Seniors club for board games etc. and coffee
- Coffee and tea machine, like the local library in the town in Denmark I used to live in.
- Co-working space would be cool. With after hours capability *(person selected after hours business workspace and added this comment)*

Respondents were asked to think of one more <u>service</u> that could be added to the Perth & District Library, that is, without worrying about the budget implications (Question 13)

117 individuals provided a response to this question. All answers were "write-in" and have been grouped by theme. Unless otherwise indicated in the chart, all suggestions were given by one respondent. It is also important to keep in mind that we asked for suggestions with "present budget aside" to try to draw more significant ideas and suggestions. By far, the largest number of suggestions fell into the 'programs' category, with speakers and information sessions at the top of the list.

Theme	Suggestions
Programs **(35)**	- More speakers /workshops/ more adult guest speakers /Canadian speakers and authors/ Artists & writers/ lecture by local resident on subject of current interest /Disinformation seminar/ speaker series on local history, travel, geology, etc. **X8** - Adult programming **x2** - More senior's resources/educational lectures, such as nutrition and health care x3 - Technical lessons/ lifelong learning program for information technology **x2** - Computer and tech courses for seniors. Tech info workshops for seniors **x2** - Skill share- opportunities to learn new skills from community members - motor repair, sewing, changing a tire, building a fence/ tools workshop /gardening **x 2** - Programs for adults without children looking to connect (childfree) - More "learning kits" "how-to" kits perhaps with videos/website links" by skilled teachers. After hours? Volunteer run? Coffee gatherings for learning or discussions - More book clubs

	• Current films, documentaries • More programs to welcome newcomers to Canada • Youth/children's programming /summer camps, more events for kids / More children's reading and activity time / Courses for kids - like home alone courses. Babysitting courses. First aid **X5** • Extra help for struggling school age children, due to Covid and being aged out of programs. Day, weekly programs, … there needs to be more • French - free French lessons /More French services! (Tutoring, French story time) **x2** • Music – free music lessons/ music program for adults/people with special needs **x2** • Christmas open house
Teen / Young Adult **(3)**	• Teen Programming • Love to see a bigger teen space with more than books/computers. Teenagers don't have much aside from the YAK club to hang out after school, do group studies and group projects. A space for them to unwind, feel less pressure completing homework, maybe even more leisure games for them. Teenagers spending time at the library is better than …! Maybe even host game nights for teenagers! • More resources and activities for young adults (aged 18-30)
Services **(17)**	• Expanded passes (e.g. museums, parks/trails, etc.)/ more museum passes (haven't got one in a while and never heard back from the request I made months ago) **x3** • Bookmobile for those without vehicles and/ or those with mobility issues **x2** • Someone to help with Libby and a computer literacy program **x2** • Regularly scheduled community services such as passport information sessions • Expanded seed library • More tutoring, tutoring with dyslexia specialists, dyslexia resources workshops • Social Group for people with disabilities • 3d printing or CNC / VR headsets • Ancestry.ca access • Computers to play learning games • More children's things • Maker space
Spaces **(19)**	• Café / Social Enterprise Café /beverage station a small coffee/ snack space with a few tables, for safe community meetups / vending machine with snacks/water **x7** • Practice & recording studio booking space /music room & accompanying instruction **x2** • rooftop patio to read would be neat / Reading space **x2** • After hours communal workspace / evening meeting space **x2** • Bookable workspace • One or more soundproof study/reading rooms • Stage, movie theatre • Senior's meeting area • Pre-school activities and large play space since there isn't such a place in Perth • Several walls used to exhibit local art - could art pieces (sculpture, pottery) be shown?
Offsite **(4)**	• A couple of satellite locations where books could be returned • Transportation to those in town that have no ability to get there • More staff hours for outreach and programming such as is offered in Tay Valley, and to expand current outreach. • Free parking

Books/ Collection **(11)**	• More books. **X7** (suggestions included art/Canadian women artists, science, sci-fi literature, for book clubs) • More music • Board games or other family games available for borrowing • More borrowing resources for kids • More French books (especially for kids)
Online / Electronic **(7)**	• Expanded offerings on Libby (audiobooks!) **x2** • Another online book borrowing source with 3-week loan period • Kindle format book loans • Additional online resources • Better online borrow like hoopla • More wi-fi hot spots available
ILL **(5)**	• Easier/Faster inter library loans/More sources/range of dates from older to new **x5**
Lending library Note: Have a Library of Things **(12)**	• Small tool/household item lending items (suggestions included leaf blowers, dehydrator, snowshoes, camping gear) **x4** • Musical instruments **x4** • Art supplies /Craft kits **x3** • Toy lending library
Staff **(4)**	• Additional staff **x2** • Staff for more programming and implementation of new, inventive ideas • Youth Programming Staff
Hours **(4)**	• More evening and weekend hours / Evening hours past 7 *x2* • As a parent with young kids, I would love if the library was open on Sundays, especially in the winter • Longer hours

Future ideas – Respondents were asked to complete the following sentence: "Over the next five years, the Perth & District Union Public Library should…. (Question 14)

135 respondents provided a 'write-in" answer to this question. While 30 respondents provided an answer such as "continue to do an excellent job meeting community needs and adapting to changes in use and expectations" or "keep up the wonderful service", there were many suggestions. The suggestions are grouped by theme/topic. Many of the 'write-in' responses were similar to those provided in Question 13 such as to have more books in the collection but there were some new responses such as upgrading the washrooms. This time, five respondents said to expand or double the space and a further 2 asked that the library receive the funding needed to expand.

Theme	Suggestions
Programs **(21)**	• Have more events/Expand programming/Maintain programming **x10** • have more community learning opportunities/ do a 'people library' regularly **x3** • Empower struggling readers/Offer more help to struggling school kids **x2** • Continue to offer a diversity of programming for all ages given changing demographics • Grow to meet/match population growth and services for newcomers to Canada • Add more children's programming

	• Create partnerships with area clubs, environmental and social organizations…. showcase their work e.g. Watersheds Canada with library featuring related materials (books, lists of podcasts, YouTube channels, films through Kanopy etc.). • Add a tools workshop and lessons, especially for woodwork • More book clubs
Teen / Young Adult **(2)**	• Have more movie nights for young adults, more concerts • Continue with children/teen programing at little or no cost
Books/ Collection **(18)**	• Expand/add as much new material as possible **x12** • Continue to build their collection especially of Canadian books/books featured in reviews found in major newspapers/ Keep relevant, new books and movies **x3** • Enlarge the periodicals sections (i.e. increase the number of magazine titles, etc.) • Maintain a balance between print collections and online databases • Invest more in dyslexia resources and services • More non-fiction • Expand the book club selection considerably. New material needed
Online / Electronic **(6)**	• Have more books available on Libby (very limited)/ more e-books **x2** • Invest in more online material (magazines, journals, e-books, audiobooks)/ online presence x**2** • Have access to more online books rather than wait months from Libby! • Keep Press Reader
ILL **(1)**	improve interlibrary loans
Membership (3)	• Find ways to bring people who aren't library users "into the fold" by having a presence at community events and by offering videos, webinars, and workshops that remove any intimidation factor people might feel about going to a library • Do fun "membership drives" in which you set and reach a target for new cardholders. • Increase visibility in the community and
Services **(10)**	• Become more of a community hub / Be a one stop community hub to link residents with local services/ Expand services, space, and join forces with other social services and organizations **x3** • Become even more of a place for people to connect. … we need more places to just come/meet/share stories/get to know each other/build a sense of community… could do things like "stuff" swaps or share foods..... to build connections/continue to provide free resources and public space to facilitate community connections **x2** • Continue to create a community hub - .. focus on youth and connecting with them • Give the community access to 3d printers and or laser cutter/engraving • Add computers • Offer bookmobile services • Become a local centre where the Indigenous community can feel represented in both programming and collection, and non-Indigenous people can go to learn about the history and culture of the Indigenous community in this area
Spaces **(20)**	• Expand space/ double its size **x5** • Hopefully receive funding for expansion of physical space **x2** • Update the bathrooms and kitchenette **x2** • Have a larger space to accommodate young children • Create a designated, closed off quiet area for those with sensitivities to sound • improve parking - the downtown lot is too busy

	- Fundraise to build a space that can accommodate other community agencies/groups - Work to create a more welcoming space. Promote books - Add something to get teens and preteens into the library - Get a maker space and 3D printer - Possibly opening space for evening groups - continue to have meeting spaces available at reasonable costs - A community focused mural could be cool - Add more windows - Maybe have more green space - flowers / garden / outdoor lounge area
Staff **(5)**	- More staff/ Hire more great people **x3** - Give a raise and/or more paid vacation to the excellent members of the staff - Hire additional staff to expand its programming, especially in the children's area
Hours **(5)**	- More hours **x3** - Be open before 10am through the week - Stay opened until 7 every day
Other **(5)**	- Receive additional funding to reflect the growing needs of the communities **x2** - Help prepare the community for drastic climate change - NOT get too big. More is not always better. In fact, it's usually worse… library should retain its small-town feel. As it is, it has a wonderful community vibe.. thanks to the great staff. Don't assume that every great new innovative idea is an "improvement." - Maintain its quality of services. Good enough because taxpayers have to pay the expansions of services or space - Create community borrowing libraries for people who live outside Perth

To conclude the survey, respondents were asked to add any other comments about the library (Question 15)

112 respondents added comments in response to Question 14.

Of these 112, 84 comments were accolades for the library or library staff.

Seven respondents offered positive feedback on library services but then added a suggestion or recommendation for a change in procedure or approach. For example, "The people who work there are The Best! I just don't know what direction the library is taking these last few years. I've had to join two other libraries at considerable expense in order to find the books I'm interested in."

Fifteen respondents went directly to a suggestion, for example, "Book labels are hard to read".

All the comments from Question 14 can be found as **Appendix A** of the report.

Part 2 –Library services against ARUPLO guidelines

While a community consultation is a very important element of the work needed to evaluate the library's present service and future needs, it can be helpful to put the present library services into a library context. The Ontario library organization called ARUPLO (Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries) completed their fourth edition of their publication called *Guidelines for Rural/Urban Public Library Systems* in 2023. Over many years, the ARUPLO publication has served as a development tool for Ontario public libraries as they investigate whether they such components as sufficient space, collections and seating to be able to serve their community. In this section, we offer a straight comparison of the guidelines and then will highlight the issues.

For this comparison, we used the ARUPLO category for a large branch, which is defined in this way: "generally serve catchment areas of 10,000-35,000 population as determined by each system". As noted on page 2 of this report, the combined resident population of the three municipalities from the 2021 Census of Canada of 20,577 will be used for these comparative statistics.

	ARUPLO Guidelines, 4th edition, large branch	Perth & District Union Library, as reported in the *Annual Survey of Public Libraries*
Facilities Net Library square footage (Note 1)	10,000-35,000	9,500
Hours of Operation	45-65 over 6 to 7 days per week	47 over 6 days per week
Staff component (FT and PT listed in FTE/ full-time equivalents) (Note 2)	5 to 17.5 FTE	6.81 FTE (4 full-time and 2.81 FTE in part-time hours @36.25 hours per week for FT position)
Qualifications of head/branch supervisor	Professional Librarian and APLL or other public administration certification	Professional Librarian
Collections (print and AV)	24,000 to 50,000	37,415 (print) + 3,355 (DVD) = 40,770
User seating (Note 3)	60-200	87 seats in non-bookable spaces inside and around the exterior of the library
Technology – Computers (Note 4)	3	11

NOTES from ARUPLO guidelines
1. For Facilities, the figure does not include additional non-assignable space required for public washrooms, utilities, stairwells, elevators, corridors, foyers, custodian, etc. This is generally allocated at 27-30% in addition to the next space.
2. Administrative time should be included in the staffing FTE to allow for the completion of duties no able to be accomplished while providing direct public service during branch open hours.
3. This includes seating for reading and independent work as well as collaborative activities, and seating for computer use, both library workstations and seating for wi-fi enabled use of patrons' devices. Seating for separate meeting/conference rooms is not included in this guideline.
4. The number of public access computers/device stations required will depend on the level of access to computer technology and Internet service and the prevalence of patrons' use of their own devices.

From this comparison between the library and the ARUPLO guidelines, there are three issues which stand out and which need further exploration:
-   The space available to the public within the library including user seating
-   Staff
-   The size of the collection

Space - The ARUPLO documentation provides guidelines for library service, and it also lists best practices. Under best practice, there is a 'space allocation by function' which includes the following:

-   **User seating**: 5 user spaces per 1,000 capita @35 square feet per user space. **Note that** when we use the 2021 Census of Canada population of 20,577, there should be 102 user seats in the Perth & District Union Public Library. The library currently has 87 seats.

    With respect to **user seating**, the ARUPLO 'best practices' suggests that a library should have a range of seating choices, but the authors admit that the guideline is intentional broad in recognition of the fact that specific branches will have different roles and service levels. That said, the library might have fewer seats if it needs the space for collections but might have additional seating if the library decides to prioritize the offering of spaces for longer terms uses such as individual and group study. Throughout the library survey, there were comments on the need to have more user seating in the library. It should also be noted that there were comments about quiet areas or study spaces so it could also be considered that the number and location of these seats is an issue to consider.

-   **Children's Area**: self-contained area of 20 to 30% of the library's assignable area.

-   **Teen Area**: 10% of the library's assignable area.

-   Generally, the facility should be large enough to provide at least 1 square foot of assignable space per population served or is projected to serve beyond minimum guidelines (e.g. if the catchment area is or will be 20,000 people, the facility should be 20,000 square feet minimum). **Note that**, according to the *Annual Survey of Public Libraries*, the library currently has 9,500 square feet. Using the Census of Canada Population for 2021, the library should have 20,577 square feet in size to serve its resident population (without counting seasonal residents or visitors).

Staff – As the ARUPLO guidelines are intended to reflect public libraries in both urban and rural areas, but they also serve multi-branch library systems. When the ARUPLO Guidelines reference the number of staff in a branch, there is an assumption that there are additional staff serving on a "system-wide basis" and performing some centralized functions (ARUPLO, page 9). The difference is that Perth has one branch and so staff serving at the library perform all the regular library functions, as there is no "higher level/additional staff" at another location performing any other functions. The library staff component does fall within the range of 5 FTE to 17.51 FTE but when the proviso of performing these centralized functions is overlayed to the equation, the staff component is rather on the lean side.

Size of Collection – The size of the collection at 40,770 physical items falls within the range projected in the ARUPLO guidelines. Keep in mind that, in many cases, the ARUPLO number represents the number of physical books in a branch of multi-branch system, which means that the user might have access to books from other branches or they could be 'exchanged' into the physical branch from time to time. the From the Survey conducted by the library, the respondents want more books or a greater range of books. This issue of the size of the collection will be explored again as part of the comparative statistics.

Part 3 – Comparative Library Statistics

Part 3 provides an analysis of the library's current services against public libraries serving communities of a similar population size and number of sites using the Government of Ontario's *Annual Survey of Public Libraries* for 2023 (as reported in June 2024 and the most recent published comparative statistics). With more than 300 public libraries across Ontario, it is important to find libraries of a similar nature, depending on the comparison you wish to make. In the comparative charts, we used libraries of a similar structure, that is, which serve their community from one or, possibly two, locations. We also tried to focus on libraries serving a similar resident population, for example, from a resident population of 16,000 to about 29,000.

In Charts 3, 4 and 5, we offer some comparative library statistics for 12 communities within eastern Ontario. These 12 communities serve resident populations over 8,000 but under 30,000, so that the socio-economic environment a consideration in the comparisons.

Chart 1: 21 Similar Ontario Public Libraries

In the first chart, we compare the Perth and District Union Library to 21 other libraries serving a similar size population and with only 1 or 2 branches and look at cardholders, expenditures and staffing. Of particular interest in this chart is that while Perth is in the middle of the group by resident population (at 12th), it is the 3rd smallest of the 21 public libraries for total operating expenditures, the smallest of the 21 libraries for spending on staff and 5th smallest for total number of staff, expressed in FTE.

Library Name and number of sites	Resident Population Served	Active Library Cardholders	Total Operating Expenditures $	Total staff (not benefits) $	Total FT staff	PT staff (in FTE)	Total staff (FTE)
Bracebridge-1	16,010	10,725	1,179,105	619,627	8	3.26	11.26
North Grenville-1	16,451	5,059	605,816	442,723	3	3.71	6.71
Russell-2	16,520	2,514	909,884	534,365	4	3.43	7.43
Port Hope-2	16,753	13,087	952,362	522,720	4	5.09	9.09
Midland-1	16,894	7,501	1,605,679	937,986	9	4.86	13.86
Petawawa-1	17,187	3,597	696,215	455,107	4	3.17	7.17
Scugog Memorial-1	17,382	4,084	872,314	543,650	2	6.23	8.23
Niagara-on-the-Lake-1	17,511	8,283	957,657	560,567	4	1.03	5.03
Port Colborne-1	18,306	5,282	986,522	502,789	7	0.43	7.43
Thorold-1	18,801	11,727	842,833	492,702	5	2.60	7.60
Cobourg-1+2	19,440	10,576	1,486,227	880,186	6	1.37	7.37
Perth & District Union-1	**20,577**	**6,267**	**833,233**	**413,330**	**4**	**2.81**	**6.81**
Wasaga Beach-1	20,675	9,955	1,301,018	798,304	7	5.60	12.60
Essa-2	21,083	3,768	952,906	574,454	5	1.74	6.74
Uxbridge-2	21,176	4,512	885,395	499,731	2	6.34	8.34
Brockville-1	21,346	3,999	1,112,059	802,975	4	1.40	5.40
Collingwood-1	23,815	8,254	1,977,068	1,086,616	14	5.14	19.14
East Gwillimbury-2	23,991	8,934	1,877,362	1,164,387	11	6.97	17.97
Clarence-Rockland-2	25,326	12,315	1,295,017	738,331	8	0.37	8.37
Grimsby-1	27,314	7,765	1,213,975	610,184	7	3.63	10.63
Orangeville-2	29,986	6,916	2,395,357	1,199,478	8	0.69	8.69
Average of 21	*20,311*	*7,386*	*1,187,524*	*684,772*	*5.95*	*3.37*	*9.33*
Position (smallest to largest)	*12*	*9*	*3*	*1*	*8*	*9*	*5*

Chart 2: 21 Similar Ontario Public Libraries for Materials Spending, Circulation and Holdings

This chart shows the collection including the amount of money spent on materials, the size of the collection and the annual circulation of physical materials. Keep in mind that the library in Perth has the 12th smallest resident population of the 21 libraries in the selected group, as shown in Chart 1. Of particular interest in this chart is the spending by Perth on physical materials (at 11th smallest of the 21 libraries) and the holdings of print titles at the 7th smallest of the 21 libraries.

This chart shows that the circulation of physical materials is 11th of the 21 libraries which is mid-range and just below the average circulation of $105,761 for this group. The chart shows a strong e-book download use at 14th of the 21 libraries and 20th of the 21 libraries for e-audiobook downloads.

Library Name and number of sites	Total Materials Spending $	Physical items Spending $	French Print Titles Held	Total Print Titles Held	Total CD & DVD Titles	Annual Circ. of Phys. Material	Annual E-Book Downloads	Annual E-Audio Book Downloads
Thorold-1	33,259	26,741	110	44,397	5,544	65,200	27,242	7,279
North Grenville-1	44,710	27,889	4,450	39,166	3,152	63,265	17,840	9,772
Scugog Memorial-1	47,324	38,325	618	34,958	5,405	70,248	27,916	12,750
Wasaga Beach-1	64,472	44,243	172	39,592	4,748	71,810	14,894	5,694
Niagara-on-the-Lake-1	65,372	46,649	291	48,895	3,869	65,017	4,924	821
Russell-2	65,405	45,732	18,326	39,731	2,348	118,296	36,949	1,377
Brockville-1	65,738	45,469	839	34,659	3,111	102,478	21,018	12,345
Uxbridge-2	66,555	51,753	690	49,667	9,479	148,204	14,283	10,515
Port Colborne-1	67,334	35,855	242	39,708	7,454	72,921	11,359	6,354
Petawawa-1	67,593	40,771	3,202	40,661	5,638	92,664	8,640	5,774
Essa-2	79,841	70,500	504	35,125	4,370	82,737	6,909	3,005
Perth & District Union-1	**80,825**	**55,083**	**718**	**37,415**	**3,355**	**100,793**	**26,710**	**15,183**
Clarence-Rockland-2	82,514	67,926	19,713	39,416	2,655	96,881	16,728	0
Port Hope-2	93,513	70,509	341	37,275	9,515	103,959	15,129	9,986
Cobourg-1+2	99,230	60,757	999	52,344	12,615	156,550	28,157	14,169
Collingwood-1	108,621	79,151	625	51,757	6,416	181,907	24,860	10,602
Midland-1	118,510	107,394	1,061	36,706	5,665	119,975	16,026	5,277
Grimsby-1	136,240	88,600	624	44,242	4,373	152,079	27,017	10,011
Bracebridge-1	140,365	92,167	257	25,904	4,202	61,136	18,318	11,186
Orangeville-2	161,951	83,441	2,463	64,447	7,939	140,000	33,589	25,636
East Gwillimbury-2	168,749	107,111	1,809	43,673	8,168	154,871	135,776	12,952
Average of 21	*88,481*	*61,241*	*2,764*	*41,892*	*5,715*	*105,761*	*25,442*	*9,080*
Position (smallest to largest)	*12*	*11*	*12*	*7*	*5*	*11*	*14*	*20*

Chart 3: Comparative Statistics for Similar Public Libraries in Eastern Ontario

For this comparison, 12 libraries in eastern Ontario, serving resident populations over 8,000 but under 30,000 were selected. Of particular interest in this chart is the placement of Perth in the combined square footage of public space. While the Perth and District Union Library serves the 2nd largest resident population of the 12 libraries, it is the 6th smallest in terms of square footage, as reported in the *Annual Survey of Public Libraries* and below the average size for this group of 12 libraries in eastern Ontario. Similarly, in terms of total staff, as reported as an FTE/full-time equivalent figure, Perth is the 8th smallest, although above the average number of total staff in FTE as reported by these 12 libraries.

Library Name and number of sites	Resident Population Served	Active Library Cardholders	Local Operating Funding $	Total Operating Expenditures $	Combined square footage of all facilities	Total staff (FTE)
Smiths Falls-1	8,780	1,665	497,042	532,658	8,397 *	5.34
Arnprior-1	8,795	5,667	302,054	905,104	13,500	5.29
Rideau Lakes-5	9,050	2,714	563,109	635,673	8,956	5.86
Leeds & Thousand Islands-3	9,465	1,830	417,397	437,894	4,654	4.06
Pembroke-1	11,174	2,894	530,326	796,369	10,000	9.77
Carleton Place-1	11,936	5,295	476,062	612,426	7,500	3.29
Mississippi Mills-2	13,163	4,386	632,846	787,932	12,530	6.31
North Grenville-1	16,451	5,059	508,138	605,816	11,000	6.71
Russell-2	16,520	2,514	814,368	909,884	8,514	7.43
Petawawa-1	17,187	3,597	713,902	696,215	12,000	7.17
Perth & District Union-1	**20,577**	**6,267**	**643,996**	**833,233**	**9,500**	**6.81**
Brockville-1	21,346	3,999	890,000	1,112,059	18,000	5.40
Average of 12	*13,850*	*3,824*	*582,437*	*738,772*	*10,379*	*6.12*
Position (smallest to largest)	*12*	*12*	*9*	*9*	*6*	*9*

* Smiths Falls reported 1,900 square feet in 2023 due to their temporary location during renovations. The actual space of the library, taken from the 2021 *Annual Survey*, was inserted into the table.

Chart 4: Comparative Statistics for Similar Public Libraries in Eastern Ontario: Holdings

For this comparison, 12 libraries in eastern Ontario, serving resident populations over 8,000 but under 30,000 were selected. The chart is sorted by Annual Circulation of Physical Materials. Of particular interest in this chart was that Perth was above the average for spending on physical items at $55,083 in 2023 against the average spending of this group of 12 eastern Ontario libraries at 40,342. However, when it came to holdings, the Perth library was 7th of the 12 libraries.

It should be noted that quantity of books is not always a good statistical comparison as a library completely full of old books is not what most users are looking for. A library should have a good turnover of books (that is, books which circulate rather than just sit on the shelves). In terms of circulation of physical items, the Perth library was 7th of the 12 libraries but had the second highest number of e-book downloads and the highest number of downloads of e-audiobooks.

Library Name and number of sites	Physical items Spending $	Electronic, DVDs Spending $	French Print Titles Held	Total Print Titles Held	Total CD & DVD Titles	Annual Circ. of Phys. Material	Annual E-Book Downloads	Annual E-Audio Book Downloads	Total Circ and Downloads
Leeds & Thousand Islands-3	31,496	13,999	106	16,675	2,738	26,097	5,995	5,115	37,207
Smiths Falls-1	44,177	16,895	734	29,220	1,061	43,804	8,870	6,255	58,929
Rideau Lakes-5	23,142	17,161	198	22,718	4,681	45,858	12,218	7,024	65,100
North Grenville-1	27,889	16,821	4,450	39,166	3,152	63,265	17,840	9,772	90,877
Pembroke-1	43,288	14,126	1,737	45,937	34,577	78,495	13,114	6,890	98,499
Petawawa-1	40,771	26,822	3,202	40,661	5,638	92,664	8,640	5,774	107,078
Perth and District Union-1	**55,083**	**25,742**	**718**	**37,415**	**3,355**	**100,793**	**26,710**	**15,183**	142,686
Mississippi Mills-2	48,327	20,893	1,336	32,543	6,924	101,446	16,754	12,324	130,524
Brockville-1	45,469	20,269	839	34,659	3,111	102,478	21,018	12,345	135,841
Carleton Place-1	**685 ***	19,218	1,704	36,348	2,922	104,696	25,585	11,961	142,242
Arnprior-1	38,392	14,114	1,423	43,671	2,067	107,889	18,468	8,287	134,644
Russell-2	45,732	19,673	18,326	39,731	2,348	118,296	36,949	1,377	156,622
Average of 12	*40,342**	*18,811*	*2,898*	*34,895*	*6,048*	*82,148*	*17,680*	*8,526*	108,354
Position (smallest to largest)	*12*	*12*	*3*	*7*	*8*	*7*	*11*	*12*	*11*

* Carleton Place purchased print materials with Development Charges but did not report that expense on the materials line. The figure was removed to create the average of the 11 libraries who reported.

Chart 5: Comparative Statistics for Similar Public Libraries in Eastern Ontario: Holdings Per Capita

When one looks at the size of the collection, you might say, well of course they have a large collection, they have the largest resident population of that selected group. For this chart, we show the 12 eastern Ontario libraries, with their resident population plus any contracting municipality (for example, Arnprior has a contract to serve the residents of McNabb-Braeside Township and Pembroke has a contract to also serve the Residents of Laurentian Valley Township).

The chart shows the holdings of print materials and the holdings of DVDs as well as the physical holdings per capita (based on resident population). For Perth, we used the resident population from the 2021 Census of Canada. From the chart, you can see that Perth, has one of the smaller holdings per capita at 1.981, with only Brockville having a smaller holdings per capita rate at 1.769

Another measure of collection is turnover rate. In a library context, "turnover rate" typically refers to collection turnover, a measure of how many times items in the library's collection are circulated in a year, calculated by dividing the total number of items circulated by the total number of physical materials owned. To show that the collection is well used, you want to have a high turnover rate. The turnover rate across the entire collection at Perth is 2.472, which means that on average, each book in the collection circulated 2.472 times. The average turnover rate for this group of eastern Ontario public libraries was 2.044. In this chart, the turnover rate is the rate for the entire collection, noting that some books might circulate 25 times per year, while others only once in a year.

	Contract population	Resident Population Served	Total Print Titles Held	Total CD & DVD Titles	Holdings of physical print and DVD per capita	Turnover rate
Leeds & Thousand Islands-3	0	9,465	16,675	2,738	2.051	1.344
Smiths Falls-1	2,891	8,780	29,220	1,061	2.594	1.447
Rideau Lakes-5	0	9,050	22,718	4,681	3.027	1.674
North Grenville-1	0	16,451	39,166	3,152	2.572	1.495
Pembroke-1	8,137	11,174	45,937	34,577	4.169	0.975
Petawawa-1	0	17,187	40,661	5,638	2.693	2.001
Perth and District Union-1	0	20,577	**37,415**	**3,355**	1.981	2.472
Mississippi Mills-2	0	13,163	32,543	6,924	2.998	2.570
Brockville-1	0	21,346	34,659	3,111	1.769	2.713
Carleton Place-1	7,644	11,936	36,348	2,922	2.005	2.666
Arnprior-1	7,278	8,795	43,671	2,067	2.845	2.359
Russell - 2	0	16,520	39,731	2,348	2.547	2.811
Average of 12		*13,850*	*34,895*	*6,048*	*2.604*	*2.044*

Part 4: Analysis of community needs

A library survey can provide a considerable amount of information for the library board and library staff to consider.

At one level, there are comments on a specific point or about a concern raised by someone in the community. That concern might be as straightforward as "I wish I could have additional tickets on the Kanopy site". Then the staff could review Kanopy usage to determine if the number is perhaps too low or whether it is not possible to expand the number of views per person due to budget issues. These specific points, raised by one person in the community, should be reviewed to determine the viability of the request. Other specific points or requests, again from one person in the community, may require more research, for example, holding "handyman workshops".

At a second level, through a survey, the library can see if the users are generally content with what the library has to offer, how the library provides its services and how the space is organized. At this level, Question 8 of the survey provided good information regarding what people "value about the library". 183 people took the time to respond to this question and 94 of them described the assistance, kindness and knowledge of the present library staff while 74 of them added a statement about the quality of the physical collection. In response to this question, there were 45 comments about the value of the library as a public space including that it is a welcoming community space that is safe for families.

A library survey offers a third level of information to the library staff and Board, focused on the bigger picture of what the library can do to improve its well-respected services and what the library might do in the future to serve its community. There were five questions which covered improvements or future planning:

- Question 9 – What would make the library better for you?
- Question 10 – What type of programming interests you?
- Question 12 – If the library was able to expand its physical space… what would they use?
- Question 13 – If the library could offer one more service, what would it be?
- Question 14 – Over the next five years, the Perth & District Union Public Library should…

If you read the responses to those questions, there were four main themes. These are areas and ideas that the library should explore further. The comments from the library survey are included but for each theme, comparative statistics, as found in Part 3 of the report, and the ARUPLO guidelines, as found in Part 2 of the report, were drawn in to the analysis.

Theme #1 – Collections

In Question 8 of the survey, where respondents were asked what they valued about the library, 74 comments related to the value of the physical collection (the second highest number of comments on a specific topic) and 16 comments on the value of the online and electronic resources. That is a positive response on the value of the collection. A statistical measure of the use of the library appears in the number of active cardholders (those who have used their library card for some service in the past 2 years). The library had 6,267 active cardholders in 2023, and as shown on Chart 3 in Part 3, this is the highest number of active cardholders among the 12 similar-sized libraries in eastern Ontario. For

contrast, Carleton Place had 5,295 active cardholders in 2023. The Annual Statistics Report for 2024 showed that 3,330 of these active library cards were used to borrow books.

From circulation statistics, the library users use the physical collection of the Perth & District Union Public Library. As shown on Chart 2 in Part 3, there were 100,793 physical items borrowed. This was the 11th highest circulation of the 21 libraries selected for the comparison. Chart 4 also in Part 3 tells a similar story, with the library 7th of the 12 similar libraries in eastern Ontario, just behind Mississippi Mills at 101,446 and Brockville at 102,478. Interestingly if you add the physical circulation, the downloads of e-books and the downloads of e-audiobooks, the Perth & District Union Library moves to the 11th position in this group of 12 libraries with 142,686. In 2024, according to the library's report to the public, the circulation of physical materials stood at 99,065.

From the library survey and the statistical report, those who use the library ARE readers, but they want a larger collection; and they were not shy about providing suggestions for the materials which could be added to the collection.

- In Question 9, where the respondents were asked what would make the library better for them, of the 14 choices, the highest number of respondents (39.69%) wanted more books, and the third highest number of respondents (21.8%) wanted a greater variety of materials to borrow.
- In Question 13, when asked for one more service in the library, we expected some of the ideas provided such as makerspace, computer and technical help for seniors. We did not expect that the survey respondents would continue to press the point about the physical collection, with 7 specifically mentioning more books, and others mentioning French books and music.
- In Question 14, when asked what the library should do over the next five years, there were 18 comments on the collection, with 12 of them specifically about expanding or adding as much new material as possible.

It is clear that the survey respondents want a larger collection, with some specific targeted areas as listed within the survey comments, but does the library have a large enough collection to serve its community? According to the *Annual Survey of Public Libraries*, the library in Perth has 37,415 physical print titles.

- The average number of **print** titles for the selected group of 21 libraries from across the province serving a similar resident population was 41,892 (Chart 2 in Part 3).
- -The holdings (number of **physical book and DVD titles**) per capita is 1.981 whereas the average holdings per capita for the 12 eastern Ontario libraries of similar size was 2.604 (Chart 5 in Part 3).

Moving to the average collection size of 41,892, as shown in Chart 2, would increase the physical collection by 4,477 items. Again, that number of titles would not fit into the present library space.

For a population of 20,577, moving to the average for holdings for capita (resident population) of 2.604 would mean 53,582 titles, or an increase of 12,812 in physical holdings of print books and DVDs . While a good number when thinking of serving the community, that number of physical titles would not fit into the present library, given the respondent's interest in user seating, quiet areas and study spaces.

The library has a well-used collection, with a turnover rate of 2.472, and the collection size fits within the ARUPLO guidelines for the catchment area that it serves. The circulation of the physical collection at 99,065 according the *2024 Annual Library Statistics Report* and that continues to sit within the range of

other libraries of a similar size, but the circulation in 2019 was 120,105. One could argue that the circulation of e-book and e-audiobooks continues to grow, more than offsetting the loss in physical circulation numbers. At the same time, 39.69% of the survey respondents (the highest rating) said that "more books" would make the library better for them and 21.8% commented that they wanted a "greater variety of materials to borrow".

An increase in the number of books, and a corresponding marketing plan to advertise the increased number of new books, should be a future direction for the library. Where to house a slightly larger collection is another part of the work to be undertaken and leads directly into the second theme – space in the library.

Theme #2 – Spaces

When you walk into the Perth Library, the impression is that there is room, there is space. The space has been rearranged a few times, with the children's area upstairs after many years on the first floor. On the first floor, there are comfortable chairs along the outside of the library at the windows as well as chairs outside. By observation on a visit, all these chairs were in use during the library hours, and there were people sitting at the tables and using most of the computers. It is a busy place for those who wish to work, read or rest.

Although the library has had a large meeting room on the second floor for some time (Marguerite Frizell Room), they gained a new public meeting room (the Common Room) when some of the staff work areas moved into the adjoining fire tower area. When three small rooms were repurposed, the library gained more public meeting rooms on both floors (the Green Study Room, the Blue Study Room and the Friends of the Library Study Room). All these the rooms in the library are well used. According to the 2024 Annual Statistics Report, there were 51 meeting room bookings in 2019 and in 2024, there were 1285 meeting room bookings.

From the responses which appeared in Question 8 of the survey, people were asked to mark items that would make the library a better place for them. The respondents did not have to mark a response, nor did they have to mark multiple responses. However, there were four responses related to space.
-   more places to sit (16.8%)
-   quiet reading/study spaces within the library (16.8%)
-   additional meeting rooms (6.4%)
-   stroller parking (6.4%)

There were specific comments related to space, including 'library is really cramped for space', 'more places to sit with access to plug in a laptop', 'more space for children', 'meeting rooms available when the library is closed' and 'room for practice/musical instruction'.

It was Question 12 of the survey where respondents could really show their interest in the library space. As noted, respondents were given a list of areas and asked if they would use that additional space. The four answers with answers from more than 20% of the respondents were:
-   additional seating – 39.5%
-   meeting rooms – 32%
-   children's space with play space – 26.5%
-   additional worktables – 23.1%

There were two specific comments within this question about 'noise' and it was noted that there was 'no separate quiet area'. Some of the noise seemed to be because of interactions at the service desk, which is perfectly normal, but for those wanting to work quietly, such noise can be problematic.

The survey clearly shows that people like the library space, and they use the library space. The 2024 Annual Statistics Report, published by the library, noted that there were 250 visits to the library each day, with meeting room books up by 25% over 2023 and computer use increased by 22%. The question is whether the library has sufficient space according to the ARUPLO guidelines or in comparison to other libraries of a similar size.

As shown in Part 2 of this report, a library serving a similar population catchment should have 10,000 to 35,000 square feet. According to the *Annual Survey of Public Libraries*, the Perth library has 9,500 square feet. As noted in Part 2, the ARUPLO Guidelines suggest one (1) square foot per resident – which means that the library should have 20,577 square feet of public space to serve its resident population community. As noted earlier, that resident population does not account for seasonal residents, all of which would pay tax dollars to their municipalities for services. Chart 3 in Part 3 of this report shows that the average size of the 12 similar libraries in eastern Ontario is 10,379 square feet. The Perth library is below the average size for those 12 libraries. Respondents did appreciate the outdoor spaces (see Question 13 of the survey) but that the use of that type of space is limited by weather.

The library, although well-organized, is not large enough to serve its population. Although it contains the various elements that people want to see in a library such as comfortable seating, worktables, meeting rooms and computers, the number of users has meant that, for some, the space appears cramped and for others, the space is noisy. One respondent mentioned the need to update the washroom areas, and those types of changes provide greater accessibility.

In the 2022 Building Condition Assessment Report, the engineering firm assessed five scenarios to expand the library space. None of those options are without cost. The library, however, does need additional space. The priorities for space – from the survey responses – are:

- Creating a quiet area in the library for reading and work
- Moving some of the library's computers into a quieter space
- Creating a Wi-Fi "bar" with plug-ins
- Increased children's area with room for an *interactive* play area
- Create access to specific meeting rooms for afterhours meetings and group work

Some of these ideas related to the library spaces are interconnected. For example, if a way could be found to increase the space of the library, that new space could be a large meeting room, which is accessible after hours, a quiet area for reading or work and a computer 'alcove'. Then the children's area could be expanded into the existing meeting room with an interactive activity area and smaller program room. Space presently taken by the computers could be shifted to hold the slightly larger physical collection.

Theme #3 – Staff

From the responses which appeared in Question 8 of the survey, those who responded, are very happy with the library staff. In question 9, only 6.9% of respondents noted that "more staff" would make the library better for them. This ranked that statement at the 9th point out of the 14 possible options provided to readers. But then, throughout the survey, there were increasing references to the usefulness of having more staff.

- In Question 9, one person responded that what would make the library better was "more staff to manage and provide wider programing and creative ideas that come up".
- In Question 13, four respondents mentioned the need for additional staff, with one specifically stating that there should be more youth programming staff and another that more staff were needed for more programming and the implementation of new, inventive ideas.
- In Question 14, where respondents were asked what the library should do over the next five years, there were 5 comments about staff, including more staff, hire more great people and hire additional staff to expand programming, especially in the children's area.

The question that must be asked if whether the library has "enough staff". That question can be quite subjective and would depend on how a library offers its services, for example, how much programming is conducted in the library. To try to determine the answer to the actual number of staff, the ARUPLO guidelines in Part 2 of the report states that there should be 5 to 17.5 full-time equivalents in a library serving a catchment area of 10,000-35,000. At the time of the 2023 *Annual Survey of Public Libraries* (submitted in 2024), the Perth & District Union Library had 6.69 staff if the time is recorded in full-time equivalents (FTE) and that number was increased to 6.81 when a part-time position moved from 28 hours per week to 36.25 hours in January 2025.

Part 3 of the report shows comparative statistics for two groups of libraries. In Chart 1, the total number of staff serving at each of the 21 other Ontario public libraries serving an average resident population of 20,311 but with only 1 or 2 branches, was 9.33 FTE. The Perth & District Union Library had the 5th lowest number of staff FTE of these 21 libraries. Within that same group of libraries, the Perth & District Union Library had the lowest spending level on staff at $413,330 against an average amount the 21 libraries of $684,772.

The answer to the question is that the Perth & District Union Library could use additional staff to match the level of staffing found at other libraries of a similar size. The survey revealed the second part of that question to suggest that more staff was needed to allow the library to offer more programs.

Theme #4 – Programs

According to the library survey, library programs are greatly appreciated. In Question 8, there were 18 specific comments regarding aspects of the library's programming offerings that people valued. For this question, it is not so much about the number of programs but about the range of offerings. The number of programs offered by a library is included in the *Annual Survey of Public Libraries*, but there are considerable inconsistencies in the recording the number of programs and participants. These inconsistencies make comparing libraries in terms of programming difficult. For this reason, we turn back to the library survey.

Question 10 focused on programs which would be of interest. In that question, five people out of the 171 who responded said that they did not participate in programs, but the rest of the respondents were full of ideas. This is a question that the library should study more carefully. 54.4% said that they wanted authors/speakers, 36.3% wanted movie night and 33.9% wanted a games night and so on. Respondents added 21 specific comments about program choices that they would like to see.

The library already undertakes a considerable amount of programming – with 446 different programs reported in the *Annual Survey of Public Libraries* but there were many comments about more programs

- In Question 9, when asked what would make the library better, 29.7% of respondents answered with "more or different programs held in the library". This was the second highest response to this question.
- In Question 13, when asked about one more service in the library, there were 35 comments specifically on programming, with an additional 3 comments on teen programming.
- In Question 14, there were 21 comments directed at programming that could be added over the next five years.

It is important to note that the list of program ideas is extensive (see Questions 10, 13, and 14) and will provide the library staff with great ideas over the coming months. However, organizing such programs does take staff time. The idea of adding staff, as demonstrated in Theme #3, is important, that staff would need to focus on programming to meet the expectations of the community.

Concluding Comments

Although lengthy and full of individual comments from respondents, the library survey provides very helpful information about the library for all staff and board members. Reading the survey comments listed in this report, and then carefully considering their implications for library services, should be a task undertaken by all.

The popularity of the library has meant that it must look toward an increase in space for its library functions. People are coming to the Perth & District library and there are not enough of the comfortable seats. The space is busier and so it is noisier than it might have been. Families with young children consider the library to be a safe space to be, and they are looking for more space to spend some time at the library, either in interactive play or quieter reading.

In the 2021 Community Survey, people stated the three main reasons that they kept coming back to the library were the collections (books, DVDs, etc.), friendly staff and welcoming environment. The 2025 Survey showed similar results. People like the library. People use the library. The staff and board of the Perth and District Union Public Library should be very proud of the library and the services that are offered. Now is the time to build on those strengths to take the library to the next level as a valued and accessible community resource.

Appendix A
Library Survey: Other comments about the library (Question 15 of the Survey)

Positive comments about the library
1. The town of Perth and surrounding townships should be very proud of the Library with all its provided services.
2. Love it
3. Absolutely fantastic staff!!!!!
4. The library is for me THE reason I'm so grateful to be living close to Perth.
5. The staff are fantastic. A third space is so important for a community.
6. Our library is amazing - the staff are consistently professional and kind, and the programming and resources are always terrific. I am very grateful for the Perth library!
7. Thank you for your continued work in our community
8. Many friends, and I, are thankful for the services that you do provide!
9. The library staff are helpful, resourceful, knowledgeable and very good at making clients feel welcome.
10. You are one of Perth's community anchors. It wouldn't be the same Perth without our library. Thanks everyone!
11. Please keep it at the quality it's at. It's perfect as is.
12. I love Perth Library! You guys are the best!
13. Overall, I am very pleased with the library services.
14. You guys rock!
15. I would not personally have any other needs...but I will say it is a great library...
16. thank you
17. just very grateful for our wonderful library and the programs you provide. Thank you for making Perth the special place it is!
18. Well organized extremely friendly, helpful staff.
19. Keep up the great work
20. The staff are amazing.
21. I love the Perth library
22. We love you and appreciate you!
23. I love the plant and seed library too! You guys are fantastic.
24. I am extremely grateful for the library and for all of the kindness and respect shown to me by the staff.
25. I love the staff
26. It's a wonderful peaceful place.
27. I love the library!
28. Continue as it is
29. Thank you for everything you guys are currently offering, it's the best resource we use for our kids
30. Thank you, it is lovely!
31. Keep up the good work
32. Was a lifeline when I had little babies/toddlers, is now an invaluable resource for our learning needs.
33. I love you.
34. Thank you for all that you do for our communities. Thank you for all the excellent & imaginative programs you offer.

35. I've recently moved to the area, and I've enjoyed the library very much so far! Found a book on Emily Carr that I thoroughly enjoyed, and from which I learned a lot. I really enjoy nonfiction subjects and love to see these section with lots of variety.
36. An excellent and well -run public library.
37. Thank you for your service.
38. You're doing a great job!
39. It's honestly been so amazing, and we love attending when we can. It's in a beautiful spot with wonderful staff
40. It's great to have the ability to buy materials being removed from library use at reasonable price
41. It is an excellent community resource.
42. Keep up the good work
43. You are great!
44. It is a friendly environment where I feel comfortable.
45. I am impressed with the library
46. Lovely place, nice people - keep it going
47. It is a most beloved space by many!!
48. the library is the most used, underfunded resource in the community. for some it is the only safe place available.
49. it is a great welcoming space, with terrific staff
50. It is a truly wonderful community resource that I have seen expand to meet community needs of many sorts
51. Staff so helpful and lovely!!
52. The community is blessed to have such a wonderful institution.
53. Thanks for all the great work, library staff. Overall, it's a very wonderful place and a great resource for our community.
54. The library is the most important community resource for me.
55. I love our little library!! It always feels like a home away from home.
56. It is an outstanding community resource that works hard to support the needs of the community
57. It's a great library!!!
58. Love the Perth library!!
59. I'm a seasonal resident who uses the library during the summer months and online resources the rest of the year. Thank you for providing such a great service. Library staff members are always so friendly and helpful.
60. Our little library is spectacular because the staff is welcoming, friendly, creative, on-top of what patrons are looking for (the newest trends, updates) and they make so much out of what they are given to work with (time, staffing, $$$). Love my library!
61. I'm very happy that Perth has a good public library! p.s. I also walk to the library sometimes.
62. Thank you!
63. Great staff, well run, love being able to use meeting rooms
64. The Perth & District Union Public Library is a great asset and service to the broad community it serves. Bravo!
65. Great service, great library.
66. I love it
67. I do love this library. I moved here from Peterborough, and I miss that library too, but this one has become one I can be fond of too.
68. I liked that re-use/repair event you have done. And the "live books" or whatever it is called where people talk to others with "lived experience" about something.

69. The library does an amazing job of serving a wide area and huge variety of community members, both in age and socio-economic background, despite a relatively low level of municipal funding and the constraints of the current economic climate. It is to be commended for continually doing more with less. Because I'm currently a rural member, it's hard to participate in the programming side of library activities, and physical visits to the library have to be coordinated with other errands and can't always be as leisurely or exploratory as one might like. For those who live in Perth, it seems like a great social hub and source of stimulating and creative activity. Access to electronic materials, however, somewhat compensates for this and I make extensive use of it. I feel my taxpayer dollars are efficiently spent on very worthwhile community resources and activities.

70. Staff are always very pleasant and helpful

71. Honestly, I love our library. I love bringing my grandchildren up the play area. I pick library books for my grandchildren to read to them when I visit. If I can't get books at the library, I can get them through interlibrary loan. The staff is great. They all act like they really enjoy working there.

72. This library is the most amazing, vibrant, community hub with a first-class collection and cutting-edge ideas. You guys are the little engine that could and then some! I've travelled far and wide and I've never found such a grand library as this.

73. Perth's jewel

74. Excellent service. Happy I moved to Perth.

75. Staff is terrific

76. Perth Library is fantastic I love the staff and choices of books and also the workshops that are available for adults.

77. Wonderful place for all!

78. I can't tell you how important this library is to our community. It is vibrant because of the employees and echoed by the people who walk through the doors and feel the living entity/thing that is our library.

79. Thank you for being there - great staff!

80. For so many people, this is their 'happy place' from friendly, helpful staff to resources to get one through the tough times. Thanks so much for all you do.

81. Thank you.

82. It's fabulous. I feel so welcome.

83. Excellent

84. As a community partner, Perth Library was so welcoming. They were organized, helpful and efficient. We loved running our programs at this location and hope to continue to do so. More than just books - watched you building community. Thank you. PFHT

These are the suggestions received in the "additional comments' section. In the first points, the person provided positive feedback and added a suggestion/recommendation for a change in procedure or approach.

1. The people who work there are The Best! I just don't know what direction the library is taking these last few years. I've had to join two other libraries at considerable expense in order to find the books I'm interested in.

2. I have no problem with your staff always helpful and supportive, but I do find the physical space cold and unwelcoming. As a lover of books and reading and a longtime library user I find your selection sparse and refrain from browsing. It is my least favourite library in all my years of visiting - I never feel a sense of anticipation and wonder at what I might discover when I visit.

3. You are doing fabulous work. I know things could be stronger if there was a better connection to other libraries. Anything you can do to improve that would be fantastic. I mostly use the library for research and it's increasingly hard to get access to what I need.

4.   The staff are always friendly and helpful. I wish that I could have additional tickets on the Kanopy site to watch movies as I don't have good internet and my T.V. has limited programming that I enjoy.
5.   Almost all the staff are great!
6.   Husband wants you to buy dungeons and dragons books 😂. I LOVE the after-hours concerts. Wonder if there can be more after-hours events?
7.   Very nice staff. Just I would like to have more book selections. "Dictionaries" (English-English linguistic books) are one of the most important "books" for libraries. Currently we don't have enough. Thank you for all. Very satisfied library.

These respondents went directly to the suggestion for change or to make a point:
1.   It can get extremely noisy in the library due to children running around and talking/ yelling/ screaming/ crying at the top of their lungs, sometimes to the point where some of us on computers can't hear what we are listening to online, even while wearing headphones. I long for the days when libraries were somewhat quieter.
2.   When first moved here (3 years ago) - very poor orientation to library - had to wander around to find what I was looking for
3.   Needs more parking, workshops, senior activities, make programs more visible to public.
4.   Would love to have free parking
5.   Shade in gardens – umbrellas
6.   Provide alternative classification system so that for example historical fiction could be easily found
7.   Do not duplicate programs already offered in Perth. Do not compete with businesses
8.   I wonder if there are enough newcomers to Canada in this area to offer more information and services to newcomers?
9.   Make it possible to donate to specific activities etc. of my choice. I have held back donating $ more than once when getting a message on the site online that my $ would support some defined children's activity that I had no intent to support
10. Book labels are hard to read
11. Sometimes I want to re-read the old classics, but they are hard to find. I read Demon Copperhead recently and would now like to read David Copperfield again.
12. Include male staff to reflect the community and the world of reading.
13. Visit Helsinki, Finland library asap
14. "I would cancel the drag queen story time to the kids, this is not age appropriate. Sex belongs in the bedroom"
15. "We have heard about drag queen story hour at libraries in Ontario. Many feel this sexualizes children earlier than necessary. We would not want this at the Perth library"

These three comments appeared in other sections of the survey but did not fit the question that had been asked. These responses are included here for reference.
- *Become part of the Ottawa Public Library's Inter-library loan system.*
- *Include more conservative perspectives and voices.*
- *Avoid politics and political/ social messages and be a more neutral zone which is truly welcoming to everyone including those who may hold different beliefs and political positions as they do. Please stop pushing gay pride. Nobody is stopping people from expressing their sexuality as they wish, but it doesn't need to be pushed into peoples faces, especially in a children-focussed space. Many Moms have told me they don't feel comfortable taking their young children to the library due to this reason because they hold to a conservative parenting style. And they want to wait to teach their kids about sexy things when they are much older.*