Results and Findings from Lincoln City Libraries Community Survey

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Research conducted, analyzed, and reported by Parlay Consulting Firm:

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Introduction

Lincoln City Libraries fosters the power of reading and provides open access to all forms of information to enrich people's lives every day. In 2024, Lincoln City Libraries will develop their next strategic plan. To inform that plan Lincoln City Libraries partnered with Parlay Consulting Firm to gather feedback from community members, including civic leaders, library employees, and residents of Lincoln, many of which are active library card holders.

This report includes the results from the online survey. Online survey responses were collected from November 28 – December 5, 2023. During that time, more than 1,000 community members shared their feedback via the survey. Findings from one-to-one interviews, employee focus groups, and community conversations are presented in a separate report.

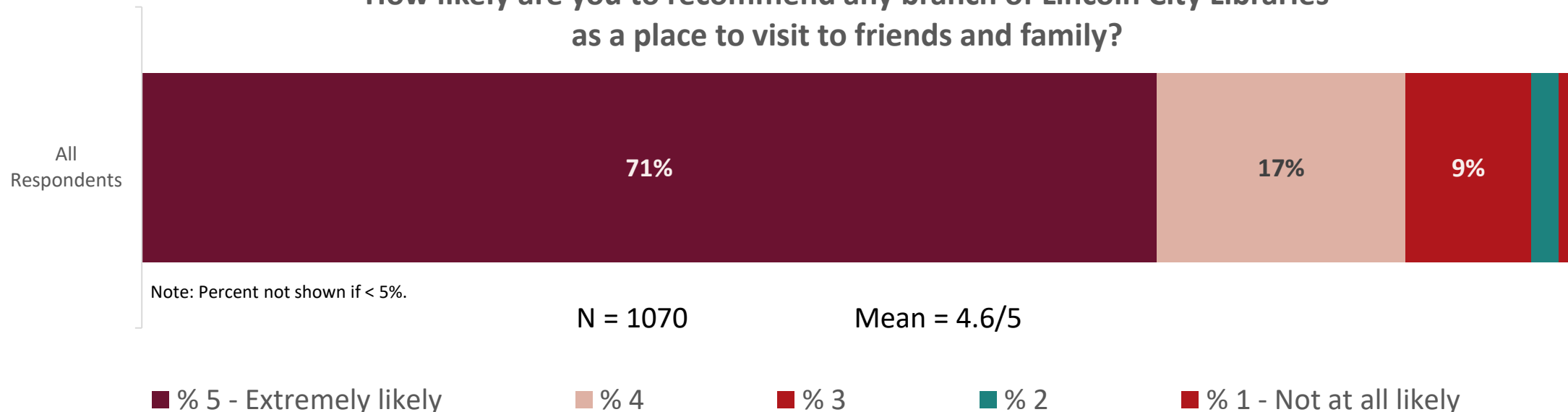*Methods are further described at the end of this report.*

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Perceptions of Lincoln City Libraries

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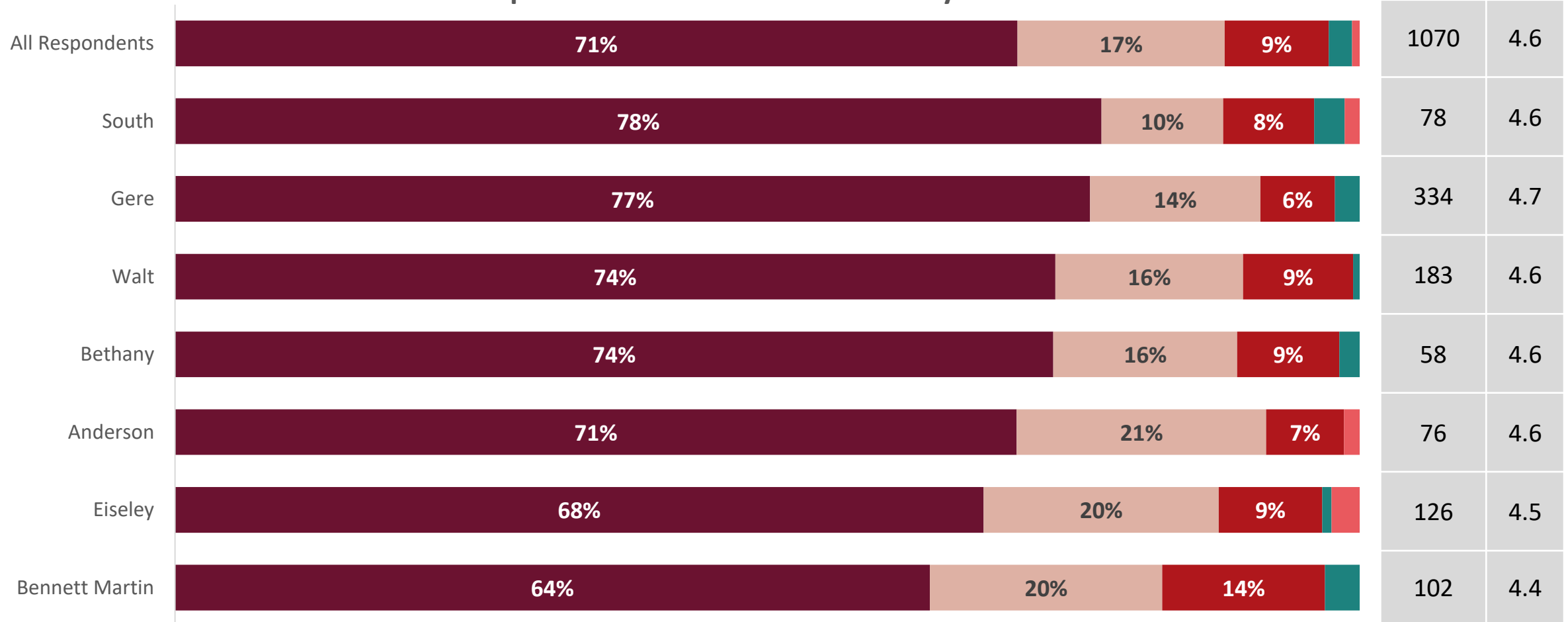
Likelihood to Recommend

- Community members gave Lincoln City Libraries (LCL) positive feedback, with more than 7 in 10 (71%) reporting they were extremely likely to recommend a branch as a place to visit to friends and family.
- Regardless of the branch they were most likely to visit, patrons were extremely likely to recommend LCL with those answering "5 – Extremely Likely" ranging from 64%-78%, depending on branch most visited.

How likely are you to recommend any branch of Lincoln City Libraries as a place to visit to friends and family?

All Respondents | 71% | 17% | 9% |

Note: Percent not shown if < 5%.

N = 1070   Mean = 4.6/5

■ % 5 - Extremely likely   ■ % 4   ■ % 3   ■ % 2   ■ % 1 - Not at all likely

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Likelihood to Recommend: Branch most likely to visit

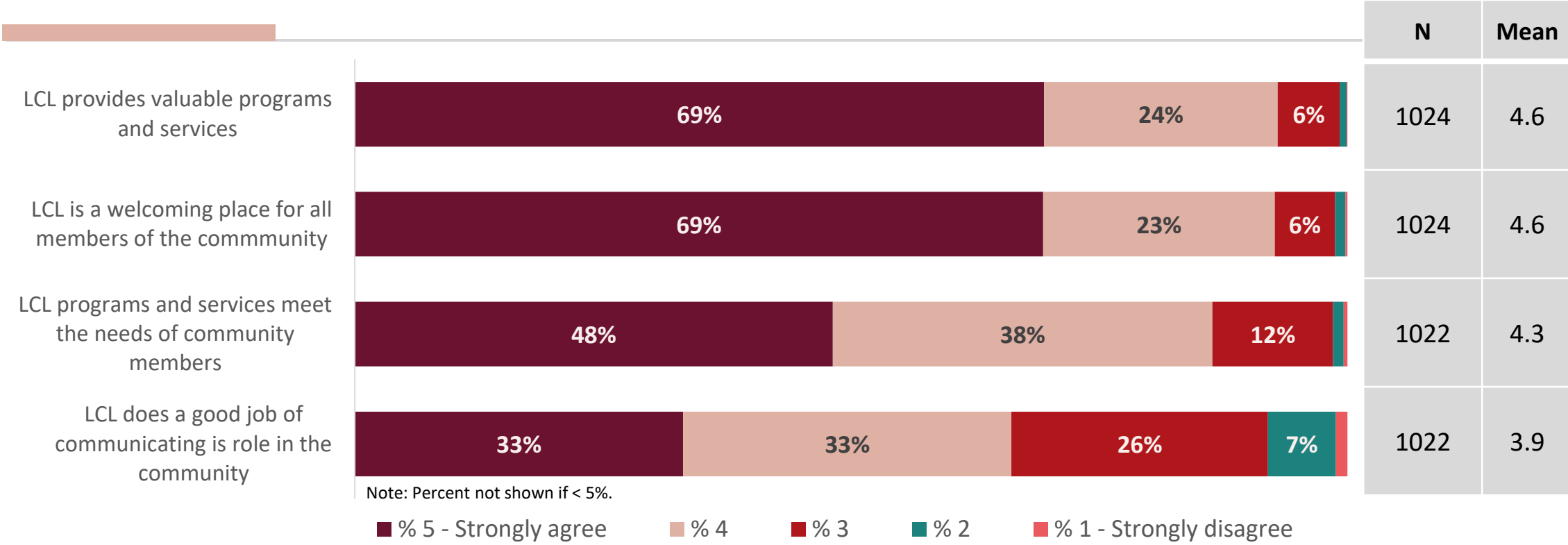## How likely are you to recommend any branch of Lincoln City Libraries as a place to visit to friends and family?

Branch	% 5 - Extremely likely	% 4	% 3	N	Mean
All Respondents	71%	17%	9%	1070	4.6
South	78%	10%	8%	78	4.6
Gere	77%	14%	6%	334	4.7
Walt	74%	16%	9%	183	4.6
Bethany	74%	16%	9%	58	4.6
Anderson	71%	21%	7%	76	4.6
Eiseley	68%	20%	9%	126	4.5
Bennett Martin	64%	20%	14%	102	4.4

Note: Percent not shown if < 5%.

Legend: % 5 - Extremely likely | % 4 | % 3 | % 2 | % 1 - Not at all likely

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Perceptions of Lincoln City Libraries

		N	Mean
LCL provides valuable programs and services	69% · 24% · 6%	1024	4.6
LCL is a welcoming place for all members of the commmunity	69% · 23% · 6%	1024	4.6
LCL programs and services meet the needs of community members	48% · 38% · 12%	1022	4.3
LCL does a good job of communicating is role in the community	33% · 33% · 26% · 7%	1022	3.9

Note: Percent not shown if < 5%.

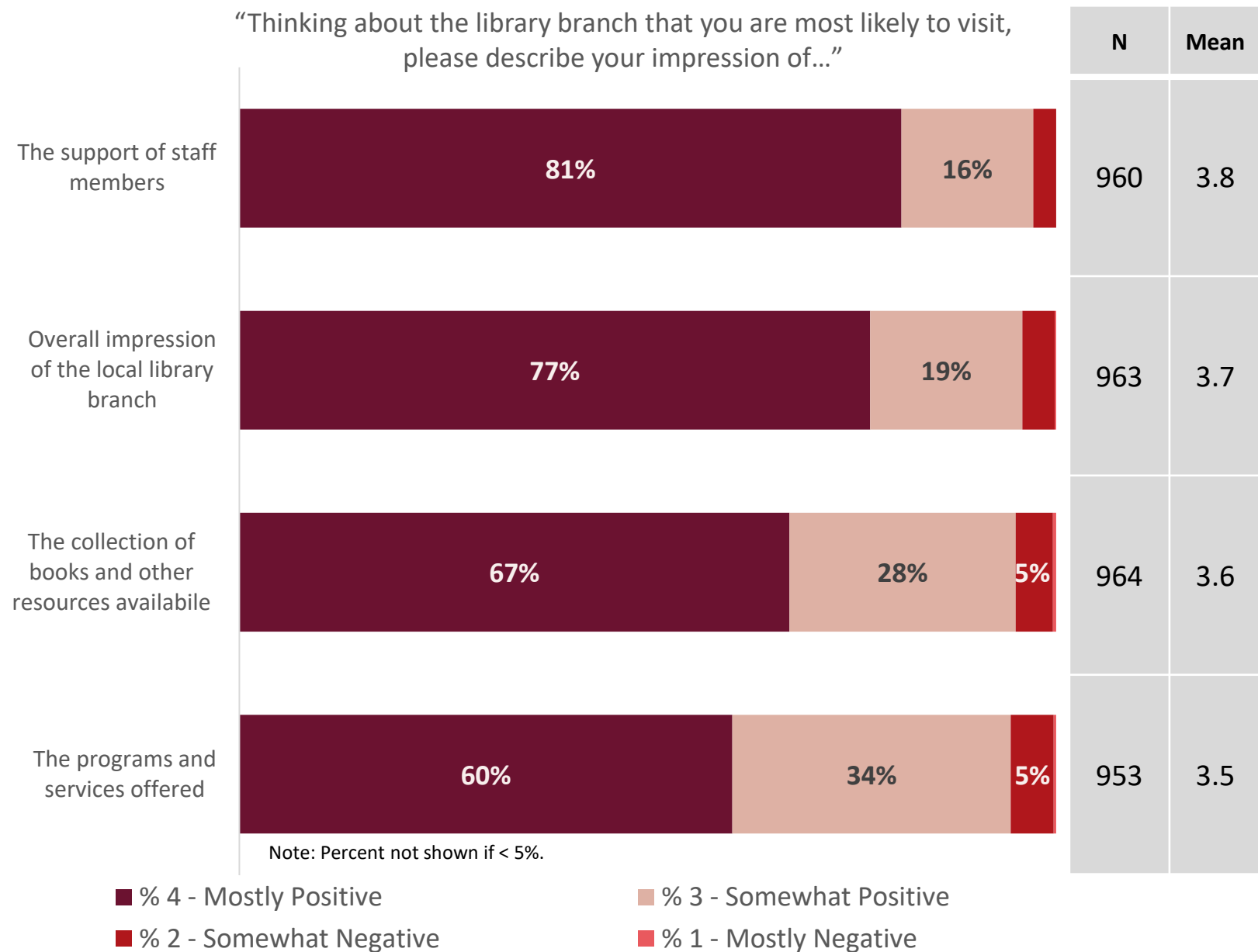Legend: ■ % 5 - Strongly agree   ■ % 4   ■ % 3   ■ % 2   ■ % 1 - Strongly disagree

- More than two-thirds of respondents (69%) strongly agree LCL provides valuable programs and services to the city of Lincoln.

- Nearly as many respondents (69%) strongly agree LCL is a welcoming place for all members of the community.

- Respondents were least likely to strongly agree (33%) that LCL does a good job communicating its role in the community.

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Perceptions of Lincoln City Libraries

▪Four in five respondents (81%) reported their impression of the support of staff members was mostly positive.

▪More than three-quarters (77%) reported their overall impression of their local library branch was mostly positive.

▪A majority of respondents (60% - 67%) reported their impression of the collection and programs/ services was mostly positive.

"Thinking about the library branch that you are most likely to visit, please describe your impression of…"

	N	Mean
The support of staff members — 81% / 16%	960	3.8
Overall impression of the local library branch — 77% / 19%	963	3.7
The collection of books and other resources availabile — 67% / 28% / 5%	964	3.6
The programs and services offered — 60% / 34% / 5%	953	3.5

Note: Percent not shown if < 5%.

■ % 4 - Mostly Positive   ■ % 3 - Somewhat Positive
■ % 2 - Somewhat Negative   ■ % 1 - Mostly Negative

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Impact and Relevance of Lincoln City Libraries

Just over half (52%) of respondents described LCL's impact and relevance as staying the same in recent years. 42% described it as increasing. 6% described it as decreasing.

Pie chart values:
- 42%
- 52%
- 6%
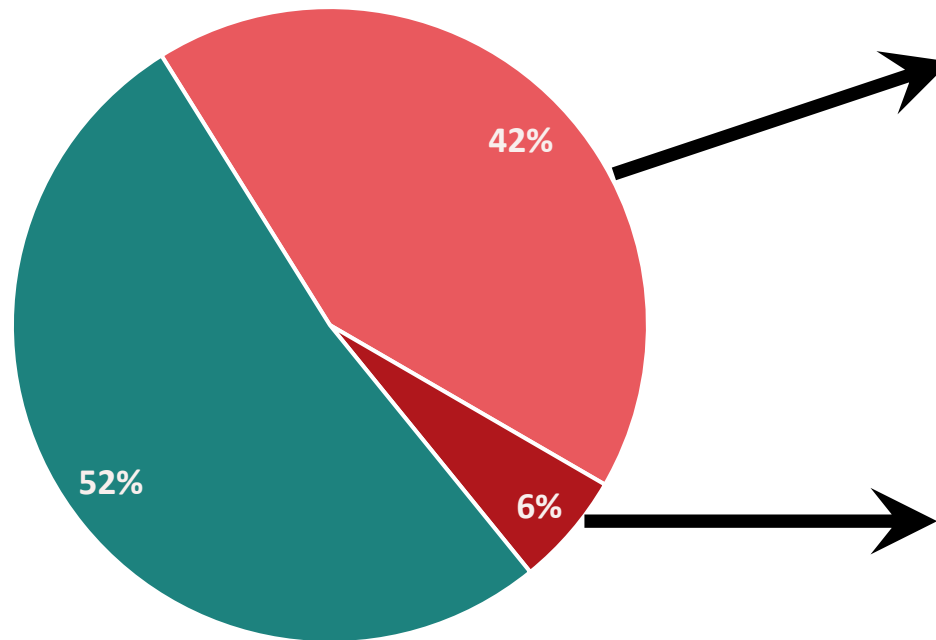
Legend: ■ Increased ■ Decreased ■ Stayed the same

What is one reason impact and relevance increased?
- Facilities are busy and used by many in community
- Resources/services are free and highly accessed
- Covid creating need for community connections
- Technology and digital resources
- Outreach and accessibility for all populations
- Increased awareness of services/collection
- Cultural focus on books and reading

What is one reason impact and relevance decreased?
- Content is readily available online from different sources
- Insufficient or out-of-date facilities/resources/services
- Diminished interest in reading among the population
- Covid creating a decreased sense of community
- Lack of awareness of services/collection
- Social and cultural issues

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Impact and Relevance of Lincoln City Libraries

Increased:

I see more people using the library, including the community rooms. Also, I think the libraries heroic work to continue serving our city during covid demonstrated how important Lincoln's libraries are to our community.

Libraries remain one of [few] public facilities where no payment is expected and where everyone is welcome. With many people struggling financially in the wake of COVID and an uncertain economy, the library is more important than ever. Everyone can utilize the library's resources.

Access to e-content and media from home/personal devices is important especially as subscription service prices increase and ability to use physical media like [CDs] and DVD decreases.

As the cost of living and inflation rise, libraries remain a steadfast source of free access to information and resources, welcoming anyone and everyone to enjoy and belong. They help provide more equal opportunities in our society, and that's important for our democracy.

Decreased:

So many resources are online now, and COVID made people less likely to leave their homes & risk inconvenience.

With so much information being available online there is less need to go into the library for many people. It seems like a lot more of a choice that people seek out rather than a need as it was many years ago.
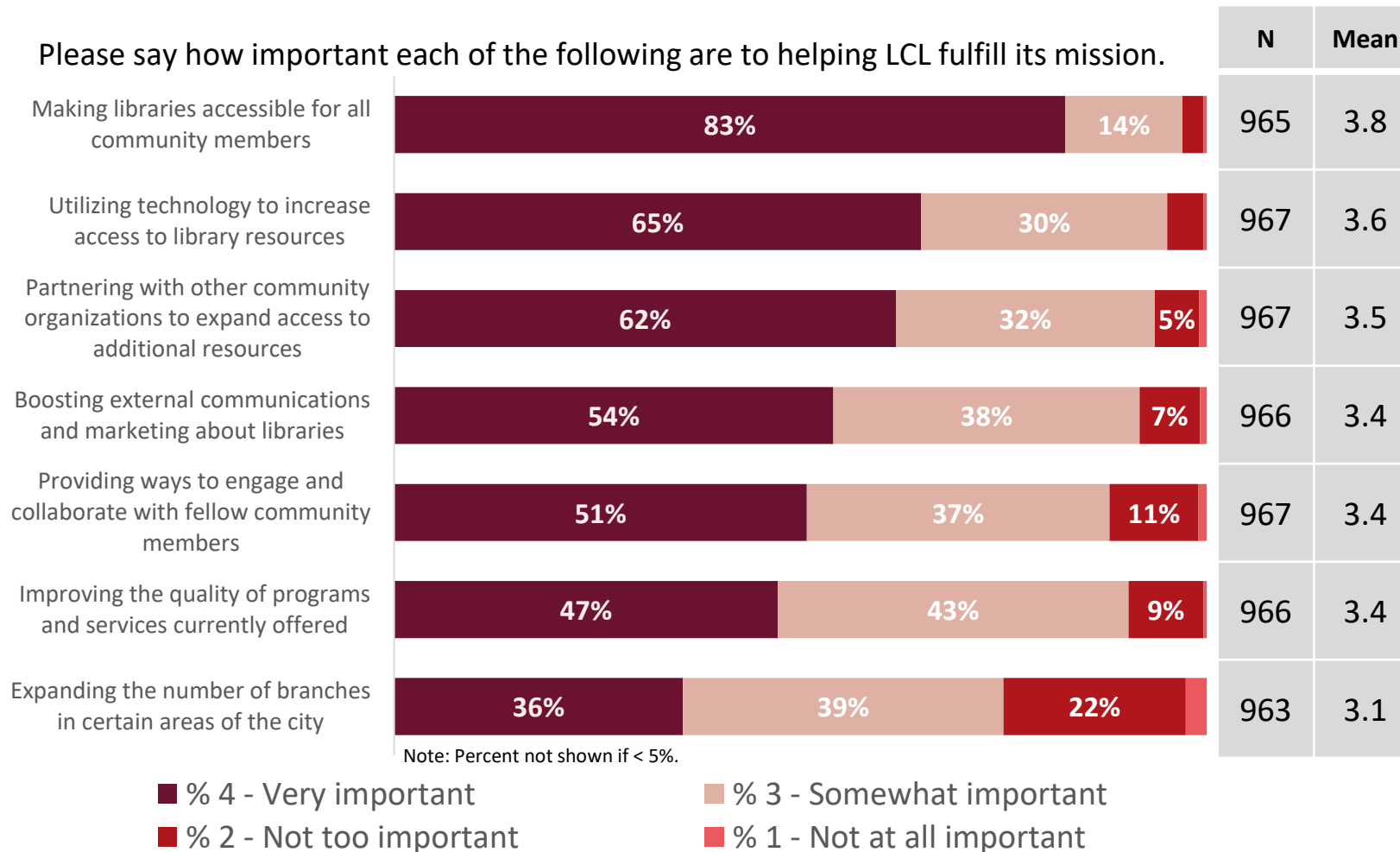
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Future of Lincoln City Libraries

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Fulfilling Lincoln City Libraries Mission

Please say how important each of the following are to helping LCL fulfill its mission.

	N	Mean
Making libraries accessible for all community members	965	3.8
Utilizing technology to increase access to library resources	967	3.6
Partnering with other community organizations to expand access to additional resources	967	3.5
Boosting external communications and marketing about libraries	966	3.4
Providing ways to engage and collaborate with fellow community members	967	3.4
Improving the quality of programs and services currently offered	966	3.4
Expanding the number of branches in certain areas of the city	963	3.1

Making libraries accessible for all community members: 83% / 14%

Utilizing technology to increase access to library resources: 65% / 30%

Partnering with other community organizations to expand access to additional resources: 62% / 32% / 5%

Boosting external communications and marketing about libraries: 54% / 38% / 7%

Providing ways to engage and collaborate with fellow community members: 51% / 37% / 11%

Improving the quality of programs and services currently offered: 47% / 43% / 9%

Expanding the number of branches in certain areas of the city: 36% / 39% / 22%

Note: Percent not shown if < 5%.

- % 4 - Very important
- % 3 - Somewhat important
- % 2 - Not too important
- % 1 - Not at all important

- When contemplating importance to mission, respondents were most likely to describe "Making libraries accessible for…" as very important (83%).
- Close to two-thirds described "Utilizing technology" (65%) and "Partner with other community organizations" (62%) as very important.
- Expanding the number of branches appeared to be lowest priority to fulfill LCL's mission, but it was still indicated as very important by more than 1 in 3 respondents (36%).

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Future of Lincoln City Libraries

Respondents were asked "What is one idea you have to help Lincoln City Libraries be an even more valued resource to the community in the near future?"

605 respondents provided feedback. Ten key themes were identified, listed below in order of frequency:

- New and additional programming
- Expanded resources (quantity and quality)
- Facility additions and improvements
- Communication to expand awareness of LCL work
- Outreach and accommodation of diverse populations
- Community partnerships
- Improved technology (and website)
- Expanded or altered hours of operation
- Mobile or Curbside Offerings
- Staff engagement with patrons

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Ideas: New and Additional Programming and Expanded Resources

"Increase hands-on educational games in all libraries."

"Expanding the book selection for kids and teens. These are the age ranges we visit the library for and even though there is a great selection. I use Pinterest a lot to find book list recommendations for my kids and often times the library does not have the majority of books I find in these recommendation lists. I would also love to have a section of Christian books for kids."

"Maybe create a reading program for the winter season to help people take their minds off seasonal depression, and possibly have a gift incentive for adults and children...Possibly have dedicated sections for books on domestic violence and sexual assault, especially during October (domestic violence awareness month)...Maybe story time events for children during evenings throughout the year.   Maybe have a few times throughout the year to be a librarian for a day...for kids to sign up to see what it's like to be a librarian and how their library works. Maybe have open story night where families could get together and anyone, adult or child, could read to the room if they wish to."

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One idea to make Lincoln City Libraries even more valued...

Facilities and Amenities

Respondents gave suggestions to potentially improve the experience of visiting branches:

- Facility additions and improvements
- Improved technology
- Expanded/altered hours of operation
- Mobile or Curbside Offerings

Facility additions and improvements

"Push to get a new central library built."
"Ensuring libraries are geographically accessible in neighborhoods."

Improved technology

"Keep the technology up to date and available to patrons."

Expanded/altered hours

"Offer more summer reading programs OUTSIDE of the normal workday."

Mobile and curbside offerings

"Perhaps a smaller Bookmobile that could operate in areas people visit (such as Walmart lots) open evenings & weekends to pickup items. Or storefront accessible with card. I think smaller & convenient is the future."

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One idea to make Lincoln City Libraries even more valued...

Community Relations

Respondents gave suggestions to potentially improve the experience of visiting branches:

- Communication to expand awareness of LCL work
- Outreach and accommodation of diverse populations
- Community partnerships
- Staff engagement with patrons

Communication to expand awareness

"We absolutely love our neighborhood library (Gere) and access to all the electronic resources through Libby and Hoopla. These apps should be advertised and promoted so much more than they currently are. The community needs to know they exist."

Accommodation of diverse populations

"Have more [resources] for the blind and disabled and adult programs."

Community partnerships

"Fun activities for kids such as New Year's Eve parties, partnering with the community such as LCP [Lincoln Community Playhouse] and Saltdogs."

Staff engagement with patrons

"Making sure your librarians [have] a good work-life balance...Those folks are amazing.."

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Respondent Characteristics

Which library branch are you most likely to visit?

Branch	%
Gere	35%
Walt	19%
Eiseley	13%
Bennett...	11%
South	8%
Anderson	8%
Bethany	6%
Williams	1%
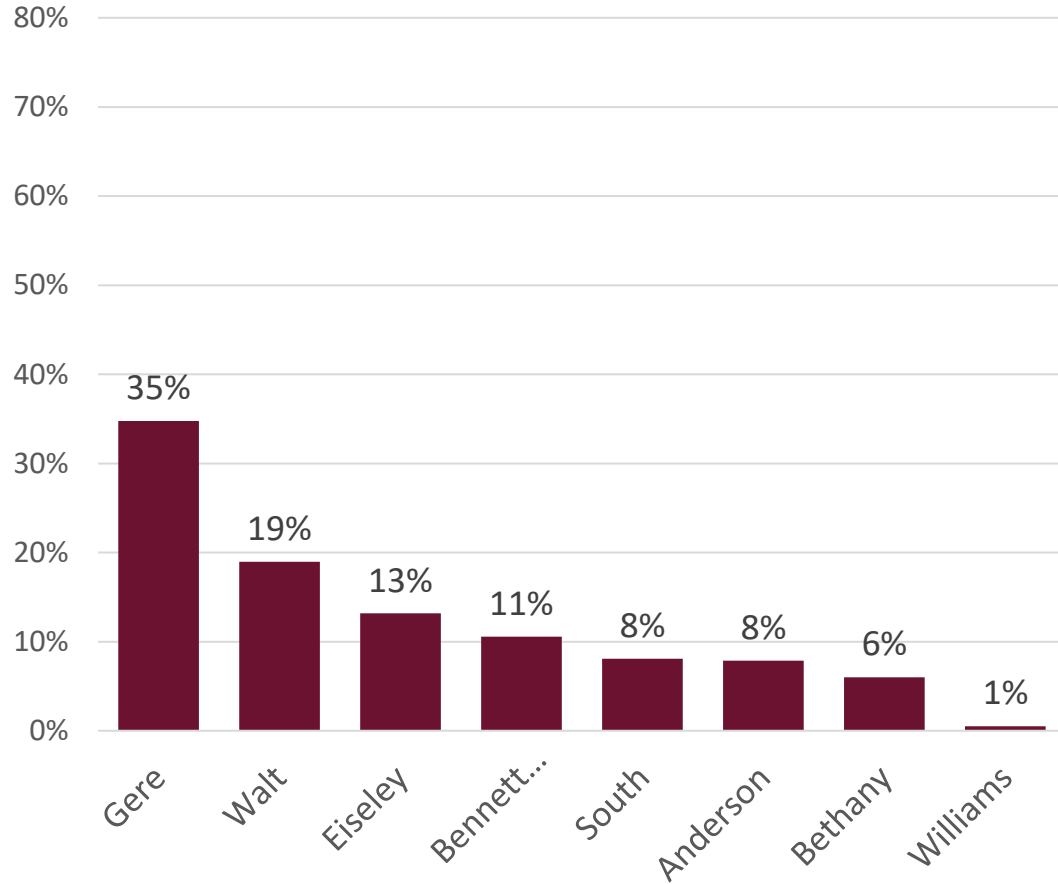
Which library branches have you visited within the last year?

Branch	%
Gere	70%
Walt	44%
Eiseley	33%
Bennett...	37%
South	25%
Anderson	25%
Bethany	22%
Williams	4%
Lied...	3%
Online	33%
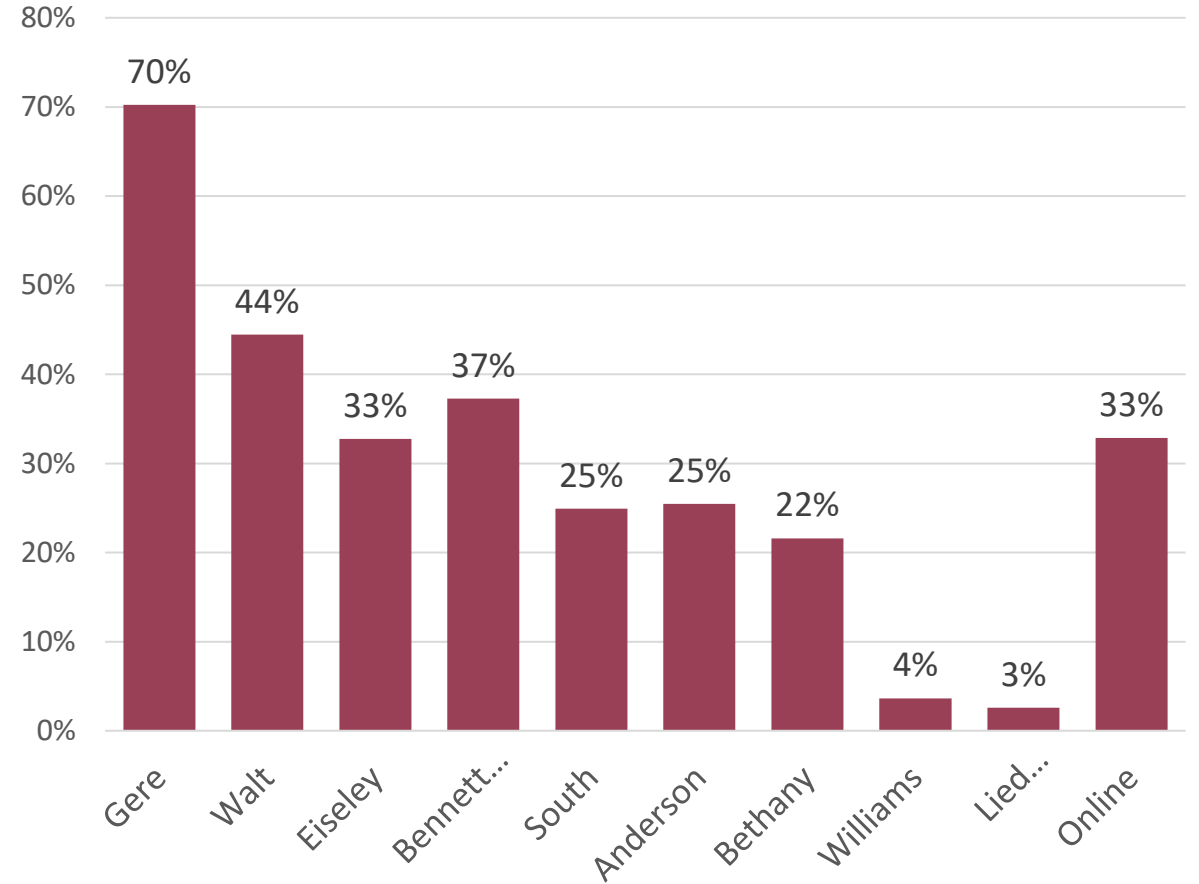
Most Visited Library Branch

- More than a third (35%) of respondents reported Gere is the library branch they were most likely to visit. Gere was also the branch respondents were most likely to visit when considering all branches they visited within the last year (70%).

- Walt was the second most visited branch for both the branch respondents were most likely to visit (19%) or those they visited within the last year (44%).

- Online services were also well utilized, selected by a third of respondents (33%)

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Library Utilization

Do you have a library card?
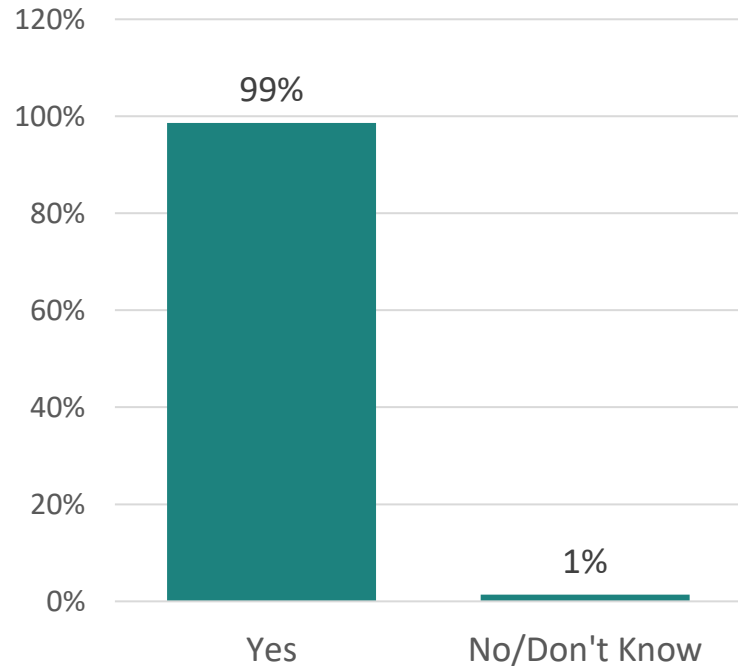
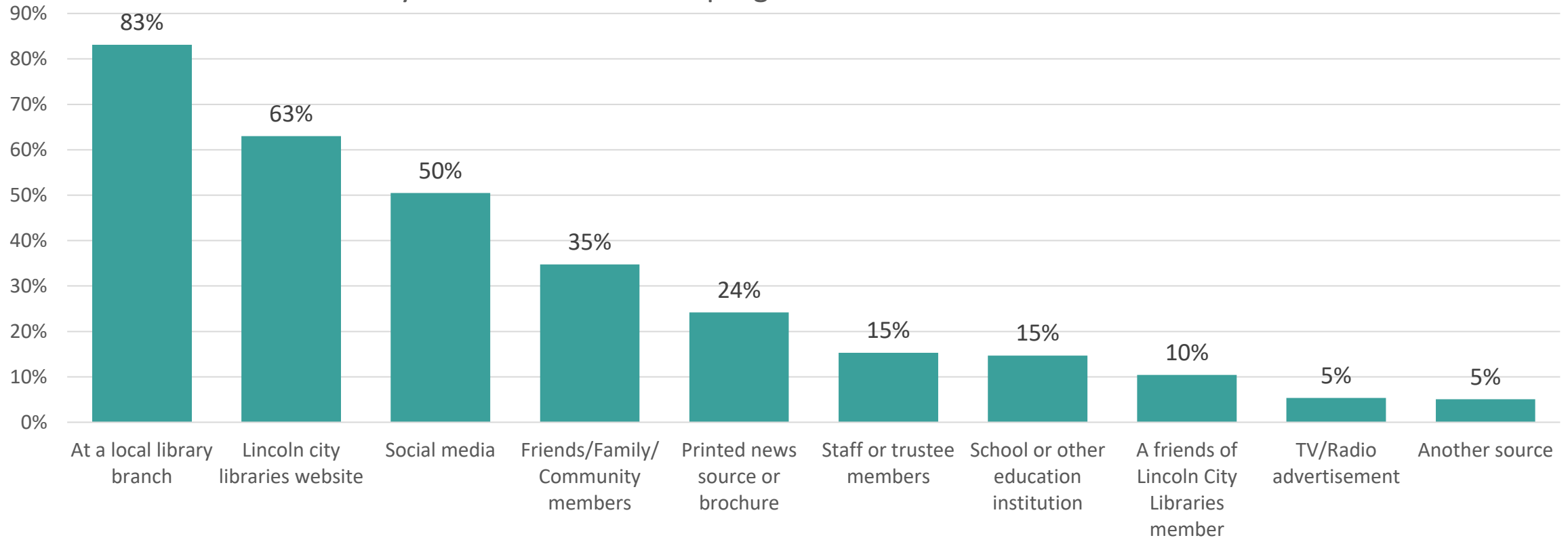## How often do you use Lincoln City Libraries system?
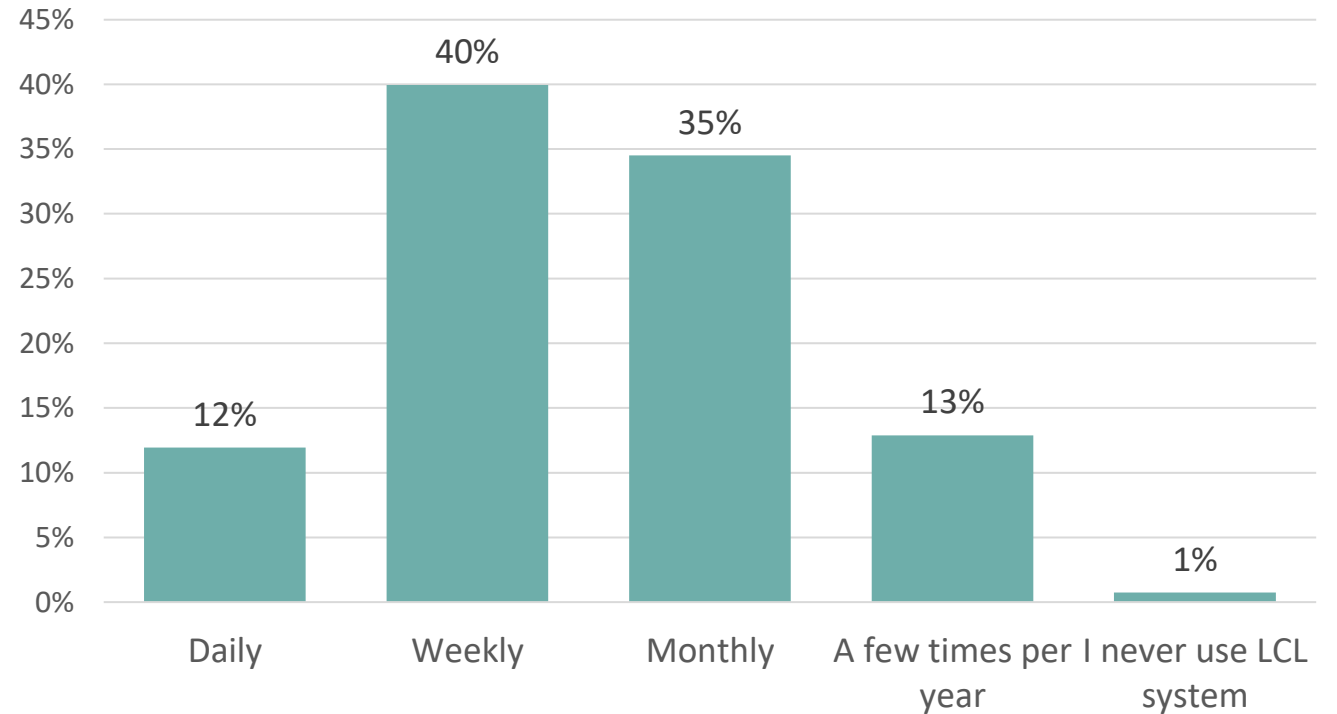
Respondents were overwhelmingly individuals that used the library system, with 99% reporting they have a library card and 86% reporting they use Lincoln City Libraries at least monthly.
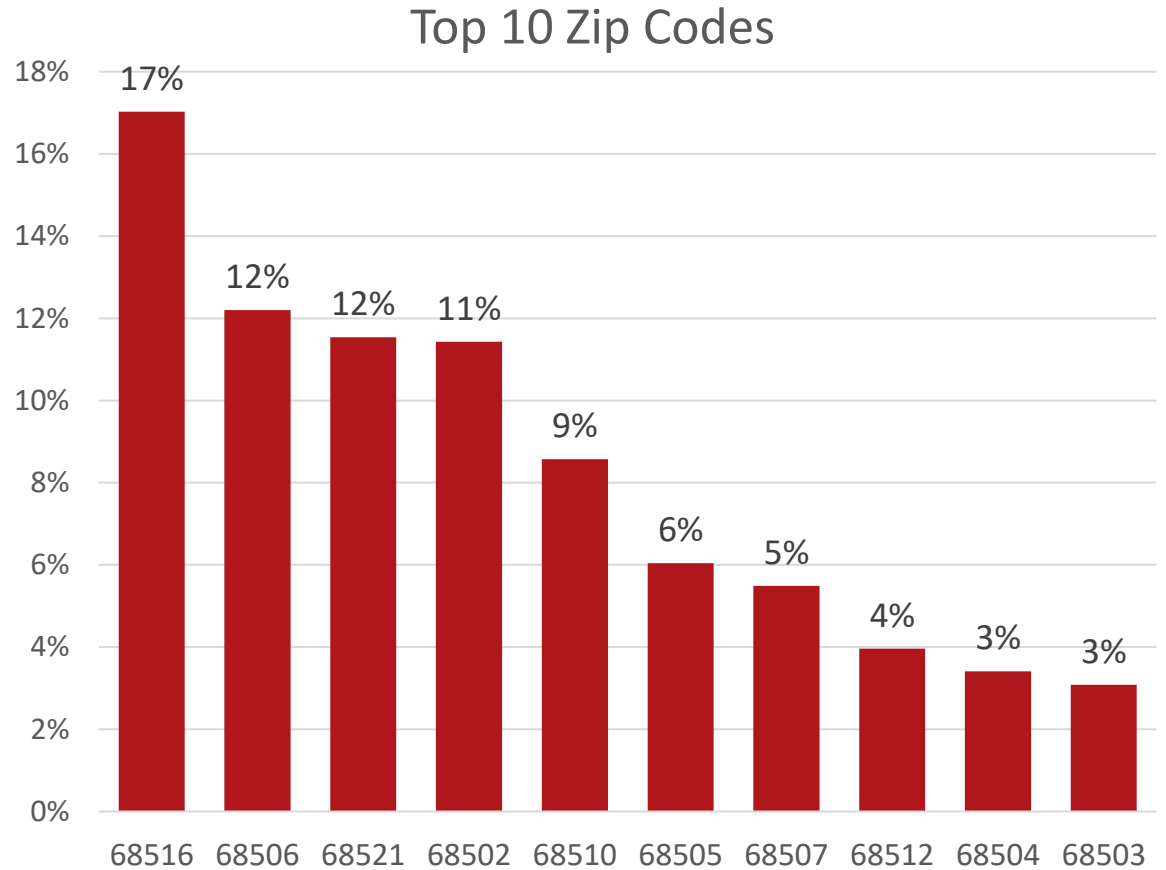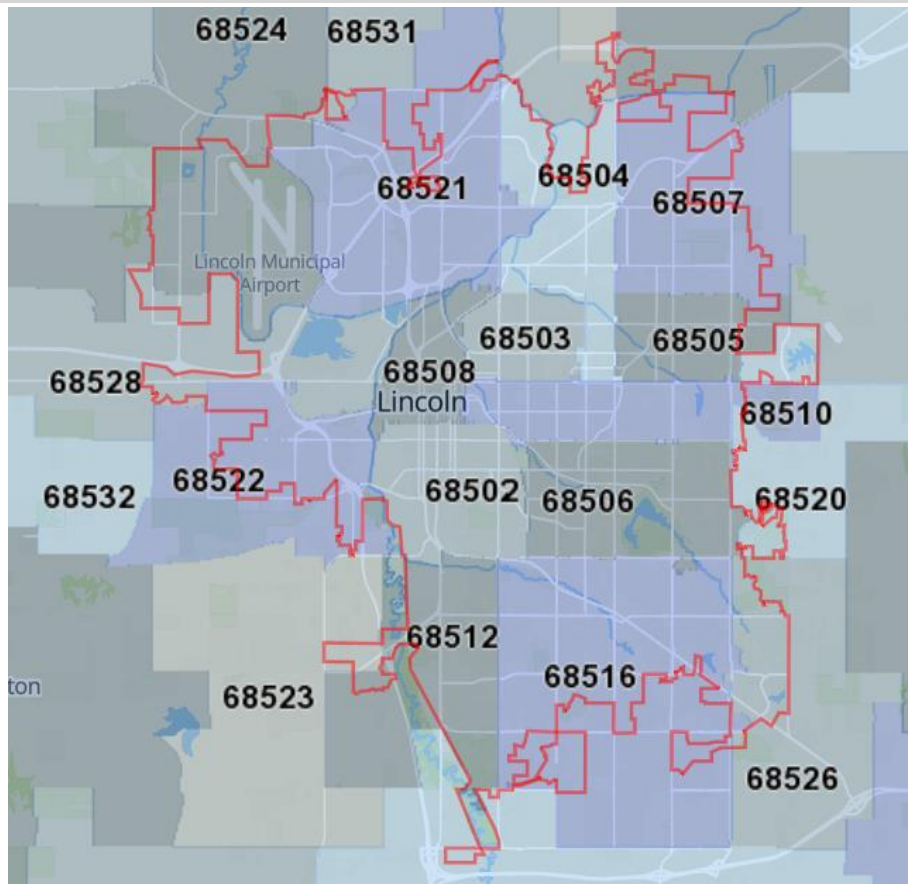
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Library Information

- Most respondents (83%) received information about LCL programs and services via their local library branch.
- Online sources, such as the LCL website (63%) and social media (50%) were another popular source of information.
- Other sources mentioned included the Macaroni Kid website, the LCL emails, and community events.

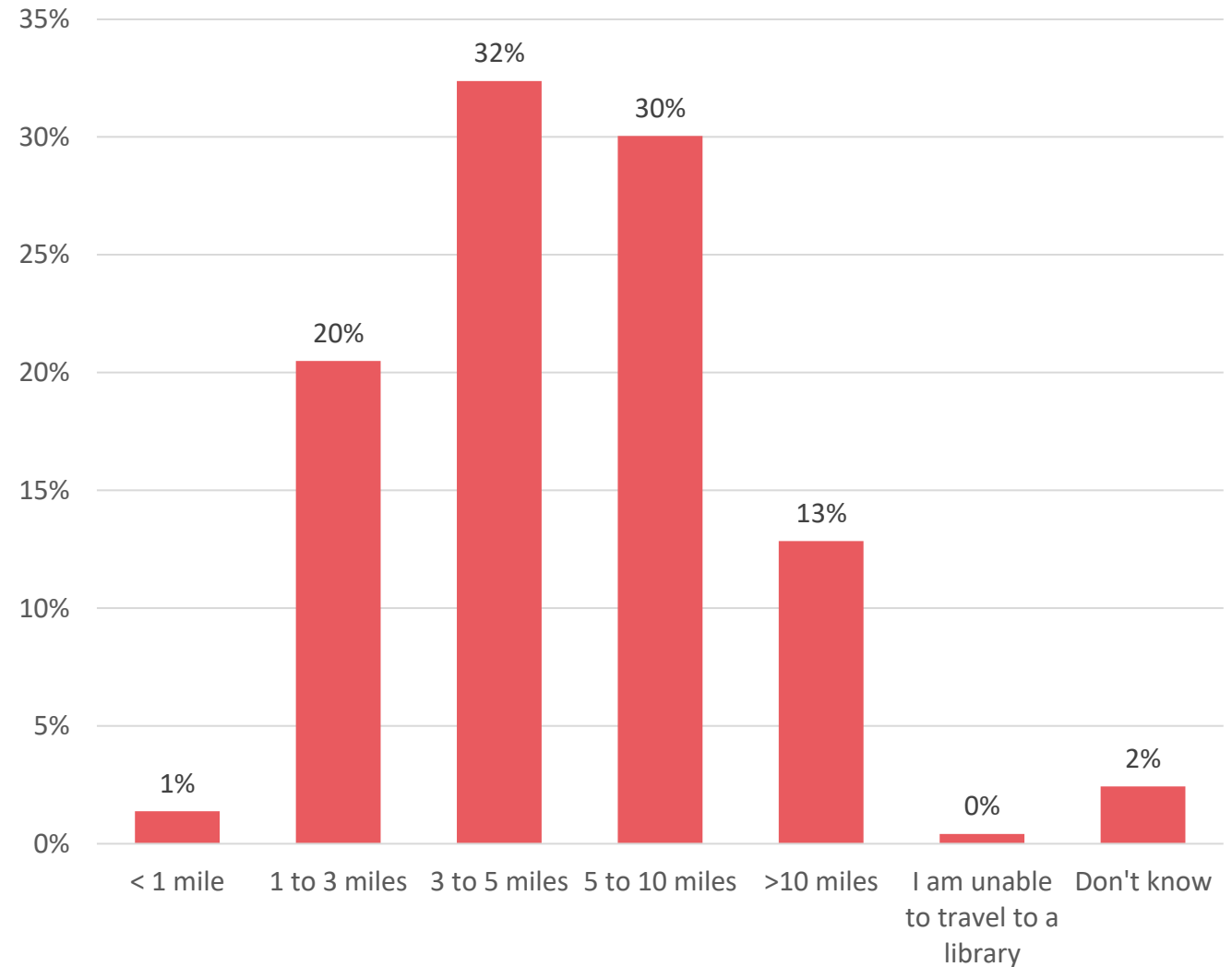## Where have you seen or heard LCL programs and services advertised or discussed?

Source	Percentage
At a local library branch	83%
Lincoln city libraries website	63%
Social media	50%
Friends/Family/Community members	35%
Printed news source or brochure	24%
Staff or trustee members	15%
School or other education institution	15%
A friends of Lincoln City Libraries member	10%
TV/Radio advertisement	5%
Another source	5%

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Geography

Top 10 Zip Codes

Respondent zip codes generally mapped onto the city of Lincoln, with approximately 90% of zip codes, partially or completely within city limits. 68516 was the most represented zip code.
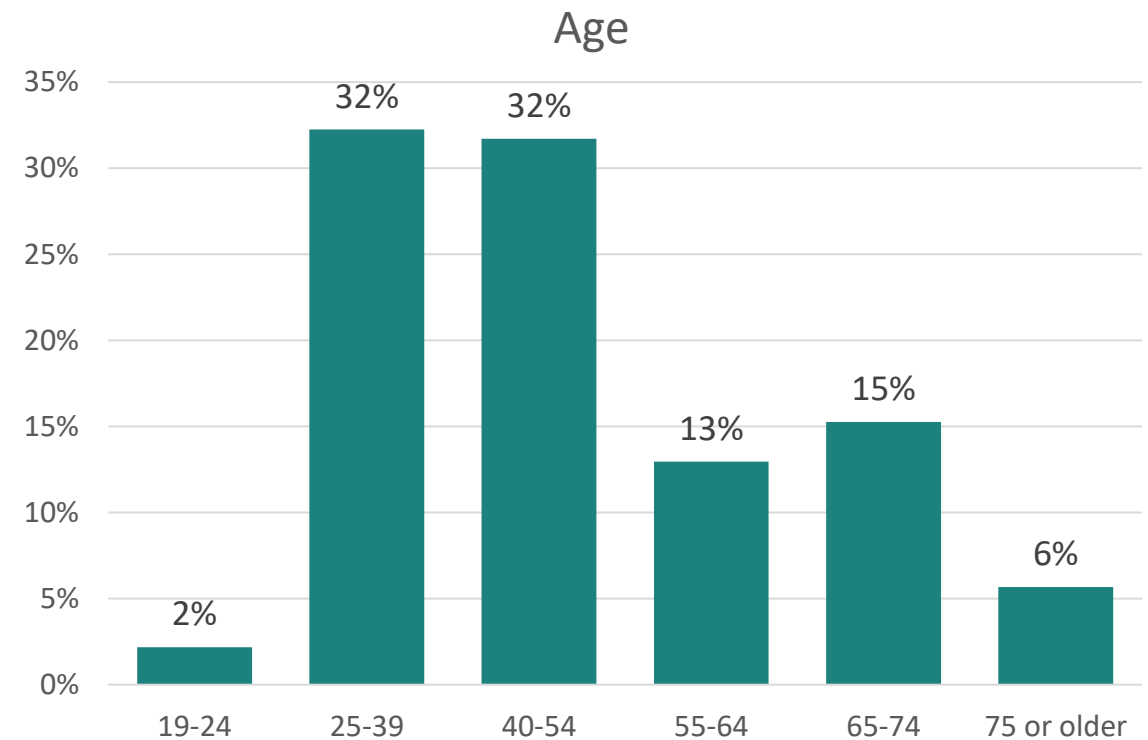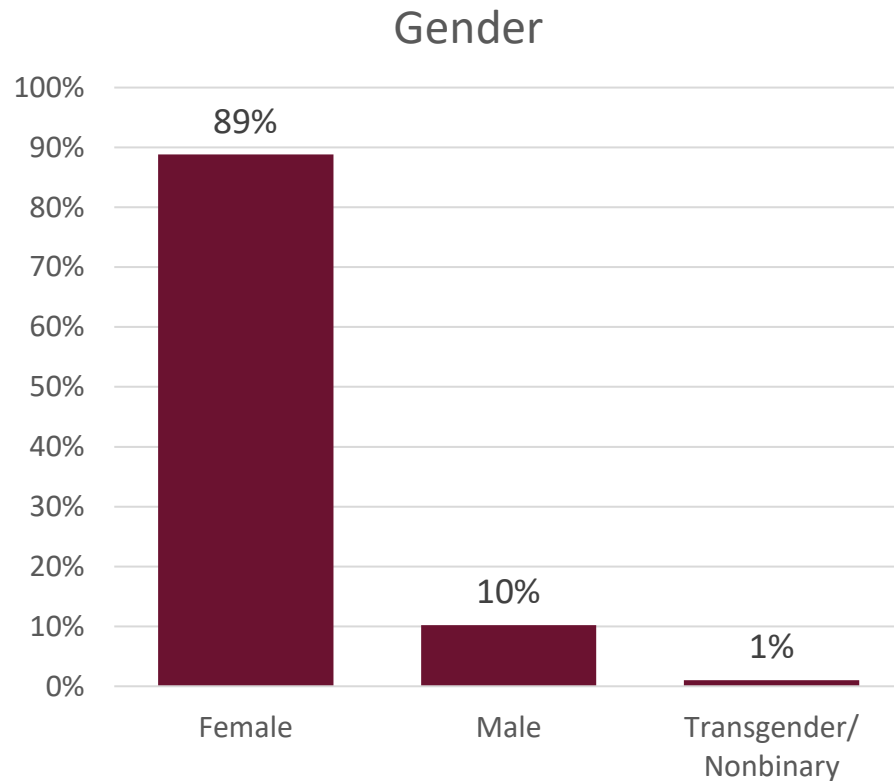
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Geography (continued)

- Most respondents reported a willingness to travel, with similar proportions selecting 1-3 miles (20%), 3-5 miles (32%), or 5-10 miles (30%).

- A smaller group (13%) were willing to travel even farther, 10 miles or more.

- Just under 2% reported they were unable to travel or unwilling to travel over a mile.

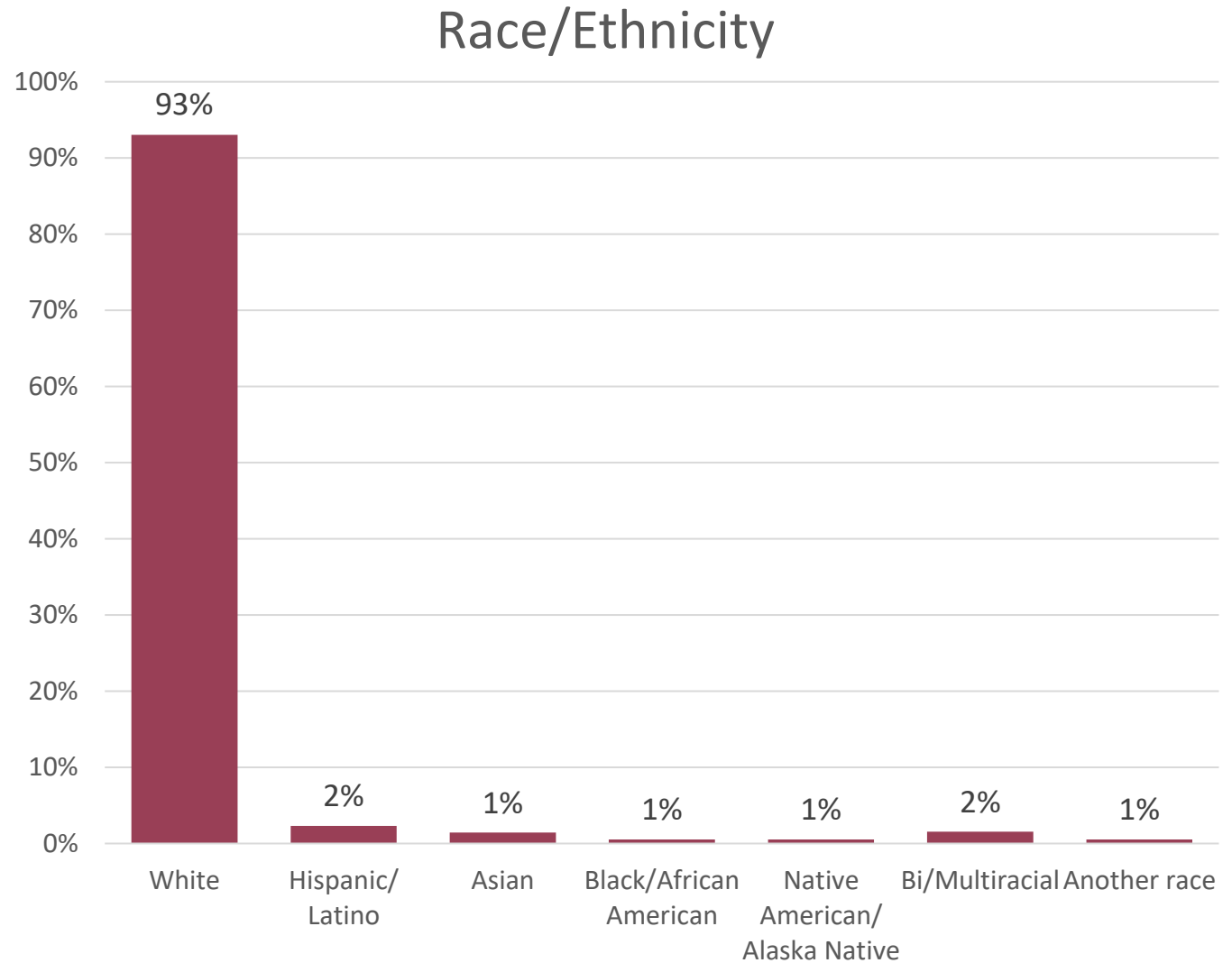## How far are you willing to travel to get to a library?

Category	Percentage
< 1 mile	1%
1 to 3 miles	20%
3 to 5 miles	32%
5 to 10 miles	30%
>10 miles	13%
I am unable to travel to a library	0%
Don't know	2%

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Respondent Demographics

Gender

- Female: 89%
- Male: 10%
- Transgender/Nonbinary: 1%

Age

- 19-24: 2%
- 25-39: 32%
- 40-54: 32%
- 55-64: 13%
- 65-74: 15%
- 75 or older: 6%

- Respondents overwhelmingly identified as female (89%) with small proportions identifying as male (10%) and transgender/nonbinary (1%).
- All age categories were represented, with most respondents identifying as 25-39 (32%) or 40-54 (32%). Young adults, ages 19-24 were the smallest category represented (2%).

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Respondent Demographics (continued)

- Most respondents identified as white (93%).
- 7% of respondents identified as a person of color, with each race/ethnicity making up 1 – 2% of all respondents.

Race/Ethnicity

Category	Percentage
White	93%
Hispanic/Latino	2%
Asian	1%
Black/African American	1%
Native American/Alaska Native	1%
Bi/Multiracial	2%
Another race	1%

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Options for Additional Analyses

Analysis of key questions by subgroups of interest (*e.g.,* age, gender, race, library branch, library utilization)

Driver analyses of what experiences are correlated with a likelihood to recommend the libraries

Inferential analysis for correlation between characteristics and responses

Further qualitative analysis to illustrate more examples of sentiment or sentiment by subgroups.

Methods and Survey Items
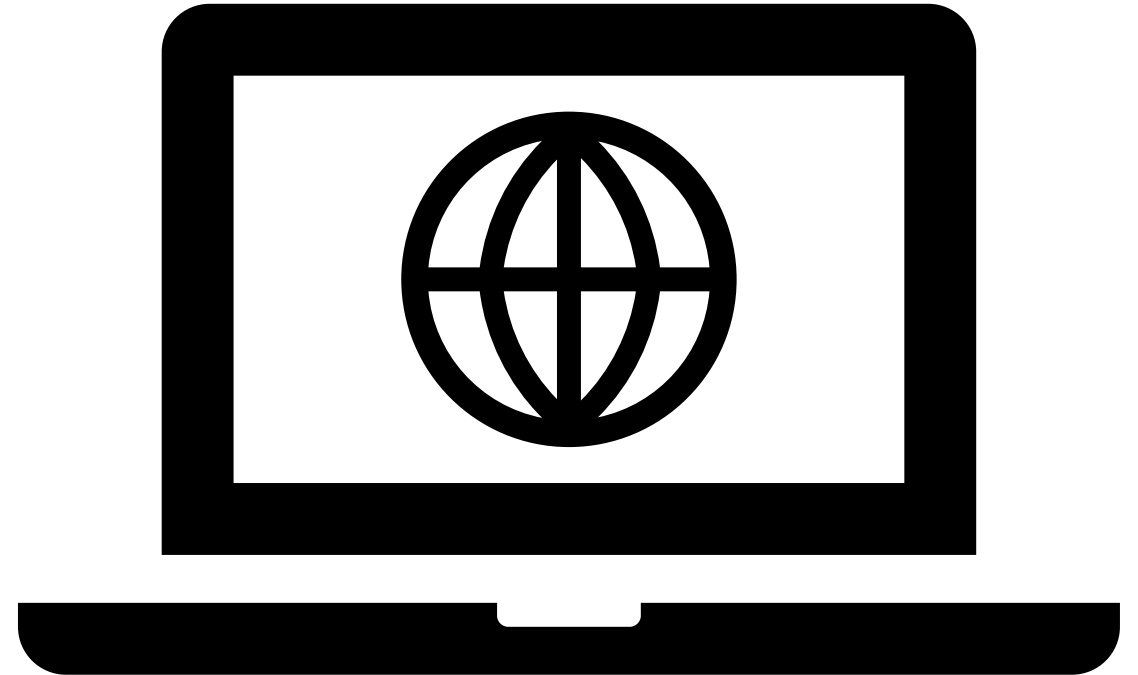
Methods

- Parlay partnered with Lincoln City Libraries (LCL) to design a survey to capture the experience of current and recent library patrons, along with ideas and priorities for all community members that could use the libraries in the future.

- The survey was fielded using an open web link. The web link was distributed primarily via the LCL website, LCL emails, social media, and advertisements within the library branches.

- The survey was offered in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Arabic, however only two individuals utilized a language other than English to complete the survey.

- 1073 respondents completed the survey. Parlay conducted checks for duplicate responses, investigating multiple responses from the same IP address. While some IP addresses were used by more than one respondent, no patterns existed in the data, to suggest duplicate responses from one individual.

- Data cleaning and analysis was completed using Stata. Open ended-items were manually coded using Excel.

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Survey Methods Summary

Population	Total N	Mode	Sample Type	Dates Surveyed	Languages
Adult Lincoln Area Residents	1073*	Web	Open†	Nov. 28 – Dec. 5, 2023	English, Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese

*1103 respondents consented to take the survey. Ten respondents were disqualified for reporting they were not yet 19. Twenty respondents consented and verified their age but did not answer any further questions. These twenty respondents were removed as incomplete.

†Though the survey used an open web link we do not suspect duplicate responses that would impact results in a meaningful way. No incentive was offered, thus there was no monetary motivation to submit multiple responses. Analysis was conducted to identify IP addresses with multiple responses. 54 IP addresses were used 2 or more times. Responses from three IP addresses that were used 5 times or more were examined but no patterns of duplication emerged to merit exclusion.

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Survey Items

How likely are you to recommend any branch of Lincoln City Libraries as a place to visit to friends and family?

Rate your level of agreement on a five-point scale where 1 means strongly DISAGREE and 5 means strongly AGREE.

- Overall, Lincoln City Libraries provides valuable programs and services to the city of Lincoln.
- Lincoln City Libraries is a welcoming place for all members of the community.

- Lincoln City Libraries programs and services meet the needs of community members.
- Lincoln City Libraries does a good job of communicating its role in the community.

Where have you seen or heard Lincoln City Libraries programs and services advertised or discussed?

Next, please say how important each of the following are to helping Lincoln City Libraries fulfill its mission.

- Making libraries accessible for all community members
- Improving the quality of programs and services currently offered
- Utilizing technology to increase access to library resources, programs, and services
- Boosting external communications and marketing about library resources, programs, and services

- Expanding the number of branches in certain areas of the city
- Providing ways to engage and collaborate with fellow community members
- Partnering with other community organizations to expand access to additional resources, programs, and services (e.g., art and artists, parks and recreation, STEM organizations, schools, etc.)

Which library branch are you most likely to visit?

Thinking about the library branch that you are most likely to visit, please describe your impression of the following:

- Your overall impression of the local library branch, generally
- The programs and services offered at the local branch

- The collection of books and other resources available at the local branch
- The support of staff members

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Survey Items (Continued)

Would you say that Lincoln City Libraries' impact and relevance in the community has increased, stayed the same, or decreased in recent years?

- What is one reason you think that the impact and relevance of Lincoln City Libraries has increased?
- What is one reason you think that the impact and relevance of Lincoln City Libraries has decreased in recent years?

What is one idea you have to help Lincoln City Libraries be an even more valued resource to the community in the near future?

About how far are you willing to travel to get to a library?

Do you have a library card?

How often do you use Lincoln City Libraries system?

Please select each of the library branches that you have visited within the last year.

*Additional questions not reflected here were asked to better understand demographics representation of respondents.

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