

# **AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT**

## **Long Range Plan 2019-2023**

**Approved by the Aurora Public Library District Board of Trustees on January 28, 2019**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Aurora Public Library District is a tax-supported facility available to all residents of the Library District as well as non-residents who choose to purchase a membership. The Aurora Public Library District consists of the Aurora Public Library, the Dillsboro Public Library, and The Local History Library @ The Depot. The Library District serves Caesar Creek, Center, Clay, Hogan, Manchester, Sparta, and Washington townships of Dearborn County, Indiana.

The Library is committed to acquiring, organizing, and furnishing access to information; developing programs and services for children entering the world of reading; and providing a center for all members of the community to meet their informational and recreational reading needs. Our library serves as a vital link between our community and the other library depositories throughout Indiana and the United States.

The Aurora Public Library District Long Range Plan is a strategic plan developed to evaluate the staff, facilities, materials, services, and programs of the Library in light of present and developing community needs. The Library District belongs to the people of our communities and we value both community input and community partnerships.

A variety of community stakeholders were included in the development of this Long Range Plan, including government agencies, business leaders, local educators, families, and social and service organizations.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

*The mission of the Aurora Public Library District is to enhance the quality of life for the citizens in the community by providing easily accessible materials, services, and programs which promote life-long learning and which meet the educational, informational, recreational, and personal needs of individuals of all ages in the community.*

## **COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION**

The Aurora Public Library District serves approximately 18,000 residents of Dearborn County and is geographically aligned with the South Dearborn Community School Corporation. Around one-third of the Library District residents reside within Center Township which includes the City of Aurora. Other incorporated areas of the Library District are Dillsboro and Moores Hill with additional communities at Manchester, Sparta and Wilmington.

With the exception of Center township, the district is primarily single-family dwellings interspersed with agricultural or wooded property. Ninety-eight percent of residents identify as white, compared to eighty percent of Indiana residents. Among families with children under the age of eighteen, sixty-seven percent of the families contain a married couple and thirty-three percent have a single parent. Residents are predominantly native English speakers. The median household income is fifty-six thousand dollars per year, and ten percent of families receive assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The top five employment sectors are Administrative, Production, Management, Sales, and Construction. Dearborn County's largest employers are Hollywood Casino and High Point Health. Eleven percent of adults ages 25 or older have no high school degree, sixty-four percent have a high school degree, and twenty-five percent have a higher degree.

## **COMMUNITY NEEDS**

Community needs were assessed through a variety of methods including staff and Library Board input, Community Surveys, and input from a committee of community members. The Community Survey and results are shown in Appendix A. Staff members participated in a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis.

One consistent theme from community members was the value of computer and Internet access at all library locations. Repeated mention was also made of the desire to participate in computer and technology skills training at the library. During the previous five years, the Library District has moved toward one-on-one training for technology needs, but will resume offering a wider variety of training opportunities for both individuals and business owners.

Although community members value the small town atmosphere of our area, there is concern about increasing social problems such as drug use, poverty issues, and the need to keep children safe. High value was placed on the programming offered by the Library District. Patrons often expressed the desire to see the number of programs increased for all age groups as a way of increasing community engagement and to provide meaningful activities for children and teens. The Library District has a long history of providing programming for preschool children and has recently started a 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten early literacy initiative. The challenge will be to manage the Library District's resources and staffing to allow for an expansion of programs and services for other ages within the community.

Both the number of programs offered and the number of people attending programs have decreased in the past ten years. The decrease in attendance at programs also points to the need

for the Library District to formulate a more comprehensive marketing plan to reach community members who are not presently using the library facilities.

A final concern for staff members is for more safety training concerning issues such as homelessness, drug use, and the possibility of an active shooter incident. Library buildings are lightly staffed during periods of low use. As safety and social issues have become more prevalent in the Library District, staff members would welcome additional training in how to handle situations in a manner that ensures the safety and well-being of both patrons and staff.

## **GOALS**

Based on the input received, the following goals have been established for the Library District:

**Goal 1.** The Aurora Public Library District will provide every member of the Library District with access to computers, Internet service, and other technology and will provide training opportunities that enable each person to use technology to enhance their personal and professional life.

**Goal 2.** The Aurora Public Library District will provide increased opportunities for all ages to interact through educational and recreational activities and will become a location where community members gather to express and share ideas.

**Goal 3.** A comprehensive marketing plan will be developed and implemented to expand the community's knowledge of the services and programs offered by the Aurora Public Library District.

**Goal 4.** Employees of the Aurora Public Library District will receive professional training to enhance their understanding of current social trends such as homelessness, drug use, and poverty issues.

## **Service Responses to Stated Goals**

**Goal 1:** In 2018, the Library District increased the speed of Internet service to all three buildings. Previously, Internet speed limited the ability of library staff to conduct technology training for groups of patrons. The Library District will plan a series of technology classes which can be led by staff members or by outside presenters. Excellent content is available through the Public Library Association's Digital Learning initiative to help with this process. To facilitate these classes, additional laptops and other equipment will need to be purchased for use within the Library District. Classes could include Microsoft Office software, cloud computing, social media platforms and genealogical research. In addition, training can be offered on e-readers and online library resources. By actively engaging the community in expanded use of technology, the Aurora Public Library District will be helping community members enhance their lives through better access to the resources needed for personal and professional development.

Objective 1.1: The Library District will maintain the resources and knowledge to assist community members in the use of technology in their personal and professional lives.

- Activity 1.1.a: Before offering classes, an assessment must be made of available equipment to determine what size group could be accommodated at each building, with equipment purchases as needed.
- Activity 1.1.b: By the end of 2019, technology trainers will be identified within the staff or the community.
- Activity 1.1.c: A professional development program will be established to enhance staff technology competencies.

Objective 1.2: Beginning in 2020, the Library District will offer at least one technology class per quarter and at least one genealogy training per year.

- Activity 1.2.a: Patrons and local businesses will be asked for input in the selection of future technology training classes.
- Activity 1.2.b: Online resources will be highlighted at a public program with homeschool families invited to attend.
- Activity 1.2.c: Programs for children and teens will include the use of technology, when appropriate.

**Goal 2:** Although community members enjoy living in a small town or rural environment, they acknowledge that recreational and educational opportunities are limited. The Library District can partner with other community organizations to increase the number of opportunities offered both in the library buildings and throughout the community. Working with other organizations will allow wider access to expertise present in the community and will build community ownership and pride in the Library District. Partnerships with local organizations will increase knowledge of library services and resources among community members who are not library users and will allow for joint marketing efforts among the organizations. A list of possible partner organizations included in Appendix B.

Objective 2.1: By the end of 2020, the Library District will be offering a minimum of one program per quarter for each of the following age groups: elementary students, teens, and adults.

- Activity 2.1.a: Library personnel will actively seek to engage other community organizations as partners in programming and to explore ways to take advantage of community skills and knowledge.
- Activity 2.1.b: Library personnel will increase their programming skills through professional reading, webinars and in-person events.
- Activity 2.1.c: Staff training days will include information on programming so all staff members can better relate library events to the library mission and can promote events to our patrons.

Objective 2.2: Program attendance throughout the Library District will increase by 15% by the end of 2020 and 10% each year for 2021-2023.

- Activity 2.2.a: Marketing will be enhanced through partnerships with schools and other community organizations.
- Activity 2.2.b: Library employees will offer at least one program per year at each local school.
- Activity 2.2.c: At least two county-wide events will be conducted through a partnership with the Lawrenceburg Public Library District.

**Goal 3:** The Library District will continue to build on previous marketing efforts and will seek out new methods of marketing services, resources, and events. A core group will be developed within the Library staff to coordinate marketing campaigns across different media, with careful attention given to branding and to reaching new audiences. Statistical analysis will be important in determining the most effective methods to reach various demographics. Within the Library District, more consideration must be given to thoughtful budgeting to make efficient use of available resources.

Objective 3.1: A comprehensive marketing strategy will be implemented to promote Library resources, services, and programs.

- Activity 3.1.a: A marketing team will be identified utilizing staff members who are willing to market the Library District's resources and services throughout the community.
- Activity 3.1.b: The marketing team members will take part in professional development opportunities to further their skills in creating marketing strategies and products.
- Activity 3.1.c: The Aurora Public Library District will partner with the Lawrenceburg Public Library District to promote library services and resources through national campaigns such as National Library Week or Libraries Transform.

Objective 3.2: Program attendance and usage of library resources will be monitored to determine the most effective marketing tools.

- Activity 3.2.a: Staff members conducting programs will use informal surveys to assess how community members learned of the program.
- Activity 3.2.b: Online resources will be monitored for usage every six months.
- Activity 3.2.c: Social media accounts for the Library District will be analyzed to evaluate the most effective marketing methods.

**Goal 4:** The safety of library patrons and staff is of paramount concern to the Board of Trustees. Time will be devoted to safety issues during staff training days and at other times for

professional development. The Library District continues to stand with the principle of full accessibility to all members of the community, and will explore ways to remove any barriers which exist.

Objective 4.1: Staff members will be trained on security procedures to ensure their safety and the safety of library patrons.

- Activity 4.1.a: In 2019, all library personnel will receive active shooter training.
- Activity 4.1.b: A new system of security cameras will be installed outside and inside the three library buildings.
- Activity 4.1.c: Staff members will receive training on best practices for providing library services to patrons with mental health issues.

Objective 4.2: Professional development will focus on understanding the social issues within our community and on ways for the library to direct patrons toward needed resources.

- Activity 4.2.a: Service providers from the local community will be asked to present training to staff members on the services they provide.
- Activity 4.2.b: A Social Services Resource Book will be created and located at each building with ready information about services available in each community.

### **Annual Evaluation Process**

This Long Range Plan describes the strategic direction of the Library District during the years 2019-2023. Implementation of the plan should begin as soon as possible. Over the five-year period, the Library Board will evaluate progress toward the goals on an annual basis, beginning in April of 2020. In April of each year, the Director will report to the Library Board the progress which has been made toward each objective. At that time the Board will evaluate whether changes should be made to the Long Range Plan.

### **Professional Development Strategy**

The Aurora Public Library District is currently staffed with a combination of full-time and part-time employees working under the following job descriptions:

- Director (LS1 certification)
- Business Manager
- Dillsboro Branch Manager (LS1 certification)
- Cataloging Assistant
- Children's Services Assistant

- Public Services Assistant (both full-time and part-time)
- Public Services Assistant (Student)
- Local Historian
- Summer Event Staff (Summer Months Only)

The Aurora Public Library District values the effort its staff members make to continue their education and to increase their skills in an information environment which is rapidly changing. Public libraries must continue to evolve to keep pace with new media, new formats and an increasing reliance on electronic resources. The Library District will continue to develop staff competencies through a combination of in-library training, workshops, conferences, webinars, and professional reading. Each staff member will be expected to participate in training opportunities that enhance the Library District's capabilities to meet the educational, informational, recreational, and personal needs of our community members.

The goals set out in this Long Range Plan indicate that professional development should be focused on marketing, programming, and technology skills, including the ability to instruct patrons in technology areas. As additional staff members are added, expertise in these areas should also be given strong consideration during the hiring process. At the same time, Public Service skills must be developed and maintained at the highest level to provide each Library patron with an exemplary customer experience.

The Library District will continue to cover most professional development costs so that every staff member may take advantage of available opportunities. As staffing allows, participation in conferences and workshops out of the Library District will be encouraged. Participation in these events will be considered as part of the employees' work week, and mileage to and from these events will be paid by the Library District.

Educational development pursuant to a Degreed/Non-Degreed Library Program is supported and encouraged for employees who seek continuing education courses or programs that are accredited by the American Library Association, Indiana State Library or equivalent accreditation. The Library District will continue to offer a tuition reimbursement program for staff members enrolled in such courses. The Library Board will review the Continuing Education Policy in 2019 and will ensure that all staff members are aware of any changes to this policy.

## **Financial Resources and Sustainability**

The Library District is primarily supported through a combination of county taxes. The Library District also receives generous support from the Aurora Public Library District Foundation. As tax rates continue to fluctuate, the Library Board must continue to monitor the revenue stream. In addition, it will be necessary to examine the impact of local Economic Development Areas on tax revenues received by the Library District.

The Aurora Public Library District was established for the benefit of the surrounding community and is supported by, and belongs to, the people of the community. As such, the management and use of the Library District's financial resources is conducted with the greatest care and

integrity. Guided by the mission statement and by the needs of the community, resources and services will be maximized within the available budget. At the same time, funds must be carefully invested to allow services to continue through periods of varying revenues or unexpected expenses.

During years where expenses may be less than predicted, the Library District may transfer up to 10% of the annual budget into the Rainy Day Fund. In addition, the Library District also maintains a Library Improvement Reserve Fund which can be used as necessary. With the combination of careful financial management and wise investment strategies, the Library District is well-positioned to provide excellent service to the community for the foreseeable future. Expected major expenses during the years 2019-2023 include repairs to the Local History Library, additional shelving at the Local History Library, a roof replacement at the Aurora Public Library, and increased funding for technology needed for programming. These anticipated expenses will be funded through the operating budget and the Library Improvement Reserve Fund.

The Aurora Public Library District Foundation receives revenues from riverboat gaming in Dearborn County, and these funds are used to provide for projects, improvements, and the betterment of the Aurora Public Library District. Foundation funds are used for items the budget of the Governmental agency may not be able to provide. By utilizing this additional resource, the Aurora Public Library District is more effectively able to fulfill the mission of meeting the information, education, and recreational needs of the community. In the past, these funds have been used for programs as well as capital expenses.

The Library District will also continue to pursue grants from local, state and national organizations for the purpose of financing resources and programs that will benefit our local community members. The Library Director will maintain a list of grant opportunities and will evaluate these opportunities within the framework of the Library District's mission and goals.

### **Assessment of Facilities, Operations, Services, and Technology**

**Facilities:** The Library District consists of three buildings. The Aurora Public Library and the Local History Library are both historical buildings, and great care has been taken through the years to maintain the historical appearance of these buildings. The Dillsboro Public Library was built in 1997, with renovations to the basement area in 2014.

Facility issues that should be addressed during the next five years are:

- A need for increased storage space at the Aurora Public Library
- A new roof for the Aurora Public Library
- Increased shelving for books and microfilm storage at the Local History Library
- Repairs to the soffits at the Local History Library
- Alternative seating and tables to provide a more welcoming environment as well as more flexibility for programming
- Installation of new security cameras throughout the Library District

**Operations:** The Library District currently has a relatively inexperienced staff which is often stretched thin among the three locations. Staff and community members have the desire



to see an increase in the programming offered within the Library District. However, the safety of staff and patrons and a high level of patron service must remain top priorities. Staff training will continue to be a high priority to ensure all staff members maintain the highest level of competency in circulation procedures, reference skills, and customer service. In addition, the goals set forth in this plan will require additional training for those staff members who move into marketing or programming responsibilities.

Safety issues will also receive additional attention during the next five years. Improved security cameras will allow more awareness of activity throughout the buildings. Staff members will also receive training to increase their knowledge of how to handle difficult situations or patrons with special needs.

**Services:** The Aurora Public Library offers a variety of services to our community with a special emphasis on providing resources for local teachers to supplement resources in the school media centers. Educators are given a different membership card with increased privileges to allow for more classroom use of the Library District's resources. The local schools also make extensive use of the online resources provided by the Library District.

Genealogy services are provided at the Local History Library @ the Depot and through use of online databases. Homebound services are available for community members who cannot come to a library building, and collections are provided on a monthly basis at an apartment complex for disabled seniors.

The Library District has a robust Inter-Library Loan program with an increasing number of requests filled for local patrons and for other libraries throughout Indiana. The Library District receives delivery service through InfoExpress five days each week to expedite the transfer of items. The District also maintains a collection of over 200 book sets which are frequently loaned to libraries and schools throughout the state.

**Technology:** The Library District is committed to providing community members with access to technology and with the skills training needed to become proficient users of technology. When necessary, the Library District will reach out to the Indiana State Library to assist with training for staff and patrons.

Public computers and staff computers have been recently updated throughout the Library District, and internet bandwidth was increased in 2018. The number of public computer stations at the Aurora Public Library and the Dillsboro Public Library are sufficient to serve the needs of the community. Purchasing additional laptop computers would provide the ability to offer classes in computer skills at any of the three locations. In addition, patrons have requested that the Library District make printing available from mobile devices.

Through professional development opportunities, the Library Director will maintain current knowledge of emerging technologies and will advise the Board of Trustees on technologies which support both the Library's mission and the needs of the community. Online databases will receive extensive marketing and will be evaluated for usage. As older reference materials are removed from the Library's print collection, new databases will be purchased to provide the same information in a digital format.

One particular area which should be addressed is the need to develop a plan for digitizing documents and photographs stored at the Local History Library. Moving ahead with this project will allow greater accessibility to the resources held by the Library District. Furthermore, this will provide a necessary backup of items that represent irreplaceable local history.

### **Equipment Replacement Schedule**

The following schedule will be used in making improvements and replacements to the Library District's technology resources.

**2019:** Replace the staff copier/printer at the Dillsboro Public Library

Install new security cameras

Purchase additional laptops for training use

Install patron printers for wireless printing

**2020:** District-wide evaluation of the public service computers with an analysis of the benefits of desktop vs. laptop models.

**2021:** Upgrade of public computers

**2022:** Upgrade of staff computers

### **Collaboration with Community Partners and Other Libraries**

The Library District has a long history of working with other libraries and community organizations to provide educational and recreational opportunities throughout Dearborn County. A list of local organizations can be found in Appendix B. Dearborn County is also served by the Lawrenceburg Public Library District, and there are many community members who use both library systems. The Aurora Public Library District has a very strong relationship with local schools, working together on classroom programs, author visits, book clubs, and theatrical performances. Library staff members have given presentations to groups of students, teachers and parents.

There are many advantages to cultivating partnerships with other organizations. Working together leverages marketing efforts, utilizes the combined skills of both organizations, and builds community ownership and pride in the Library District. It also allows programming expenses to be shared among participating organizations. A continuing concern has been that library use is lower in the western portion of the Library District around the town of Moores Hill. Intentionally reaching out to groups in Sparta and Manchester townships may help build local interest in library services and resources. Community partnerships may bring in community members who are currently unaware of the services offered by the Library. It also allows newer staff members to gain exposure to the experiences of a broader cross-section of the local population.

Community partnerships will be vital in achieving the Library District goals of increased programming and more comprehensive marketing. Working with other organizations will also make it easier to reassess community needs and to make course corrections during the next five years. The Library District will develop stronger networks with our community social services

providers to help Library employees better understand current social trends and better connect community members with needed services.

### **Community Notification of Long Term Plan**

The Library District will provide a written copy of this Long Term Plan to community stakeholders, including Dearborn County Council, Dearborn County Commission, the South Dearborn Community School Corporation, the City of Aurora, the Town of Dillsboro, and the Town of Moores Hill. A digital copy of the plan will be posted on the Library District web page and print copies will be available in each of the three buildings.

Employees of the Library District will be given copies of the plan, and training will be conducted for the staff in 2019.

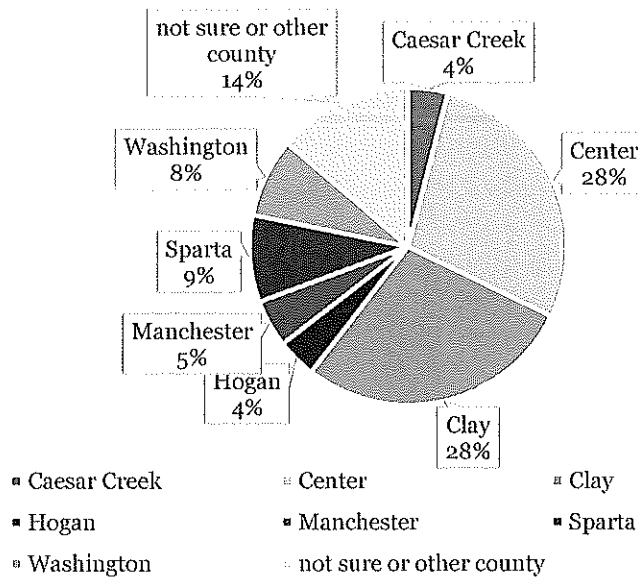
## Appendix A

The Board of Trustees for the Aurora Public Library District is conducting a community survey as part of the planning process for setting Library priorities over the next five years. Please take a few minutes to respond to these questions about library services and community needs.

The Aurora Public Library District serves 7 townships in Dearborn County. Please circle your township below:

Caesar Creek                  Center                  Clay                  Hogan                  Manchester  
    Sparta                  Washington                  I'm not sure

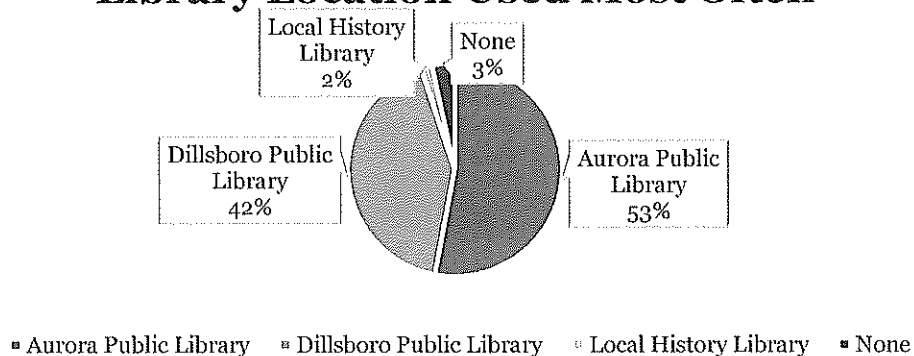
### Number of Responses by Township



The Library District currently offers service at three locations. Please check the location you or your family visit most often.

- The Aurora Public Library, 414 Second Street, Aurora
- The Dillsboro Public Library, 10151 Library Lane, Dillsboro
- The Local History Library @ the Depot, 510 Second Street, Aurora
- None of the Aurora Public Library District buildings

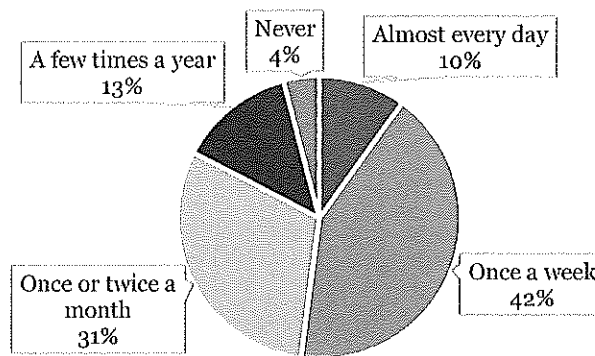
### Library Location Used Most Often



How often does a member of your family visit one of the Library buildings?

- Almost every day
- Once a week
- 1 or 2 times each month
- A few times a year
- Never
- Never, but we use the Library's online or downloadable resources

### How Often Does a Family Member Visit the Library?

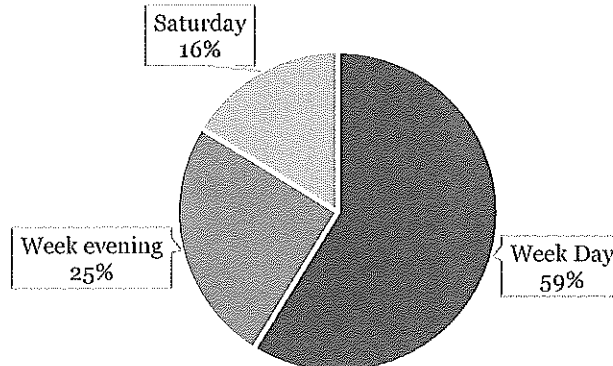


■ Almost every day ■ Once a week ■ Once or twice a month ■ A few times a year ■ Never ■

When would you be the most likely to use the Library?

- Week day
- Week evening (after 5 pm)
- Saturday

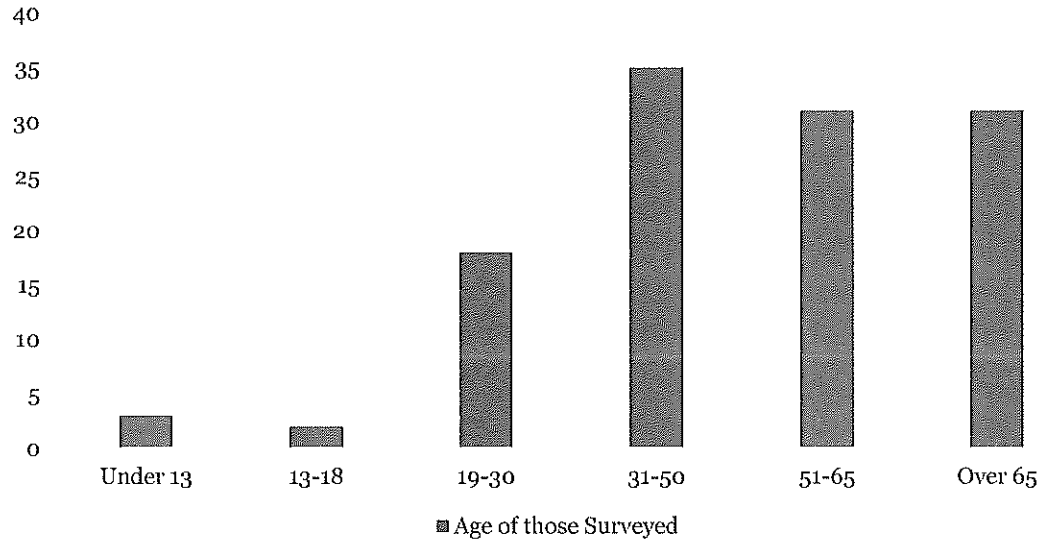
### Most Likely Time to Visit the Library



■ Week Day ■ Week evening ■ Saturday ■

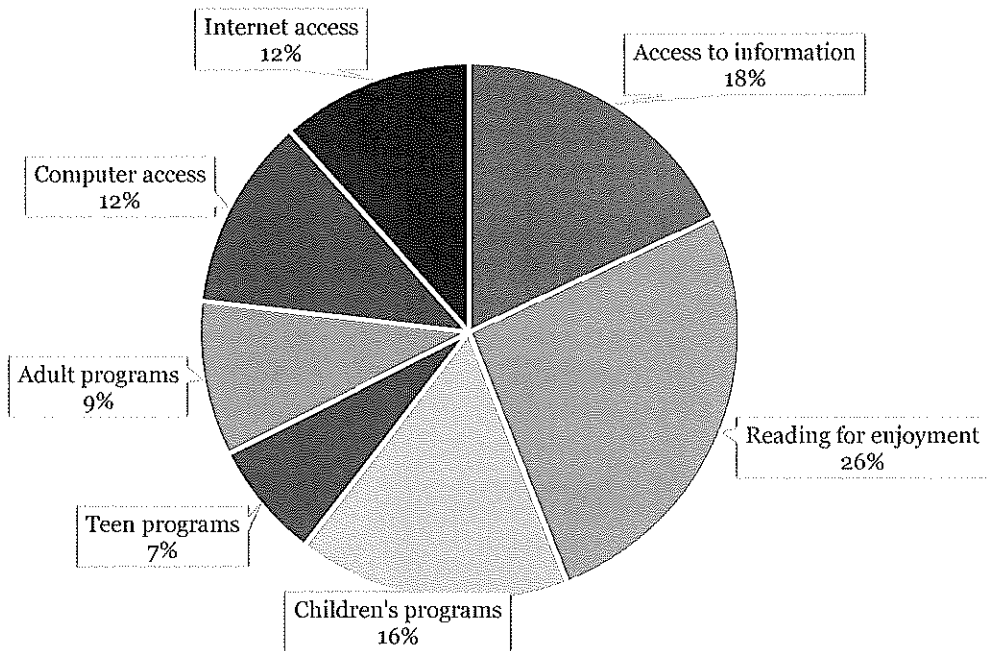
Please select your age.  under 13  13-18  19-30  31-50  51-65  over 65

### Age of those Surveyed



Which of these Library services do you consider to be most important?

### Which Library Services are Most Important?

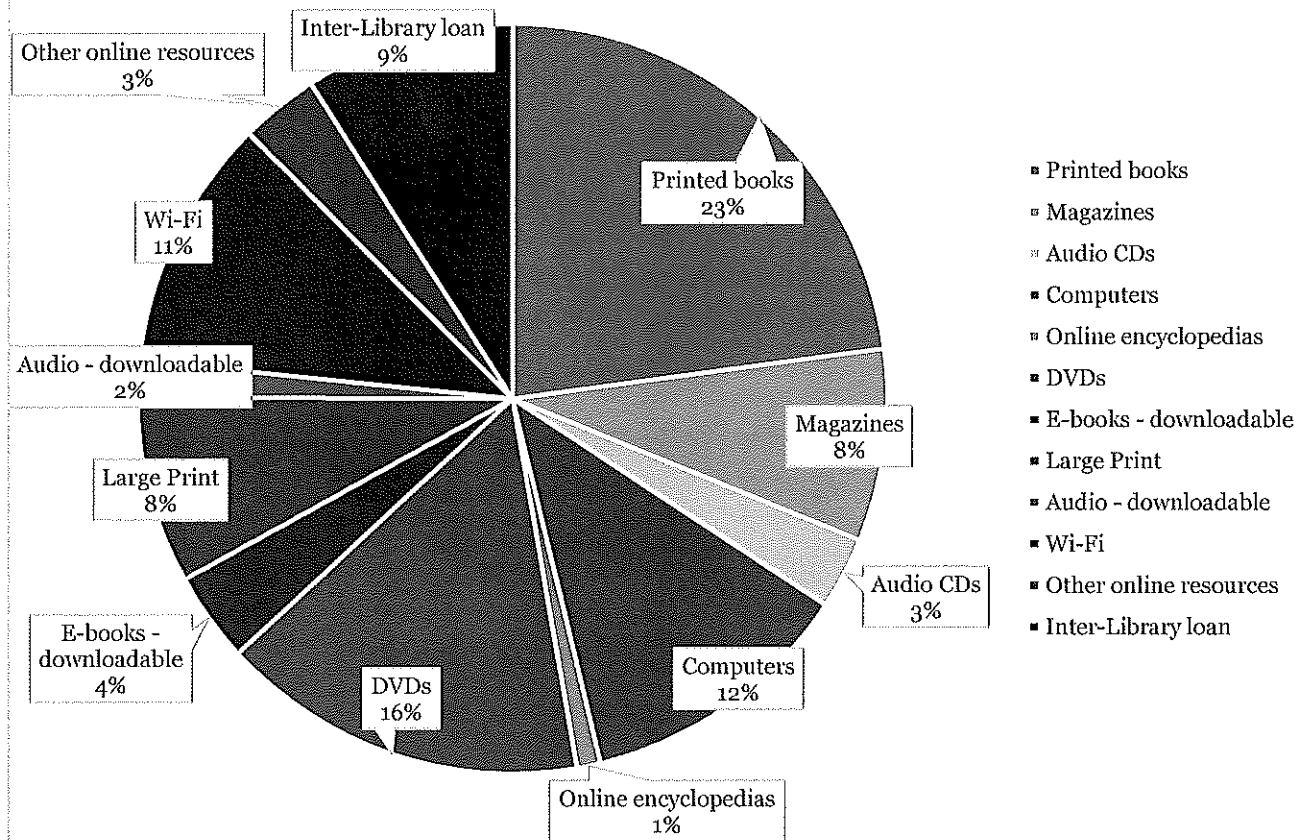


- Access to information    ▪ Reading for enjoyment    ▪ Children's programs    ▪ Teen programs
- Adult programs        ▪ Computer access        ▪ Internet access

Please circle any of these services that you have used in the past year.

- |                      |                          |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Printed Books        | Downloadable e-Books     |
| Magazines            | Large Print Books        |
| Audio Books on CD    | Downloadable Audio Books |
| Public Computers     | Wi-Fi                    |
| Online encyclopedias | Other online resources   |
| DVDs                 | Inter-Library Loan       |

Services Used by the Responder



How would you describe our community?



Aurora Responses



Dillsboro Responses



What is the largest need in our community?

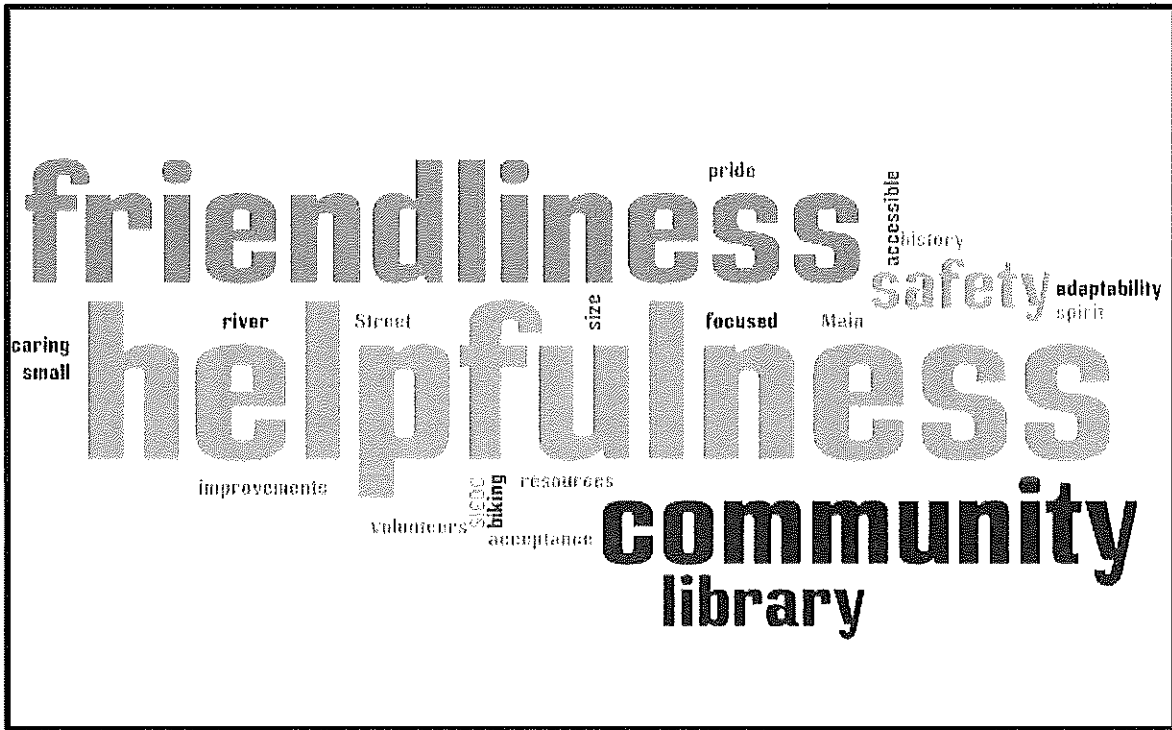


Aurora Responses



Dillsboro Responses

What do you see as the biggest strength of our community?

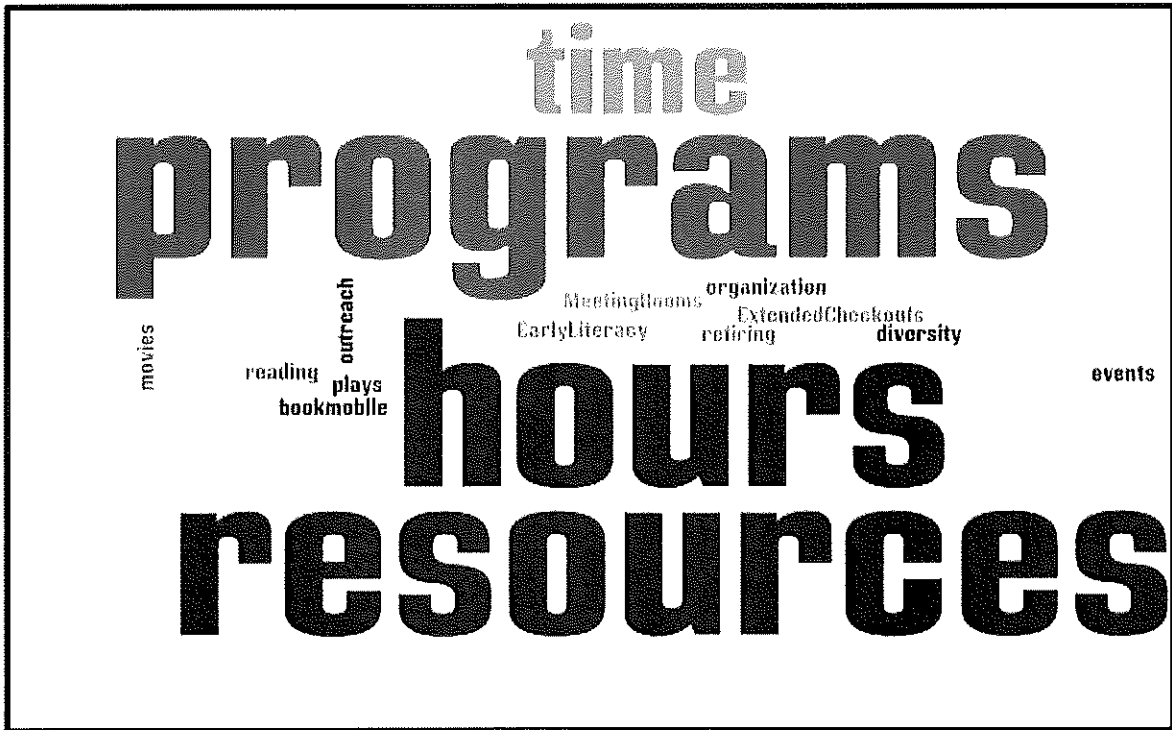


Aurora Responses

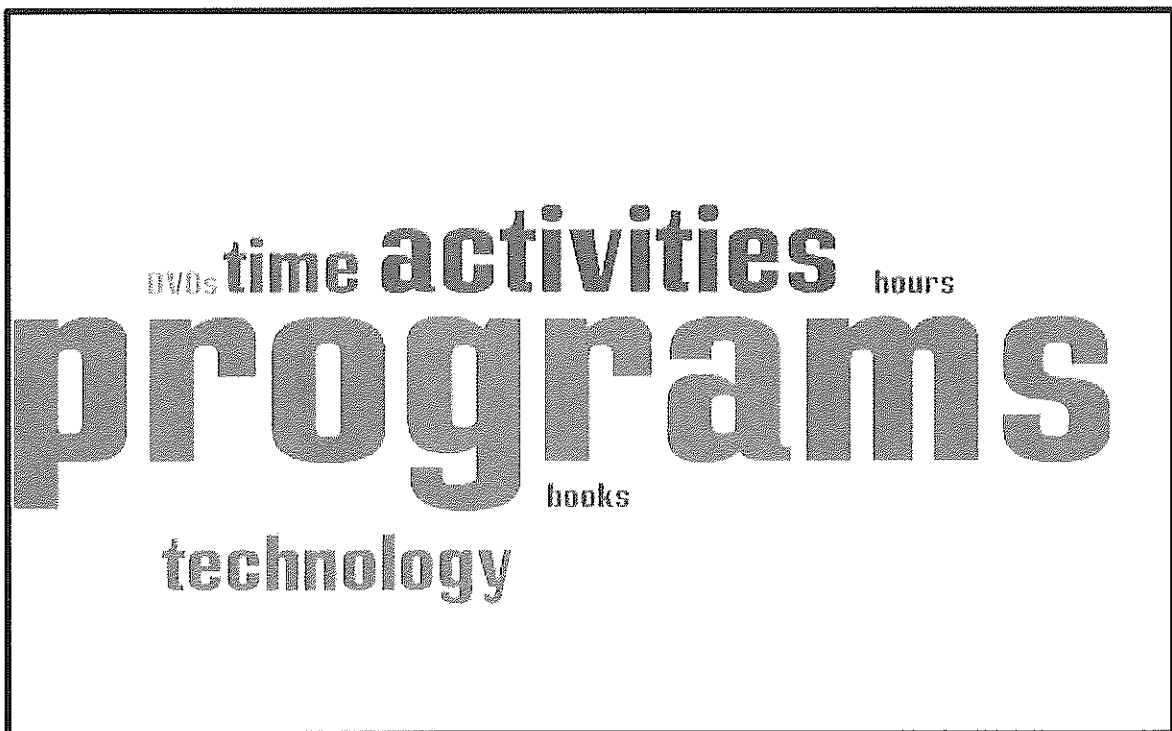


Dillsboro Responses

What would motivate you to use the Library more often?

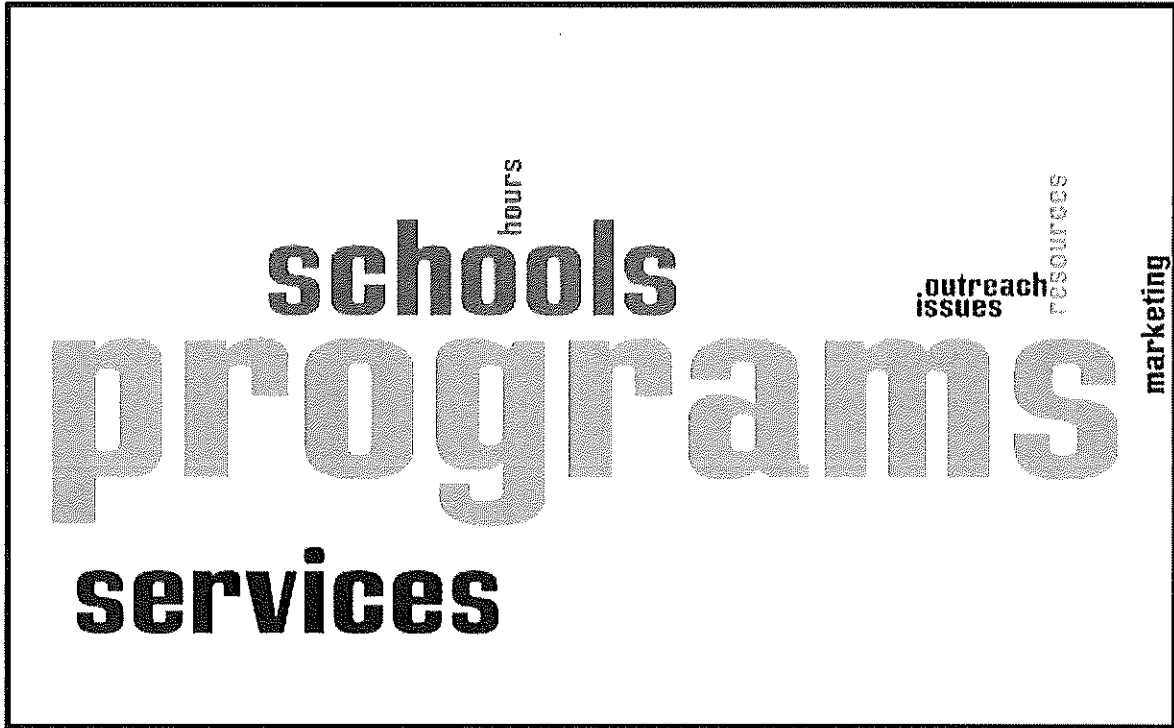


Aurora Responses

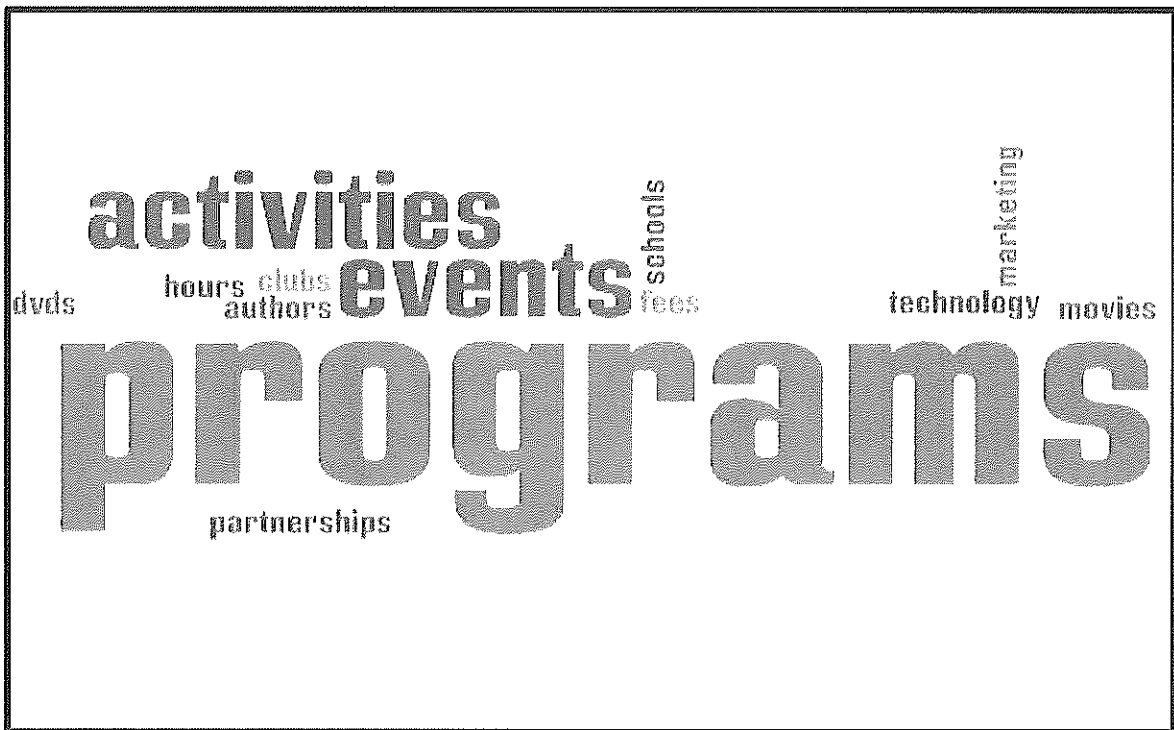


Dillsboro Responses

What could the Library District do to better serve the community?

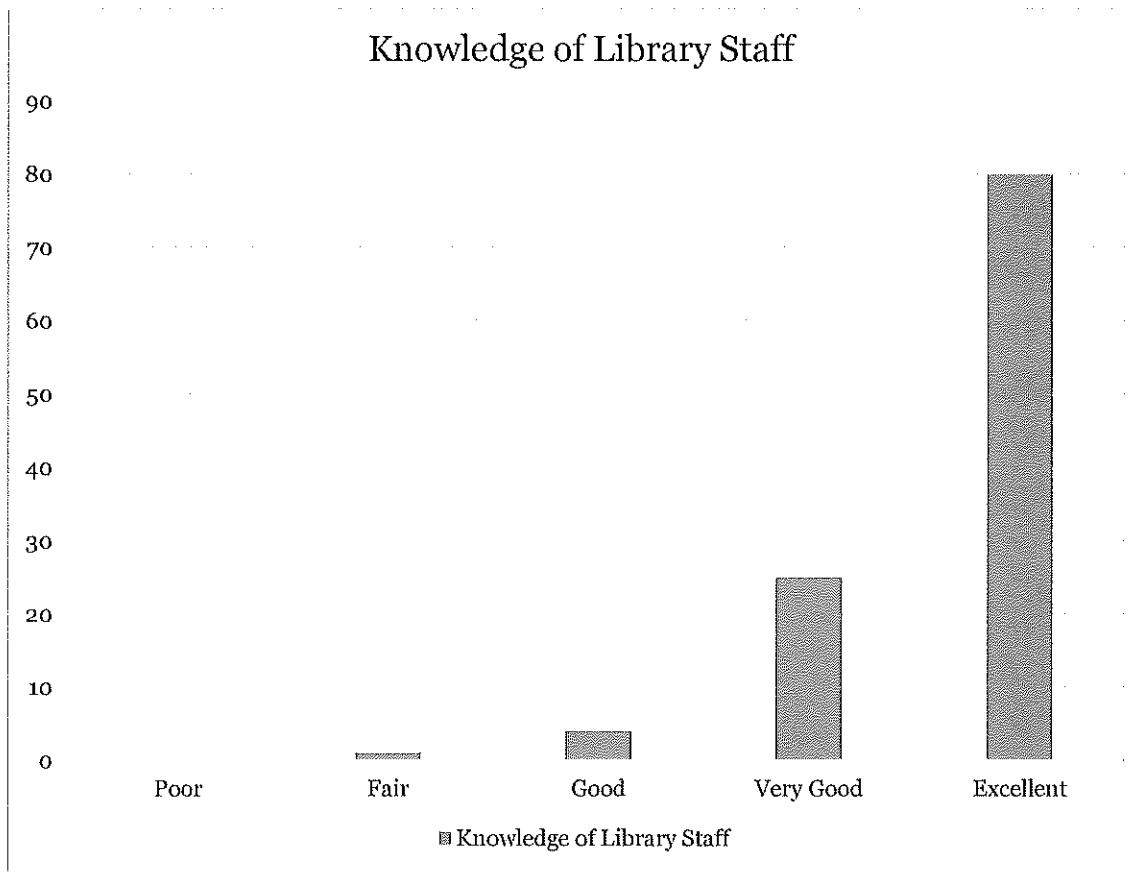
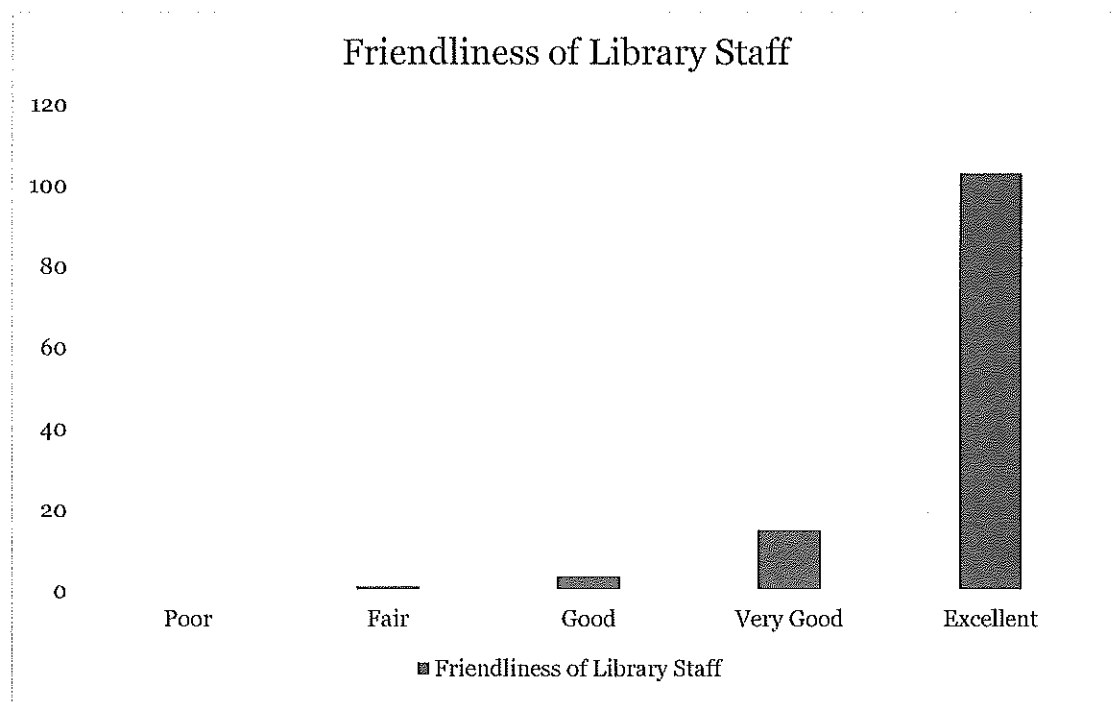


Aurora Responses



Dillsboro Responses

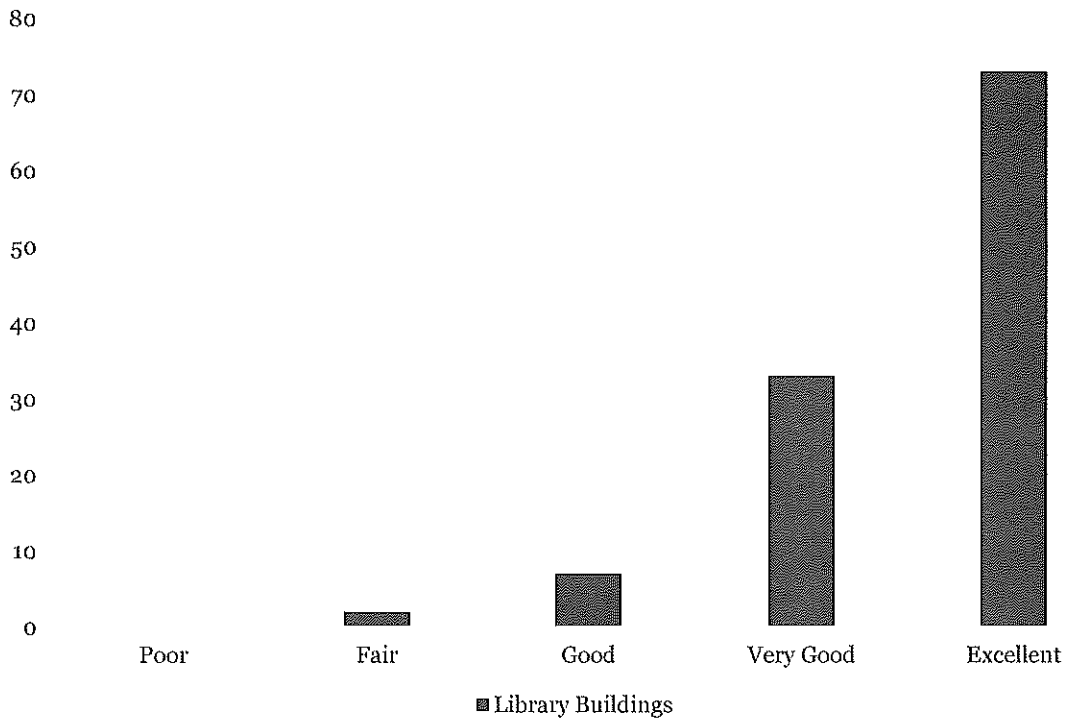
Please rank the Aurora Public Library District in the following areas on a scale of 1 to 5.



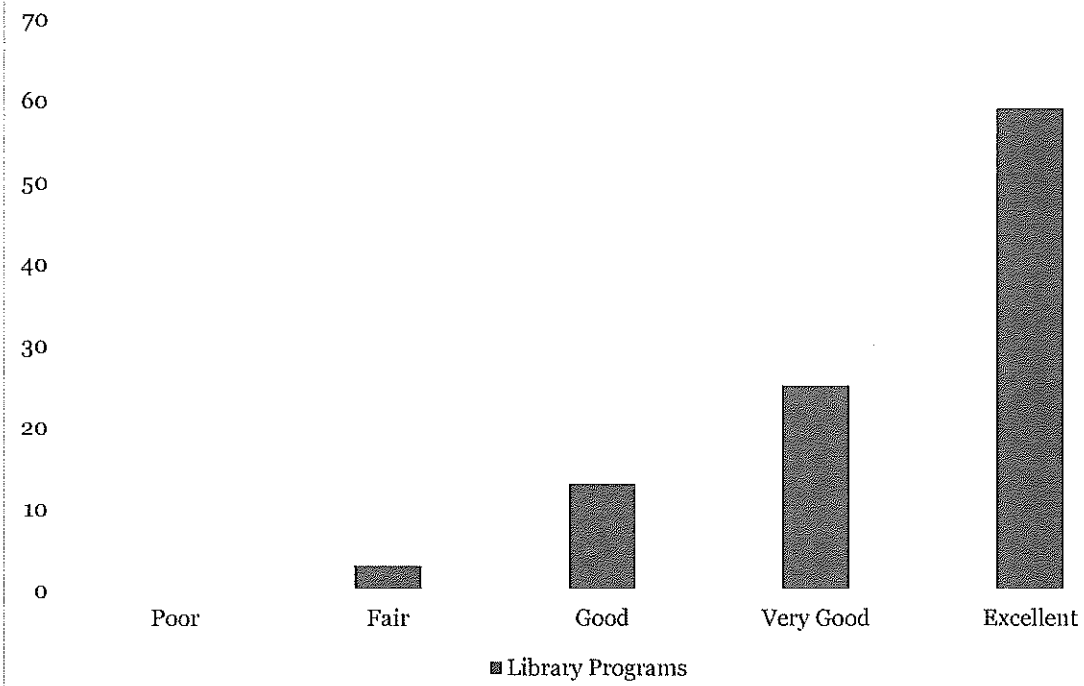
### Library Collections



### Library Buildings



# Library Programs



## Appendix B

### Potential Community Partners

Organizations in bold print have previously partnered with the Aurora Public Library District.

**ABC Academy**

**Aurora Fire Department**

**Aurora Garden Club**

**Aurora Park Board**

**Aurora Police Department**

**Aurora Recreation and Community Center (ARCC)**

**Carnegie Hall (Moores Hill, IN)**

**Clearinghouse Food Pantry**

Dearborn County Chamber of Commerce

**Dearborn County Clearinghouse**

**Dearborn County Recycling Center**

Dillsboro Arts Center

**Dillsboro Fire Department**

**Dillsboro Community Partners**

**Dillsboro Police Department**

**Great Crescent Brewery**

**Greater Cincinnati STEM Cooperative**

**Head Start (Aurora, Dillsboro, and Moores Hill sites)**

Highland Arts Council

High Point Health

**Hillforest Historic site**

Homeschool Groups

**Hoosier Hills Literacy League**

**Lawrenceburg Public Library District**

**Lollipops and Rainbows Preschool**

**Main Street Aurora**

**Moores Hill Senior Center**

**Purdue Extension**

**South Dearborn Chess Club**

**South Dearborn Community School Corporation**

**Southeastern Indiana Art Guild**

Southeastern Indiana Musicians Association

**St. John's Lutheran School**

**St. Mary's Catholic School**

**Scout troops**

Young Voices of Indiana