

Cedar Springs



Public Library

STRATEGIC PLAN: GROWING TOGETHER 2026-2030



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Strategic Plan: Growing Together – A Note from the Director

When I joined the Cedar Springs Public Library, I immediately recognized something special: a shared excitement about what the library could become. A beautiful facility, great staff, engaging programs, a collection with room to grow; the question was never whether Cedar Springs Public Library was a good library. It was, "How can we become an even better one?" For me, the answer was simple: Challenge accepted.

The timing could not have been better. The Library had recently emerged from a difficult period, one in which its future was uncertain. But, thanks to the tireless efforts of previous Directors, the resilience of the staff, the guidance of the Board of Trustees, and the unwavering support of the communities we serve, CSPL endured. Grateful for the support, the Board and staff were ready to move forward with renewed purpose, poised to show everyone exactly what a well-funded small-town library could do.

Thanks to the new library services agreement between the City of Cedar Springs and Solon Township, the Library now has the strongest financial foundation in its history. Finally, instead of asking about our limits, we can begin asking about our possibilities. However, with those possibilities comes an equally important responsibility: to be accountable of every public dollar entrusted to us.

I believe the most valuable way to honor that responsibility is this: Show, don't tell.

This Strategic Plan is how we intend to do exactly that. Rather than making assumptions about what our communities wanted, we asked. Working alongside the Lakeland Library Cooperative Director, we gathered input through community surveys and focus groups, engaged the Board of Trustees and library staff in meaningful conversations, and carefully analyzed library data. Every goal in this Strategic Plan is rooted in what we heard from the people we serve and reflects our commitment to growing alongside our communities and meeting their changing needs.

Growth without direction is simply spending. Growth guided by a shared vision creates lasting impact. This Strategic Plan is our roadmap for investing in our collections, programs, technology, facilities, and staff in ways that will strengthen the Library's impact for years to come. It reflects our belief that every improvement should make the Library more welcoming, more accessible, more innovative, and more responsive to the needs of our communities.

Over the coming years, we hope you won't simply read about these improvements, you'll experience them. You'll discover new programs, expanded collections, enhanced technology, welcoming spaces, and opportunities to learn, create, and connect. Our goal is that every visit demonstrates the value of your investment while bringing our vision to life: to be a vibrant community hub where knowledge, connections, and curiosity empower every person to learn, grow, and thrive. That goal is reflected in our purpose: We are committed to supporting the growing needs of our communities through our collection, connections, and curiosity.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the staff of the Cedar Springs Public Library, thank you for your continued trust and support. This Strategic Plan is our promise that you won't simply hear about the value of your investment, you'll see it in the services we provide, the experiences we create, and the opportunities we make possible. We are honored to serve you, excited for the future, and eager to show you what a well-supported small-town library can do.

Sincerely,

James Pugh, MMLIS

Our Commitment to YOU



Growing Together

The Cedar Springs Public Library is more than a place to borrow books. It is a cornerstone of our communities where people discover new ideas, build meaningful connections, and find opportunities to learn and grow. As our communities continue to evolve, so does the Library. This Strategic Plan reflects our commitment to meeting the changing needs of those we serve through our collection, connections, and curiosity while strengthening our organization for the future.

This plan was shaped by you, the voices of our communities. Through surveys, focus groups, conversations with community stakeholders, and thoughtful feedback from patrons, we gained valuable insight into the needs, priorities, and aspirations of the people we serve. Guided by that input, and grounded in our purpose, vision, and values, we have created a roadmap that will guide our decisions and investments over the coming years.

By strengthening our collection, expanding meaningful partnerships, delivering engaging programs and services, and continuously improving how we operate, we will build upon our strong foundation while embracing new opportunities. Together with our patrons, partners, staff, volunteers, and Board of Trustees, we will continue creating a welcoming library where knowledge, connections, and curiosity empower every person to learn, grow, and thrive.

Our Purpose

We are committed to supporting the growing needs of our communities through our collection, connections, and curiosity.

Our Vision

To be a vibrant community hub where knowledge, connections, and curiosity empower every person to learn, grow, and thrive.

Our Values

Access – We ensure equitable access to information, resources, and opportunities for all.

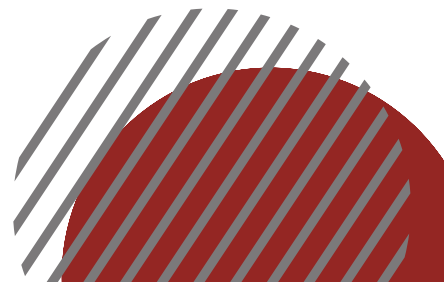
Curiosity – We encourage exploration, discovery, creativity, and lifelong learning.

Community – We cultivate meaningful connections and partnerships that strengthen our communities.

Service – We provide welcoming, responsive, and high-quality service to everyone we serve.

Stewardship – We maintain public resources with integrity, transparency, and accountability.

Growth – We embrace innovation, adaptability, and continuous improvement in our services and organization.



Purpose Statement: The Cedar Springs Public Library is committed to supporting the growing needs of our communities through our collection, connections, and curiosity.

1 Commitment to Growing our Collection

We will strategically grow and maintain a diverse, relevant, and accessible collection that reflects the interests and needs of our communities.

- Increase investment in collection development
- Expand shelf space
- Implement community feedback
- Expand Library of Things collection

2 Commitment to Growing our Connections

We will actively develop and sustain relationships with residents, organizations, businesses, schools, and local leaders to enhance services, expand opportunities, and increase our impact.

- Create targeted outreach plan
- Strengthen awareness of library resources
- Implement patron instructional content

3 Commitment to Growing our Curiosity

We are committed to fostering curiosity, creativity, and lifelong learning through diverse and engaging educational, cultural, recreational, and enriching programs for all.

- Expand program offerings for all ages
- Encourage community participation in programming
- Work with community experts to offer instructional programs for all ages
- Improve our library spaces
- Emphasize skills educational programs
- Perform program audit

4 Commitment to Growing Ourselves

We are committed to fostering organizational excellence through the growth and development of our staff, Board of Trustees, and facilities.

- Invest in professional development
- Update library policies and bylaws
- Develop Capital Improvement Plan



Our commitment to forward momentum



PURPOSE - We are committed to supporting the growing needs of our communities through our collection, connections, and curiosity

VISION - To grow together with our communities by inspiring curiosity, strengthening connections, and expanding opportunities for lifelong learning

COLLECTION - Grow and maintain a relevant and accessible collection

CONNECTIONS - Strengthen partnerships and community engagement

CURIOSITY - Expand programs and learning opportunities

OURSELVES - Develop staff, Board, and operations

Staff carry out projects and initiatives

- Assign responsibilities
- Allocate resources
- Establish timelines
- Define success measures.

- Collection usage
- Program attendance
- Community partnerships
- Patron feedback
- Staff and board development
- Financial and operational metrics

Quarterly reports by the Library Director to celebrate successes, address challenges, and update priorities.

Strategic Plan Data Summary

Under the direction of the Board of Trustees, the Cedar Springs Public Library has undertaken the development of a strategic plan to ensure the Library remains intentional and responsive as the communities of Cedar Springs and Solon Township grow, the needs of patrons change, and the role of libraries continues to evolve. The planning process was designed to move the Library toward a clear, community-informed direction for the future.

Strategic Plan Timeline

1. March 3, 2025 – Library Board agrees to work with Carol Dawe, Lakeland Library Cooperative Director, as the consultant for the Strategic Plan.
2. March 31, 2025 – Dawe reviews timeline and process with Library Board at board meeting.
3. May 2, 2025 – Dawe conducts Library Staff Focus Group.
4. May 27, 2025 – Dawe conducts Library Board Focus Group at special meeting.
5. June 2025 – July 2025 – Dawe and Pugh collaborate on drafting strategic planning survey based on staff and board inputs from focus groups.
6. August 25, 2025 – Library Board approves Strategic Plan Survey
7. September 8 – October 10, 2025 – Strategic Plan Survey is available to the public.
 - a. The Survey was available online, at the Library, at City Hall and Township Offices.
 - b. Pugh makes weekly trips to each location outside the library to pick up surveys.
 - c. 123 surveys were submitted – 73 online, 50 paper
8. October 2025 – November 2025 – Pugh compiles the survey data.
 - a. Pugh compiles contacts of survey takers who wished to participate in community focus groups, coordinates with Dawe for availability.
9. December 16, 2025 – Pugh sends out invites to community stakeholder focus groups.
10. January 2026 – Dawe conducts community focus groups 1/12 and 1/15 all day both days.
11. February – July 2026 – Dawe and Pugh compile and analyze data from surveys, focus groups, and existing data.
12. July 27, 2026 – Pugh presents Draft Strategic Plan to Library Board.

Next Steps

1. Board Approves Strategic Plan
2. Director works with Library Staff to devise action items/projects that pertain to approved plan.
3. Director provides regular updates to Library Board on plan progress.

Community Input and Assessment

Information was gathered through a combination of digital and physical community surveys, staff and Board focus groups, community focus groups, existing Library data, circulation statistics, program attendance, monthly reports, and direct community feedback.

Survey results indicate strong community support for the Library. Of respondents, 90.3% reported being either very satisfied or satisfied with the Library overall. The majority of respondents also identified the Library as an important part of the community and valued its welcoming environment, knowledgeable staff, facilities, equitable service, accessibility, and ability to meet their needs.

The survey further demonstrated that the Library's traditional services remain central to the community. Physical collections were identified as the most important service, followed by Library programs and events, digital collections, customer service, and the Library website. Respondents also identified the Library as a place to find materials, pick up holds, attend programs, spend time, and access community space.

Strategic Direction

As part of this process, the Director and Consultant determined that it was important to revisit the Library's mission, vision, and values, which have not been substantially updated since 2019 and the communities and the role of the Library have changed since then. Reframing the mission as a Purpose Statement, while updating the Vision and Values, gives the Library a clearer and more current foundation for making decisions and ensures these guiding statements reflect who we are today and where we want to go in the future. The proposed Purpose Statement is:

We are committed to supporting the growing needs of our communities through our collection, connections, and curiosity.

The proposed Vision is to be "a vibrant community hub where knowledge, connections, and curiosity empower every person to learn, grow, and thrive." The strategic framework is supported by six core values: Access, Curiosity, Community, Service, Stewardship, and Growth. Together, these values emphasize equitable access, lifelong learning, meaningful partnerships, welcoming and responsive service, responsible stewardship of public resources, and continuous improvement. The strategic plan is intended to provide the Library with a clear foundation for decision making, resource allocation, programming, services, and organizational growth while remaining grounded in the needs and priorities expressed by the community.

The following is the summarized compiled results of the information gathered for the purposes of drafting this Strategic Plan. If you would like more information regarding the data set, please contact the Library Director at 616-696-1910.

How We Gathered Info



Survey

- Both digital and physical
- At Library, City Hall, Township Office



Focus Groups

- Staff Focus Group
- Board Focus Group
- Community Focus Groups



Existing Library Data

- Circulation Stats
- Monthly Reports
- Program Attendance

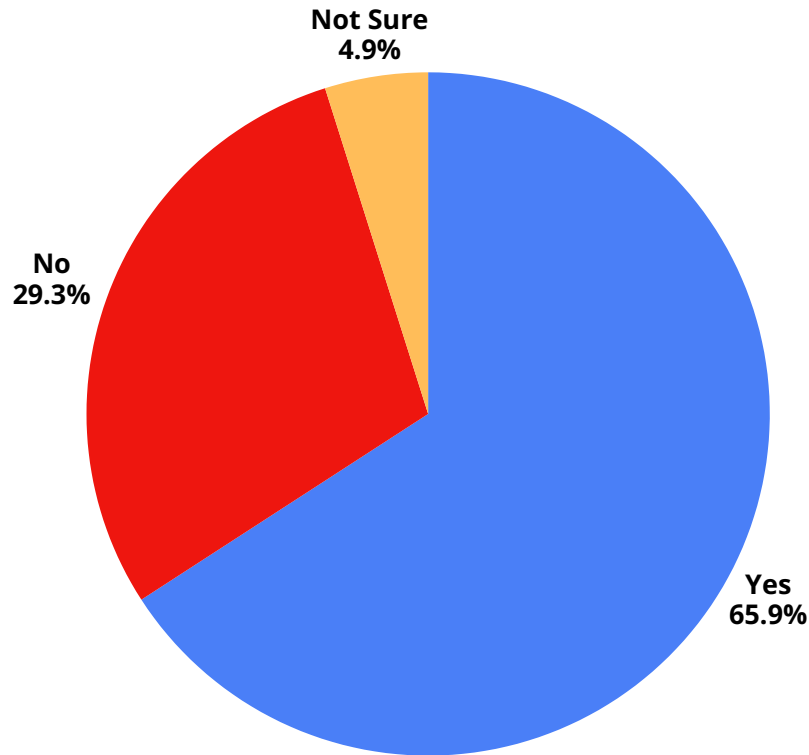


Community Feedback

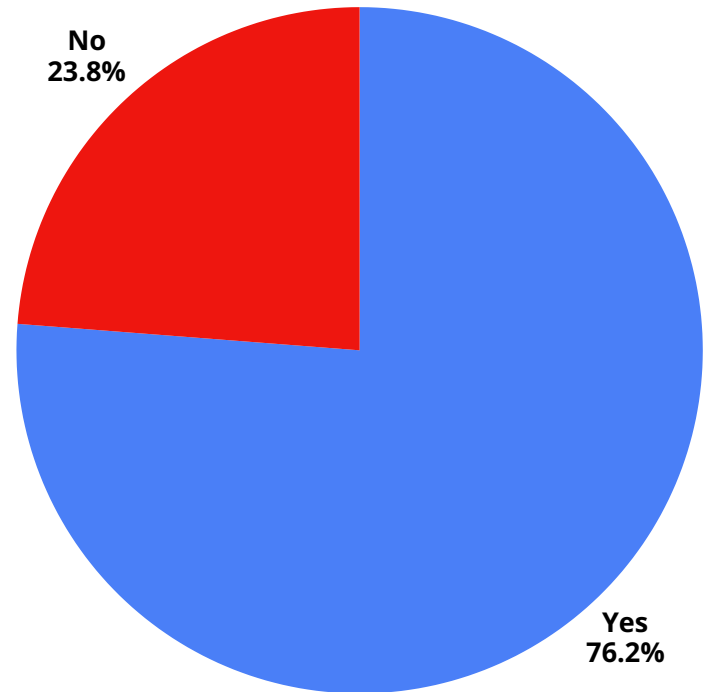
- Listening to community suggestions

Survey Results

Do you have a Cedar Springs Public Library card?

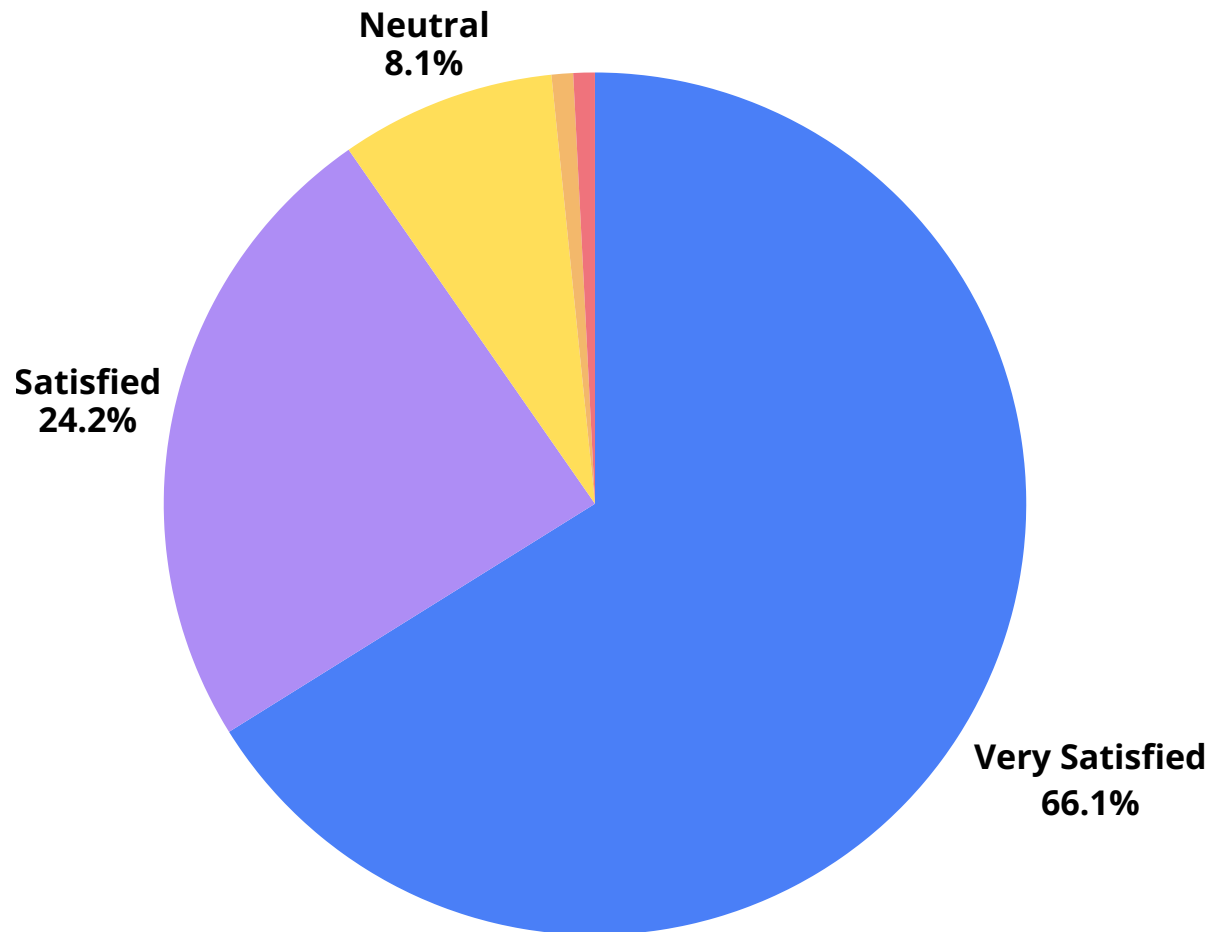


Are you a resident of Cedar Springs or Solon Township?



Survey Results

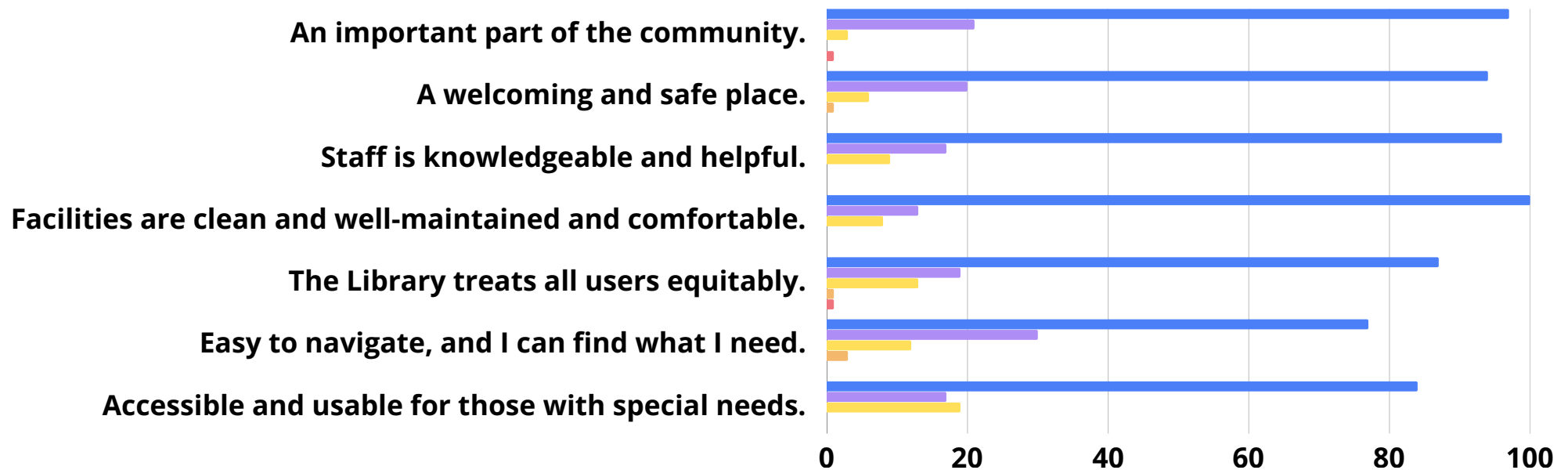
How satisfied are you with the Cedar Springs Public Library overall?



Survey Results

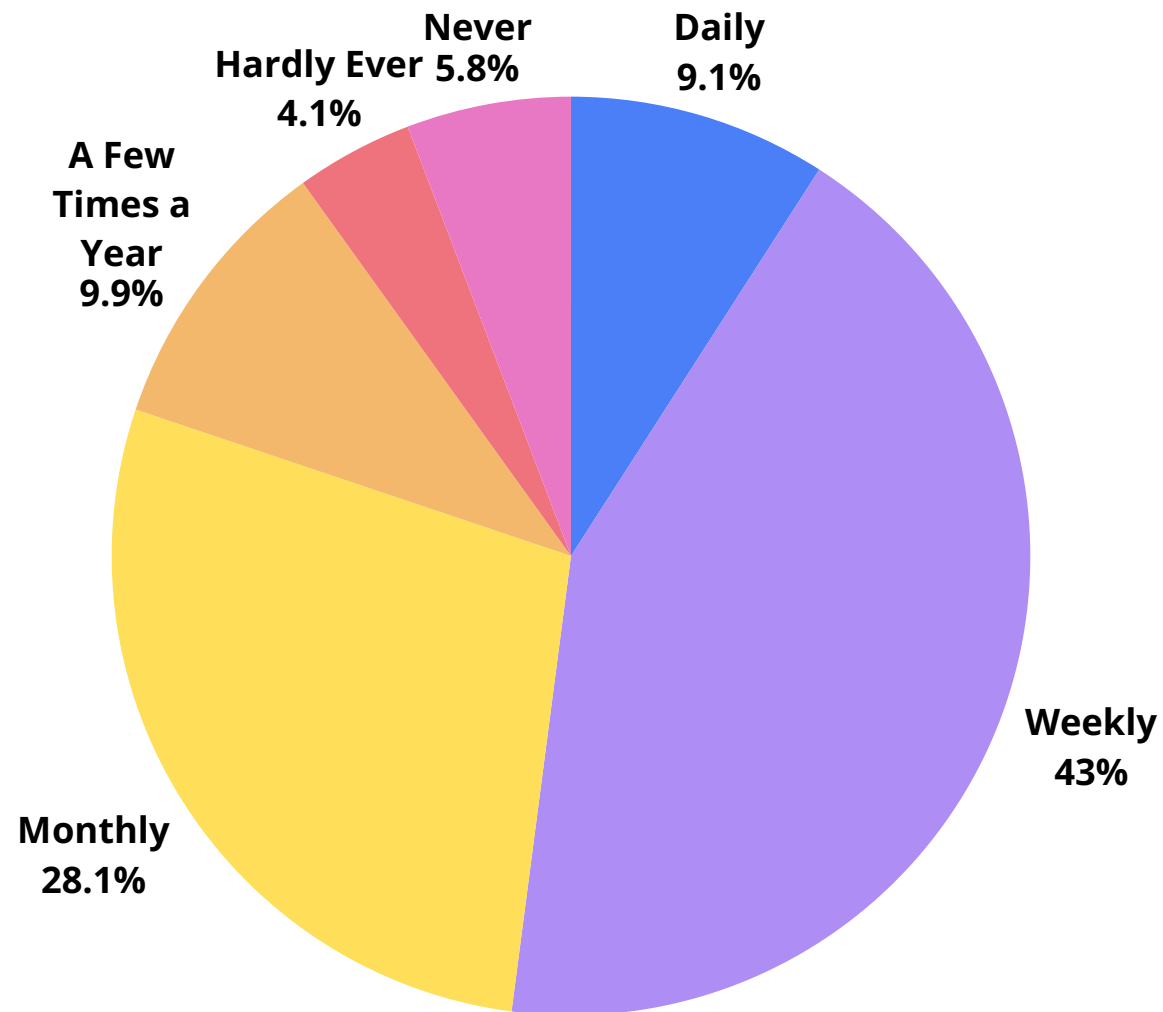
Thinking about the Cedar Springs Public Library, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following.

● Strongly Agree ● Agree ● Neither Agree or Disagree ● Disagree ● Strongly Disagree



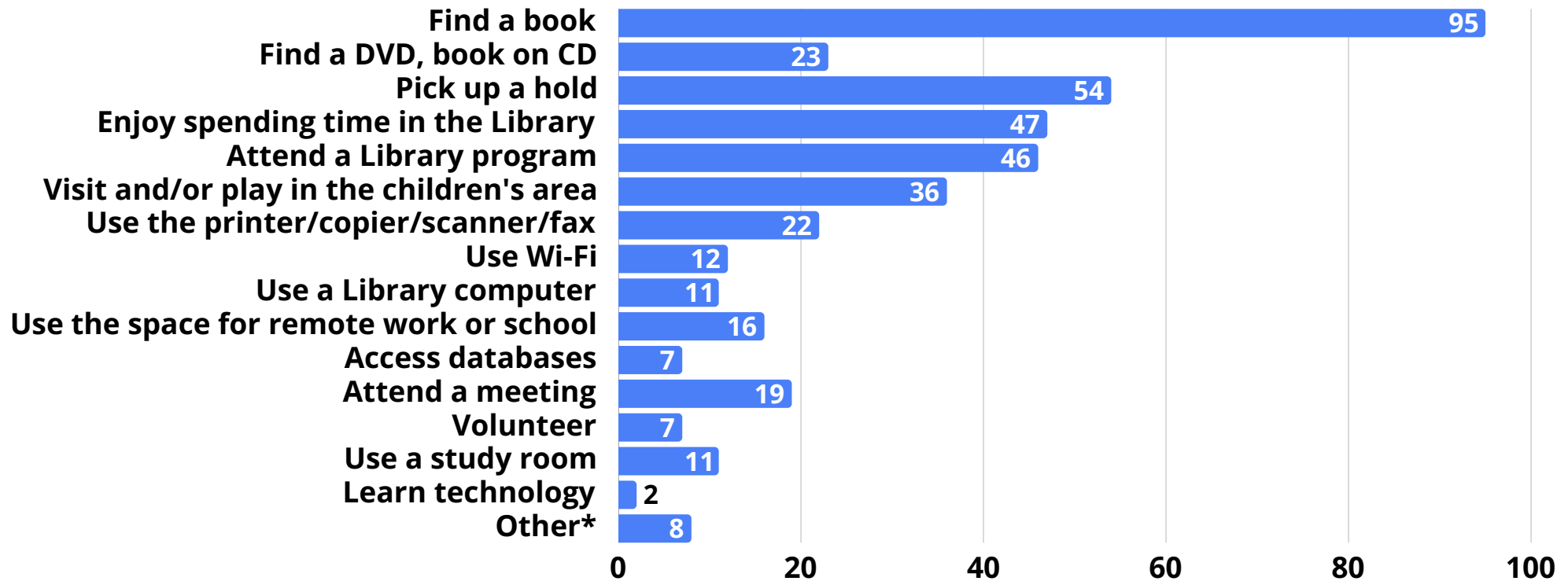
Survey Results

**How often do you use the Library and/or
online Library services?**



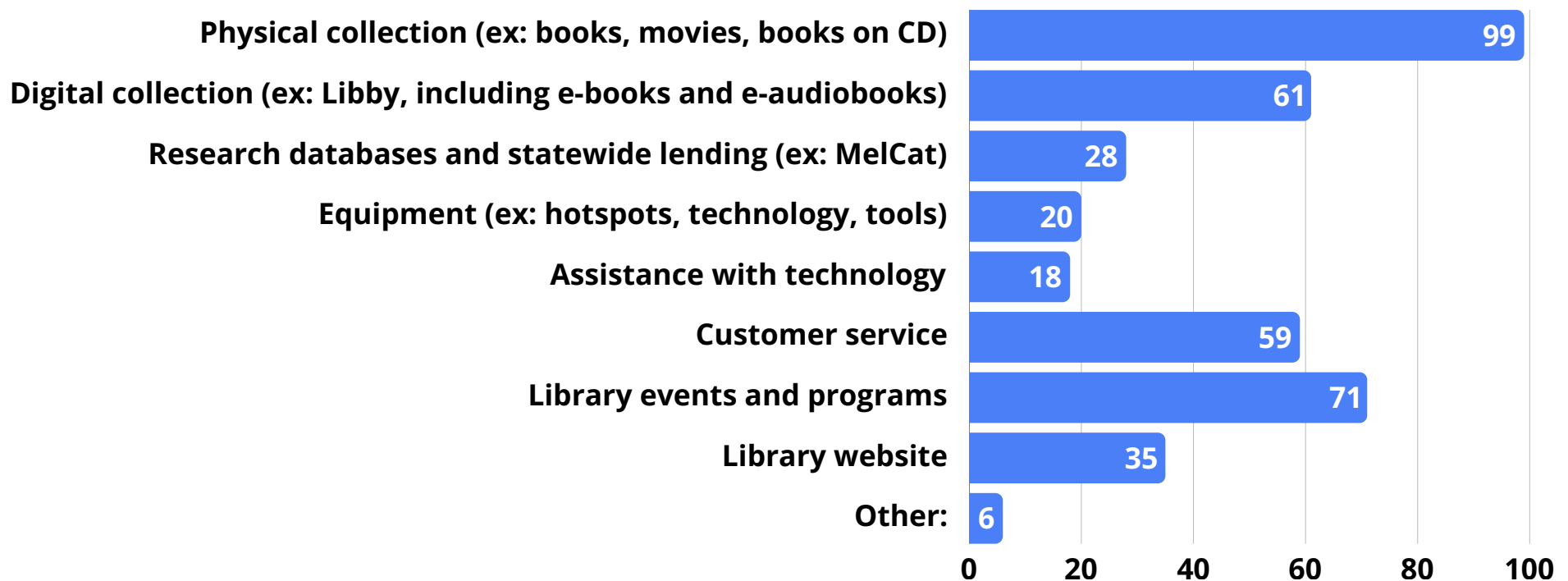
Survey Results

Why do you use the Library?



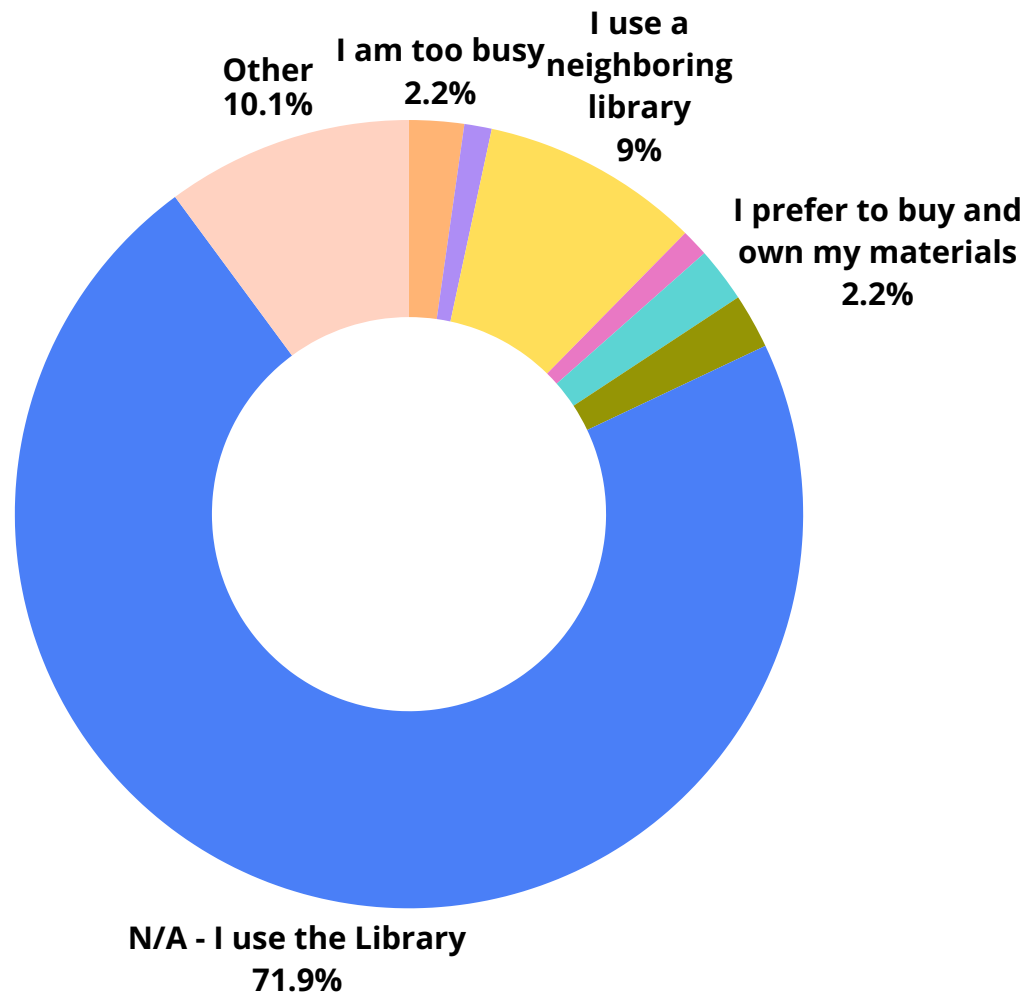
Survey Results

Which of the following services are important to you and your family?



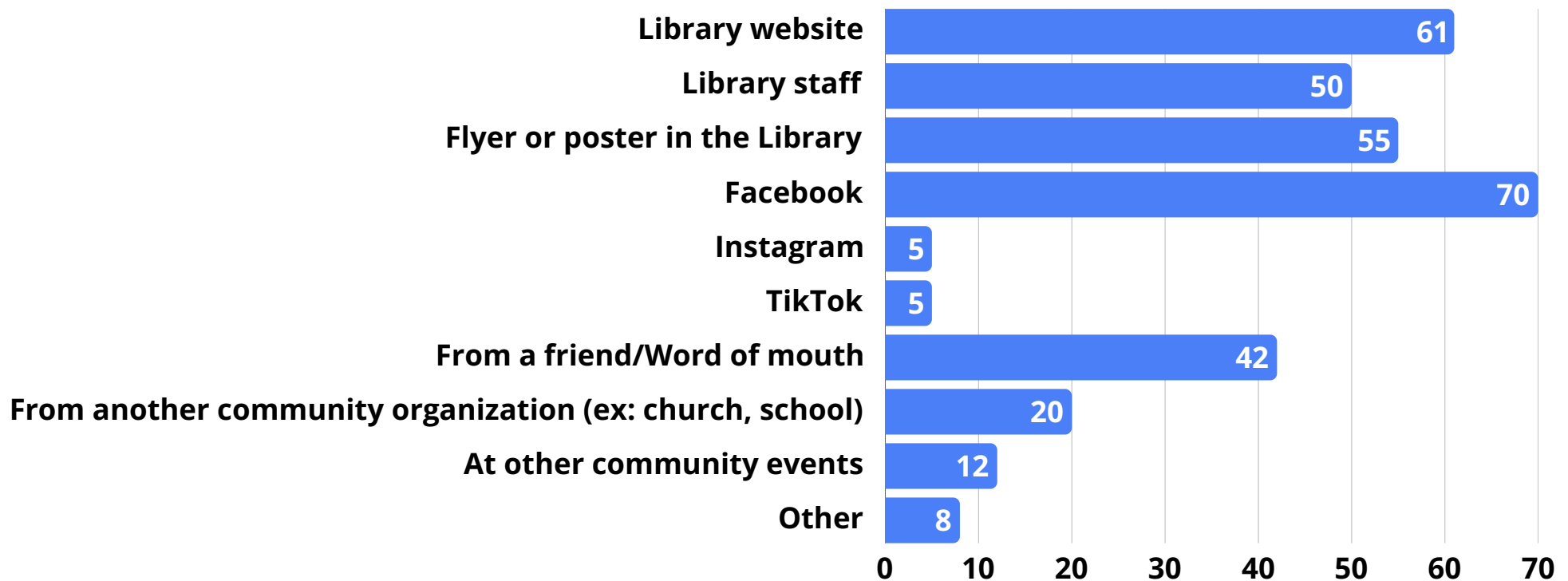
Survey Results

If you don't use the Library, please indicate the reason below.



Survey Results

Where do you learn about what's going on at the Library and in the community?



WHAT WE HEARD

Top Themes from Our Strategic Planning Survey



COLLECTIONS

More variety in books, eBooks, audiobooks & digital resources



HOURS

More evening and weekend availability



PROGRAMS

More programs and events for all ages and interests



CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Early literacy, story times, sensory play & family fun



COMMUNITY

A welcoming place that brings people together

TEENS

More programs, books & spaces just for teens



LEARNING & ENRICHMENT

Classes, workshops, speakers, crafts, wellness & lifelong learning



HOMESCHOOL SUPPORT

Resources, materials & programs for homeschoolers

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Stronger connections with schools, local organizations & the community



TECHNOLOGY & ACCESS

Easy-to-use resources, online access & digital literacy



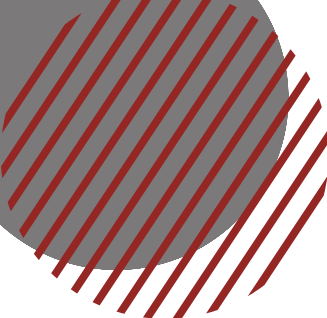
SPACES

Cozy, comfortable spaces to read, learn & connect



STAFF

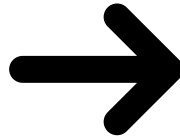
Friendly, knowledgeable & dedicated to our community



Inspiration for Growth

The Mission

The mission of the Cedar Springs Public Library is to provide quality materials and services to educate, inform, teach, and partner with our diverse community in an atmosphere that is welcoming and promotes lifelong learning.



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CSPL Strategic Plan: Growing Together

