YOUR VOICE IN EVERY CHAPTER

PHASE 1 WHAT WE HEARD REPORT



cochrane
HOW THE WEST IS NOW

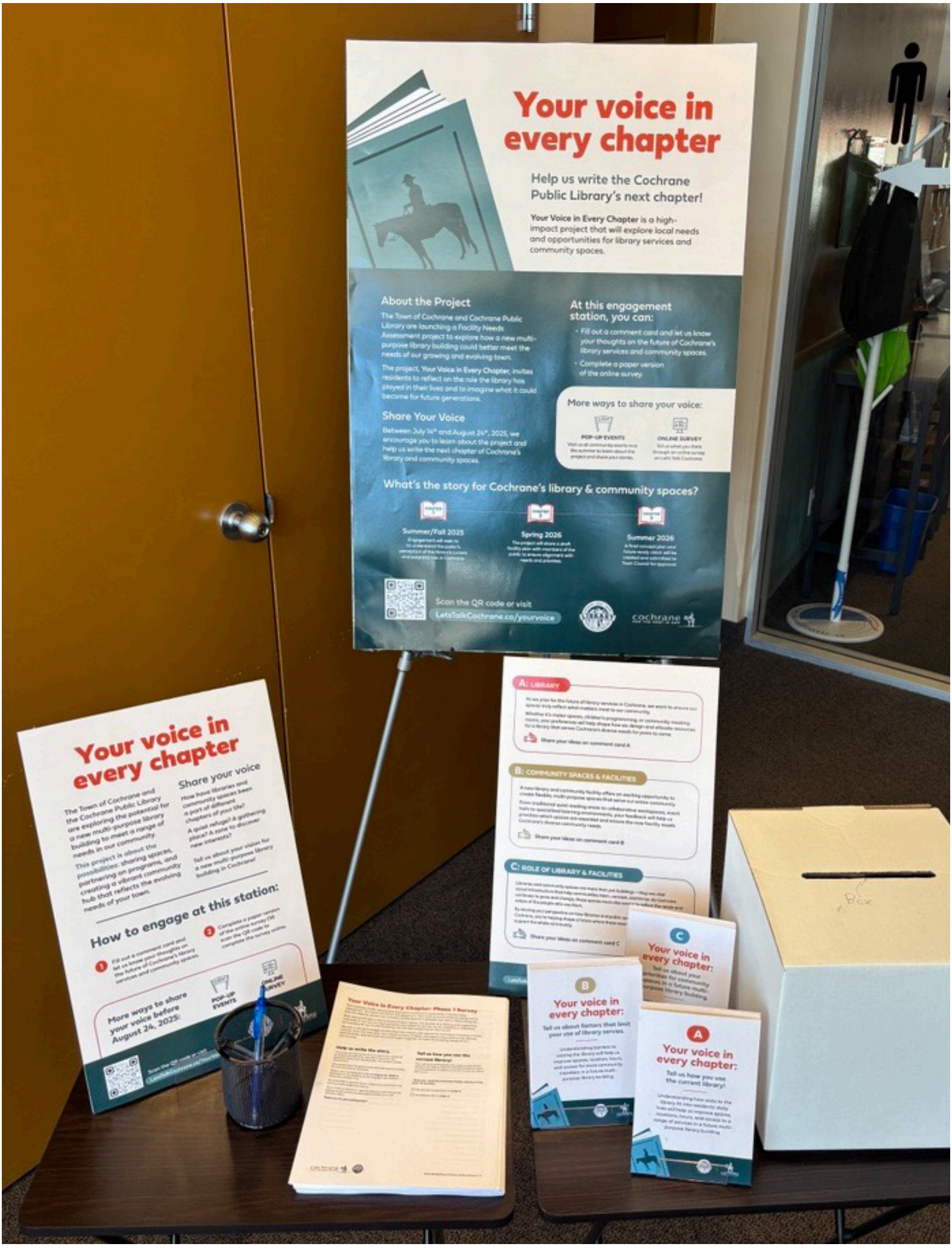

Your voice in every chapter
Help us write the Cochrane Public Library's next chapter!
Your Voice in Every Chapter is a high-impact project that will explore local needs and opportunities for library services and community spaces.
About the Project
The Town of Cochrane and Cochrane Public Library are launching a Facility Needs Assessment project to explore how a new multi-purpose library building could better meet the needs of our growing and evolving town.
The project, Your Voice in Every Chapter, invites residents to reflect on the role the library has played in their lives and to imagine what it could become for future generations.
Share Your Voice
Between July 14th and August 24th, 2025, we encourage you to learn about the project and help us write the next chapter of Cochrane's library and community spaces.
At this engagement station, you can:
Fill out a comment card and let us know your thoughts on the future of Cochrane's library services and community spaces.
Complete a paper version of the online survey.
More ways to share your voice:
POP-UP EVENTS
ONLINE SURVEY
What's the story for Cochrane's library & community spaces?
Summer/Fall 2025
Spring 2026
Summer 2026
Scan the QR code or visit
LetsTalkCochrane.ca/yourvoice
cochrane
Your voice in every chapter
Share your voice
How to engage at this station:
More ways to share your voice before August 24, 2025:
POP-UP EVENTS
ONLINE SURVEY
A: LIBRARY
B: COMMUNITY SPACES & FACILITIES
C: ROLE OF LIBRARY & FACILITIES
Your Voice in Every Chapter: Phase 1 Survey
Your voice in every chapter:
Tell us about factors that limit your use of library services.
Your voice in every chapter:
Tell us how you use the current library!
Your voice in every chapter:
Tell us about your perceptions for community spaces in a future multi-purpose library building

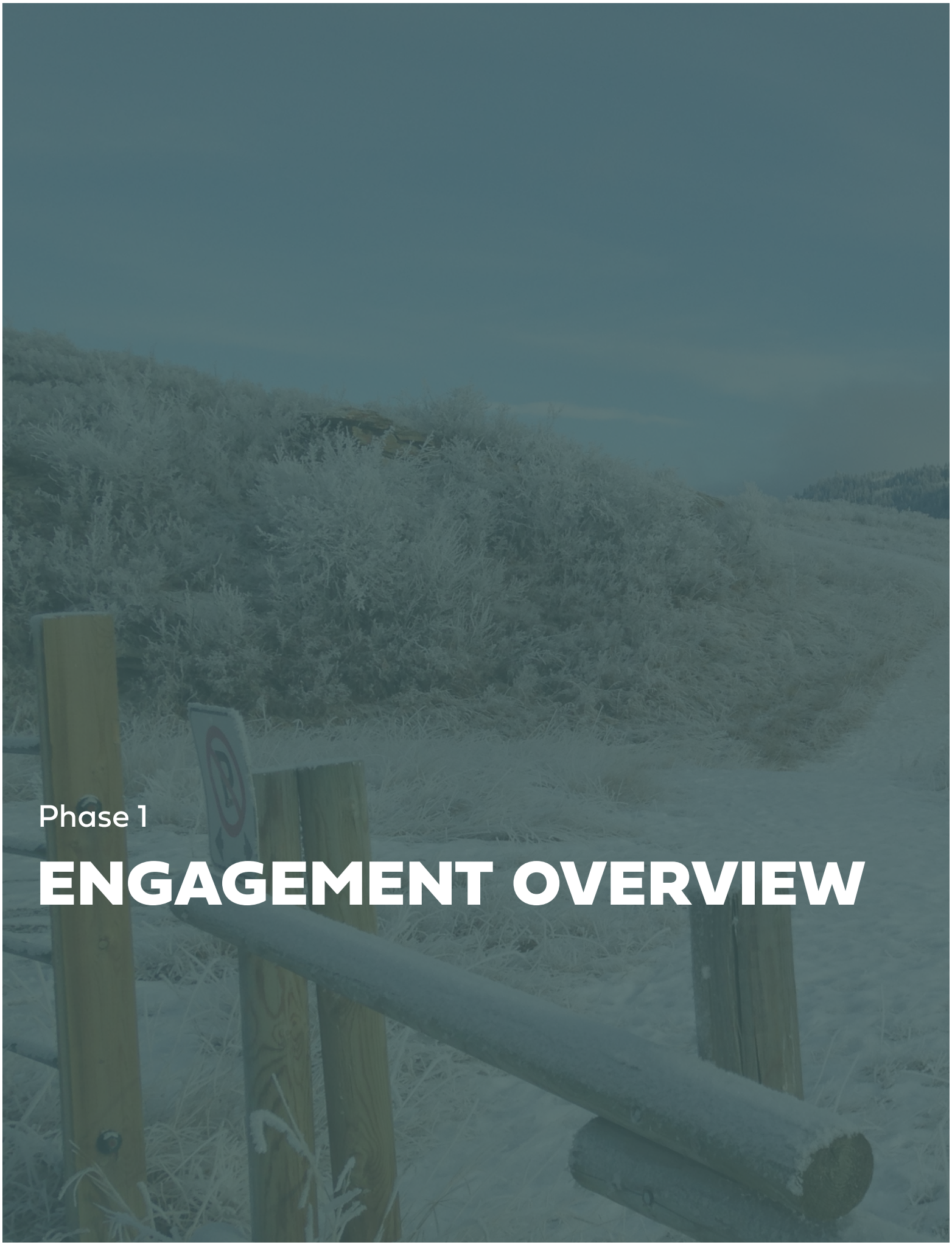
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW.....4

PUBLIC SURVEY SUMMARIES.....8

DATA AND TACTICS.....29

LOOKING AHEAD.....35



Phase 1

ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

YOUR VOICE IN EVERY CHAPTER

Project Timeline

The Town of Cochrane and the Cochrane Public Library are undertaking a Facility Needs Assessment to explore how an ideal future library and community space could better meet the needs of our growing and evolving community. This long-term planning project will guide investment in library services and community spaces, ensuring they remain responsive to Cochrane's population growth, shifting demographics and changing needs. This assessment builds on the library's 75-year legacy as both a community hub and a place of discovery, learning and connection.

Needs Assessment

The Facility Needs Assessment follows a phased approach:

- **Assess: Understanding Needs:** This phase focused on understanding how residents view the library's current and future role in Cochrane. Engagement through surveys, pop-ups, stations and focus groups helped identify how the library is used today. The input highlights current gaps and aspirations for future services.
- **Identify: Defining Opportunities:** Building on community input from the first phase 'Assess: Understanding Needs', and research this phase looks at opportunities for partnerships, expanded services and new features. Workshops and discussions help set priorities for a new facility.
- **Reporting: Sharing Outcomes:** At this stage, the analysis and outcomes from the consultations will be public.
- **Refine: Concept Design and Future Ready Vision:** In this phase, draft design concepts are shared with the public and other interested parties to confirm alignment with community needs and priorities. Feedback ensures the vision reflects both practical requirements and community values.

Engagement Philosophy

To ensure this engagement considered the needs of all Cochrane residents and interested parties, the project team identified the following priorities:

- **Inclusive:** Create a welcoming space for conversation that respects the diverse lived experiences of all participants.
- **Accessible:** Make participation easy by offering a range of opportunities and formats and designing materials with different abilities, schedules and learning styles in mind.
- **Meaningful:** Provide authentic opportunities for people to share their ideas, priorities and concerns and ensure these are heard and considered.
- **Transparent:** Share clear information about the process, explain how decisions are made and report back on what we heard.
- **Adaptive:** Remain flexible and responsive, adjusting engagement methods to reflect the needs of participants throughout the project.



Phase 1: Assess (July-August 2025)

Focused on how residents use the library today and their ideas for a future facility.



Phase 2: Identify (Fall 2025)

Feedback gathered during the first phase of this consultation will be evaluated. The project team will report back on key outcomes in future phases of engagement.



Phase 3: Reporting (Winter 2025)

The outcomes of consultations for the project will be made publicly available.



Phase 4: Design & Feedback (Spring 2026)

A new phase of public consultation will invite residents to help refine potential concepts and ideas for the future multi-purpose library building.

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT TACTICS

Engagement Purpose

The Cochrane Library Facility Needs Assessment is about planning with the community to ensure future library spaces, services, and other purposes a new facility can fulfill all reflect local needs.

This first phase of engagement was designed to understand how residents use the library today, identify barriers and gather ideas for future programs and spaces. The process also helps set priorities, explore opportunities for partnerships and confirm that future plans align with what the community values.

Communications Approach

Awareness and participation were supported through coordinated outreach and communications. The Town of Cochrane and the Cochrane Library worked with the project team to launch a campaign at the start of engagement. Key tactics included:

- **Social media** posts on Town and Library channels to share updates and promote events.
- **A news release** announcing the project and inviting residents to participate.
- **Project web page** hosted on Let's Talk Cochrane as the central hub for project information and surveys.
- **Posters and signage** placed in community locations to promote participation.
- **Outreach emails** to interested parties and community organizations with invitations to engage.
- **Frequently Asked Questions** and background materials made available at engagement stations and online.

1.1K
Website Views

13
Social Media Posts

5
Magnet Signs

9
Sandwich Boards

Engagement Tactics

A range of tactics were deployed to meet residents where they are and provide multiple ways to participate. Online, place-based and in-person tactics were employed, giving residents an opportunity to provide feedback based on what was most convenient for them.

Online

Online Survey: A comprehensive survey invited both library users and non-users to share feedback on how they use the library, barriers to access and their vision for the future. The survey was available on Let's Talk Cochrane from July 14 to August 24, 2025, with paper surveys provided at engagement stations.

In-person

Community Conversations: Information and activity stations facilitated by the project team provided opportunities to connect face-to-face with residents. Conversations mirrored the survey questions and gathered feedback on:

- The ideal future library and community space, including features and spaces that would encourage people to visit a new multi-purpose library in Cochrane.
- The journey to the library, including other activities people pair with their visit.

These events were hosted at high-traffic community locations to reach a broad audience, including:

- Cochrane Food Fest (August 10, 2025)
- Sounds of Summer, Cochrane Public Library (August 12, 2025)
- The Station (August 12, 2025)

Place-based

Self-Guided Engagement Booths: Engagement booths provided take-away and on-site activities such as **comment cards** and **paper surveys.** Participants could fill out a "comment card" to share what they would like to see in the new library and multi-use space. Feedback was collected through ballot boxes and incorporated into the engagement analysis. Booths were located at the Cochrane Public Library, The Station and the Family and Community Support Services (FCSS).

3
Comment Cards

2
Survey Formats (paper & online)

3
Self-Guided Engagement Booths

3
Community Conversations



Phase 1

PUBLIC SURVEY SUMMARIES

PUBLIC SURVEY

The survey invited both current library users and non-users to share how they experience the Cochrane Public Library today and the opportunities they would like to see in the future.

Questions explored patterns of use, barriers to access and aspirations for new spaces, services and programs. Input from both current and non-users provides a clearer understanding of how the library currently serves the community and how it could evolve to meet emerging needs.

What stands out

The project team connected with nearly 400 residents through surveys, in-person conversations at pop-up events and comment cards collected at self-guided engagement booths. Below is a summary of what stood out across key themes:

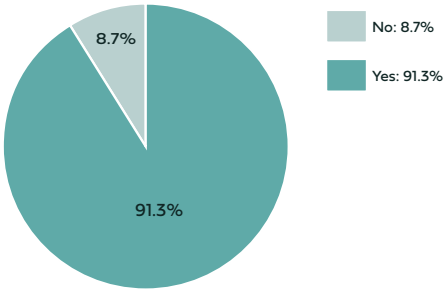
- **A valued community hub:** The Cochrane Public Library is widely seen as a safe, welcoming and trusted place that brings people together. Staff are consistently praised for their helpfulness and the library's role in supporting lifelong learning, literacy and community connection is highly valued.
- **Space limitations:** Many residents described the library as a valued community hub, while recognizing that the current building is increasingly stretched to meet Cochrane's needs. The collection could be broadened and there is limited space for quiet study, children's play and larger programs. A lack of separation between areas can also lead to noise and congestion, making it difficult to fully support the range of activities and users the library serves.
- **Balance of tradition and innovation:** Books and reading remain central to how people view the library, but there is also strong interest in expanding programming, creative spaces, cultural activities and opportunities for social connection. Residents want the library to balance its traditional role with evolving community needs.
- **Accessibility and location:** Convenience is a key factor. Residents want a centrally located library that is easy to access by car, on foot, or by transit. Parking, walkability and accessibility for all ages and abilities are recurring themes.
- **Community vision:** Looking ahead, residents imagine a larger, flexible, multi-purpose facility that reflects Cochrane's identity, supports people of all ages and offers space for learning, creativity and gathering. Many see the library as a cornerstone for building social connection and cultural vibrancy in a growing town.

"The library is one of the most welcoming spaces in Cochrane. It feels like a place for everyone."

"A new library should be spacious, inclusive and adaptable. Somewhere for quiet reading, family programs and community events all under one roof."

"Cochrane's library is more than books. It is a hub for learning, creativity and connection that deserves room to grow with the community."

Question 1: "Have you used the Cochrane Public Library in the past 12 months"



The majority of survey respondents (91.3%) reported using the Cochrane Public Library within the past 12 months, while a smaller share (8.7%) had not.

Current library users were asked questions about their experiences, patterns of use and areas for improvement, providing detailed insights into how the library functions today. Non-users were asked a separate set of questions focused on barriers to access and factors that might encourage them to use the library in the future. This structure ensured the survey reflects the experiences of both users and non-users.

YES

Current Library Users
Recreation patterns and preferences

- Q #2: How often do you visit the Cochrane Public Library?
- Q #3: What library services do you use? Select all that apply.
- Q #4: On average, how long are your visits to the library?
- Q #5: When do you typically visit the library?
- Q #6: What, if any, activities are most likely to be part of an outing that includes a visit to the library?
- **Q #7: How do you travel to and from the library?**

NO

Current Library Users + Non Users
Barriers

- Q #8: Which of the following program or service factors, if any, limit you visiting the library as often as you would like to?
- Q #9: What, if any, of the following personal and social factors limit you visiting the library as often as you would like to?

Community spaces and facilities

- Q #10: How often do you visit the following facilities and spaces in Cochrane?

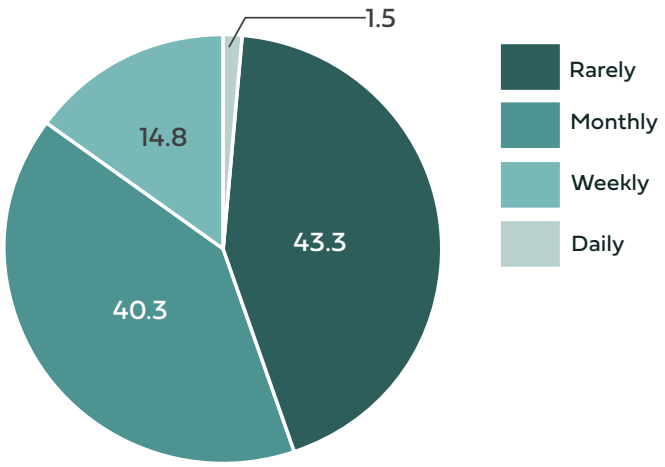
Section #1: Library Users

This section of the what we heard report focuses on the experiences of current library users (i.e. people who have visited the library in the last year).

Participants were asked about how they use the library today, how often they visit, how long they typically stay and when their visits usually occur. Questions also explored which library services they access, what other activities people typically pair with a library visit, and how they travel to and from the facility.

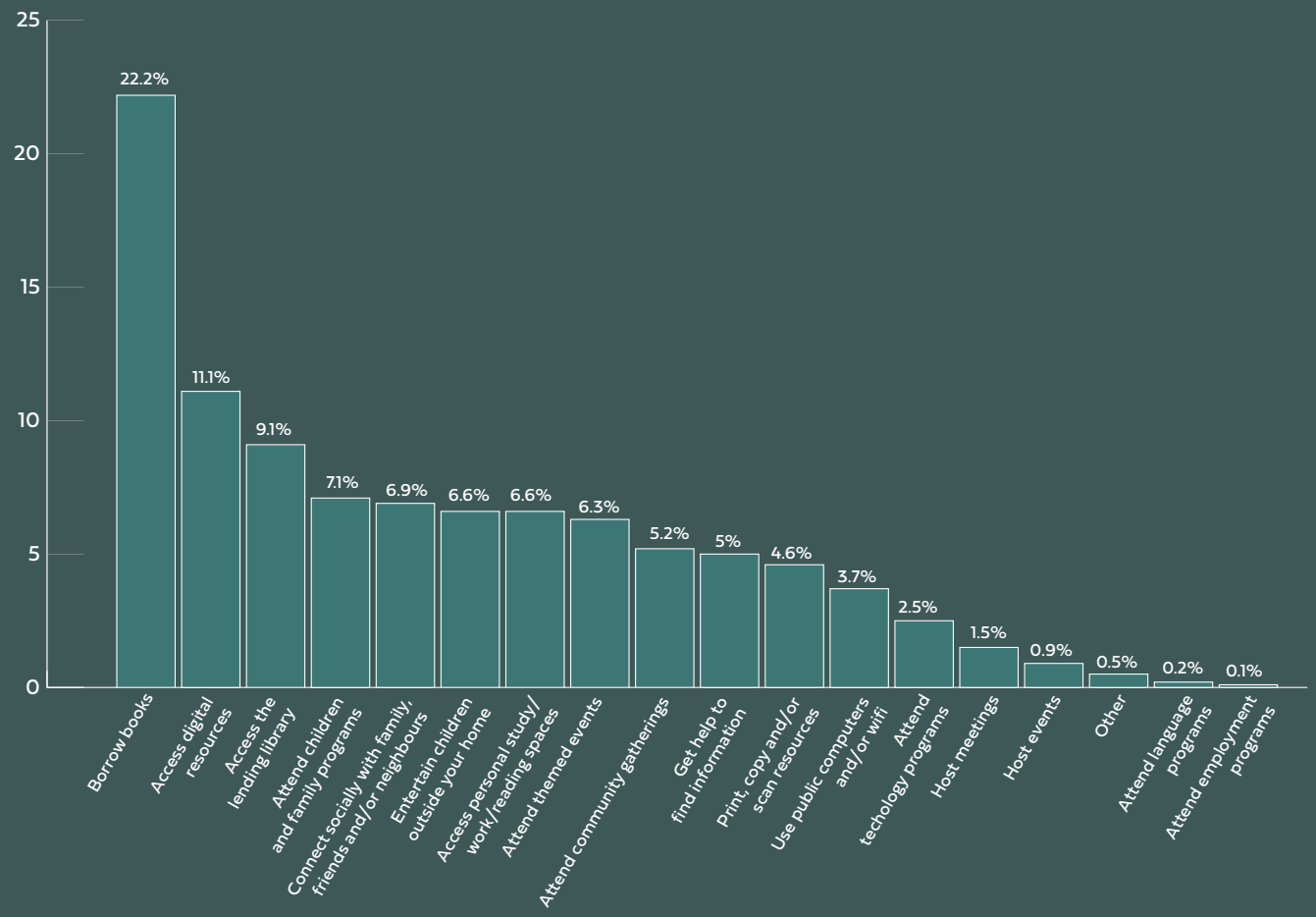
This section of the report provides a detailed picture of current library users' habits and experiences, offering insight into how the library serves the community today and where improvements may be needed.

Question: "How often do you visit the Cochrane Public Library?"



The majority of current library users visit the Cochrane Public Library on a regular basis. Many are fairly frequent visitors, with 43.3% reporting weekly use and 40.3% visiting monthly. A smaller share of 14.8% said they visit rarely, and only 1.5% reported visiting daily.

Question: “What library services do you use?”



What we Learned

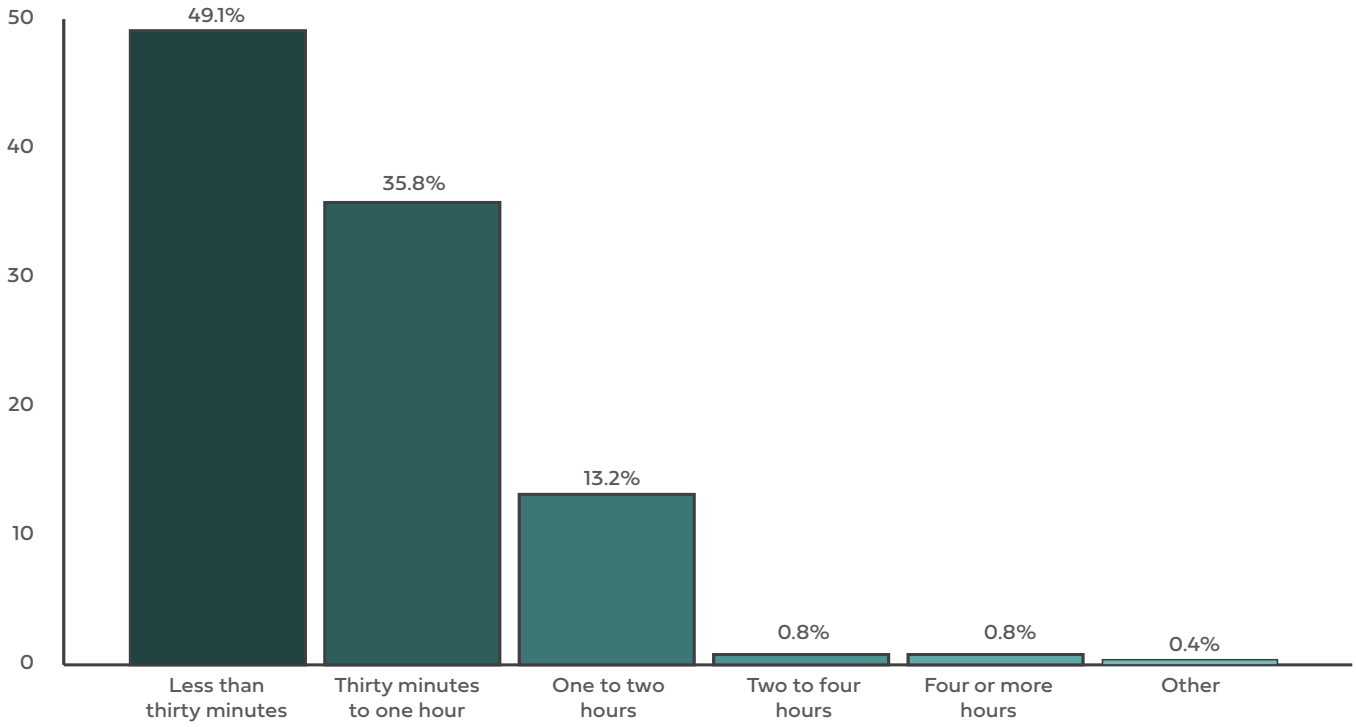
The majority of current library users reported borrowing books (22.2%), followed by digital resources such as e-books and audiobooks (11.1%), the lending library (9.1%), and children and family programs (7.1%). Many users visit on a fairly frequent basis, often weekly or monthly. Smaller shares noted using study or work spaces (6.6%), entertaining children (6.6%), or attending themed events (6.3%). Few reported using computers or Wi-Fi (3.7%) or printing and scanning (4.6%), while hosting meetings and events was limited to under 2%.

Overall, while most users access the library for its resources, they also value it as a space that supports a wide range of uses, programs, and events.

Responses to the “other” option highlighted the breadth of programming and services that residents value but are not always captured in standard categories, including:

- Creative and educational programs such as art classes, gardening talks, adult programs, Northern Lights talks and 3D printing.
- Cultural and community activities like book clubs, Fireside Chats, Indigenous cultural programs and meetings with Indigenous elders in a safe and welcoming setting.
- Alternative collections and resources including puzzles, board games, movies, CDs and the seed library.
- Special events and performances such as the Sounds of Summer series, plant sales and art exhibits.
- Library as a space to concentrate, read and relax, valued as a safe and inclusive environment.

Question: "On average, how long are your visits to the library?"



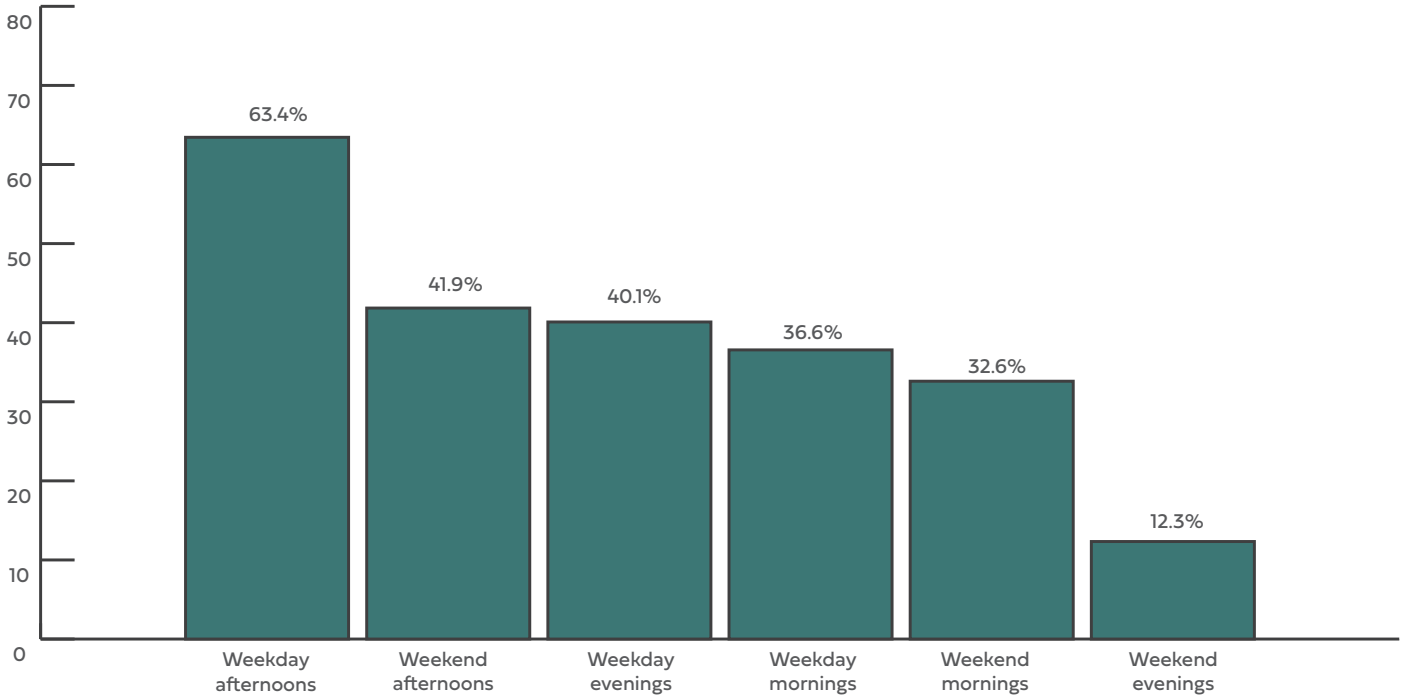
What we Learned

The length of stay question reveals that most residents use the library briefly, with nearly half (49%) staying for 30 minutes to an hour and just over one-third (36%) spending less than 30 minutes. A smaller share (13%) reported visits of one to two hours, while very few stay longer: only 1% indicated two to four hours and another 1% reported four or more hours.

In the 'other' responses, participants noted that visit length often depends on the activity: a quick trip to borrow books or tools may last only 10–30 minutes, while attending a program, working on a project, or participating in a book club can extend a stay to two hours or more.

These results suggest that while the library primarily supports short visits, it also provides the flexibility for longer stays, pointing to the need for both quick-use spaces and comfortable areas designed for extended use in a future facility.

Question: "When do you typically visit the library?"

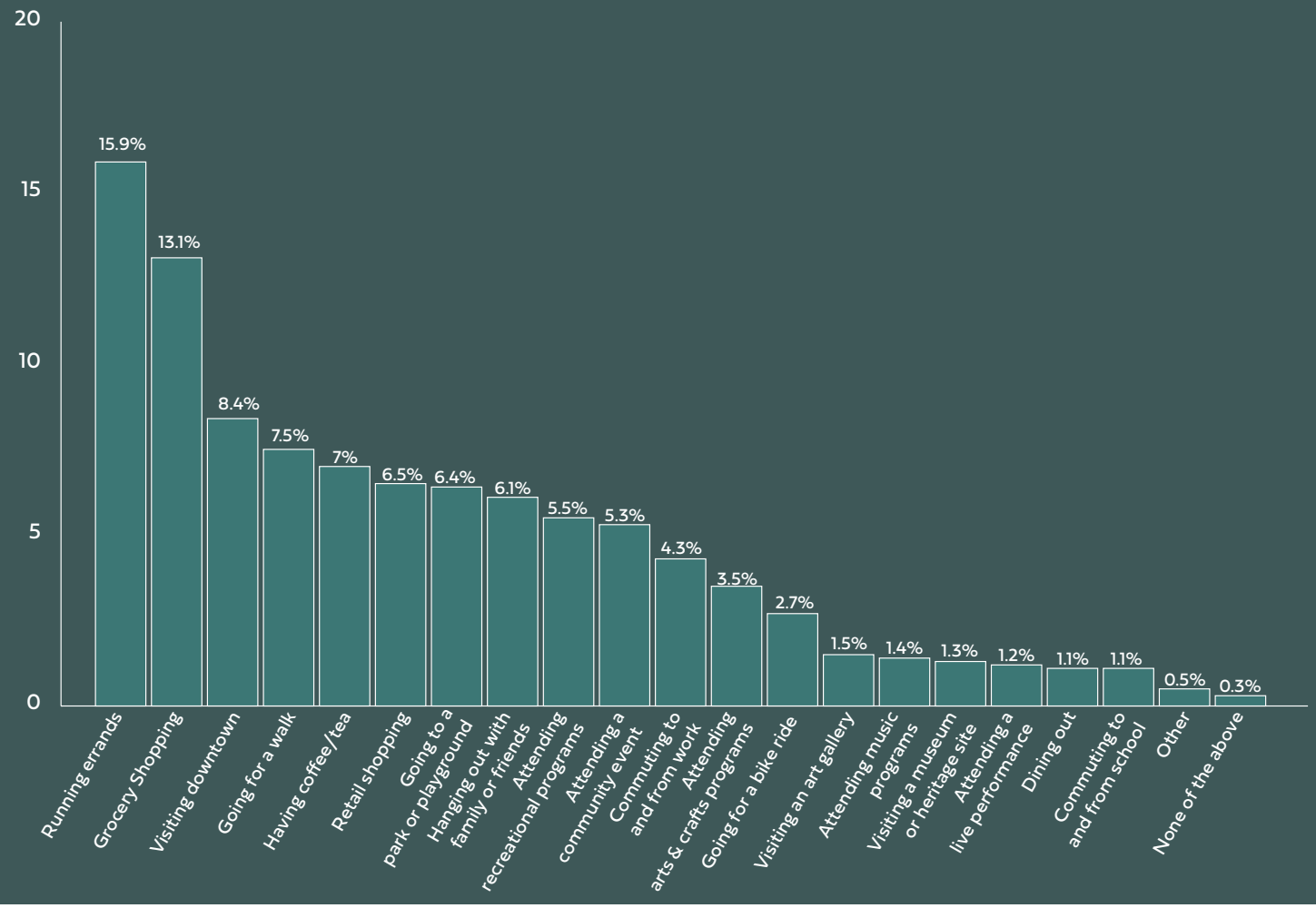


What we Learned

Patterns of library use show the highest attendance during weekday afternoons (63%), with notable activity in the weekday evenings (40%) and weekend afternoons (42%). Smaller shares reported visiting in the weekday mornings (37%) and weekend mornings (33%), while weekend evenings (12%) were the least common.

These results suggest that weekday afternoons are the busiest period, with steady use across other times and more limited engagement on weekend evenings. The consistency across weekday and weekend daytime periods highlights the library's role as a flexible community space that fits into diverse routines and user patterns.

Question: "What, if any, activities are most likely to be part of an outing that includes a visit to the library?"



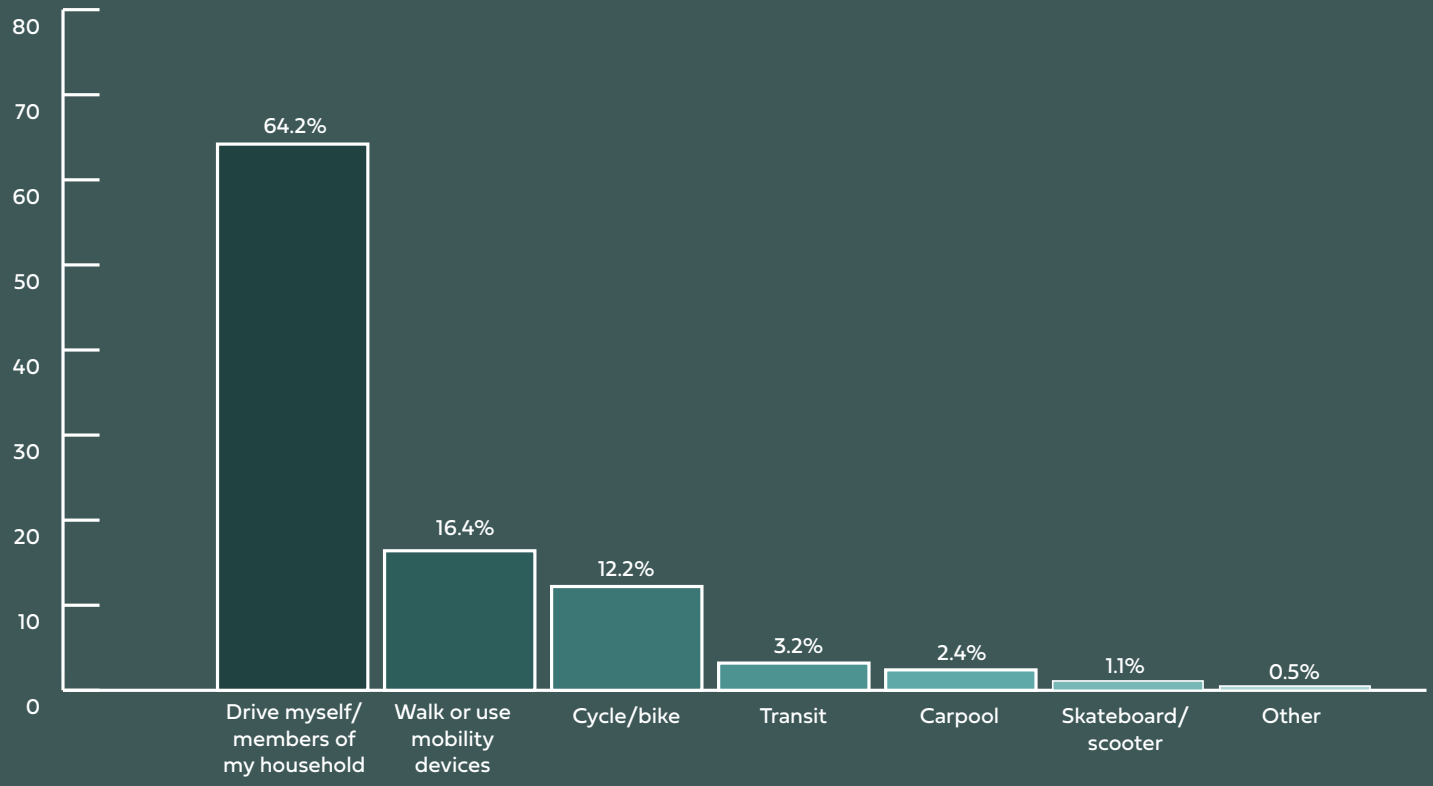
What we Learned

Thinking about how a library trip fits into routines, respondents often paired it with other tasks. Running errands (16%) and grocery shopping (13%) were the most common, followed by visiting downtown (8%), going for a walk (8%)and having coffee or tea (7%). Smaller proportions of participants connected their library trips with retail shopping (7%), going to a park or playground (6%), or spending time with family or friends (6%), while fewer paired their visits with cultural programs, commuting, or dining out.

These results suggest that while most visits are brief, the library also supports longer stays, pointing to the need for both quick-use spaces and comfortable areas for extended use. The findings also show how visits are often tied to daily routines and errands, highlighting the value of a central location and the potential to integrate complementary uses in a future facility to make visits more convenient for residents

In the "other" responses, participants emphasized personal and community-oriented uses, such as attending early-years programs, yoga, or using the library itself as a space to write, work on puzzles, or meet new people. Several called for features like playgrounds, walking paths, coffee shops and art displays, while others stressed the importance of keeping the library centrally located and well-connected to surrounding shops and recreation centres.

Question: "How do you travel to and from the library?"



What we Learned

Patterns of travel highlight the car as the primary way of accessing the library. Nearly two-thirds of participants (64%) reported driving themselves or a household member, while smaller proportions of participants walk or use mobility devices (16%), cycle (12%), or take transit (3%). Few respondents mentioned carpooling (2%) or skateboarding/scootering (1%). In the "other" comments, participants emphasized the importance of keeping the library central and ensuring adequate parking at future venues.

These results suggest that while some residents use active or alternative modes of travel, the library is most often accessed by car, making both parking and safe pedestrian and cycling connections important considerations for future planning.

"The library is where I go to write, work on projects or meet new people."

"Sometimes the library is my sole destination!"

"A central library keeps it part of daily life."

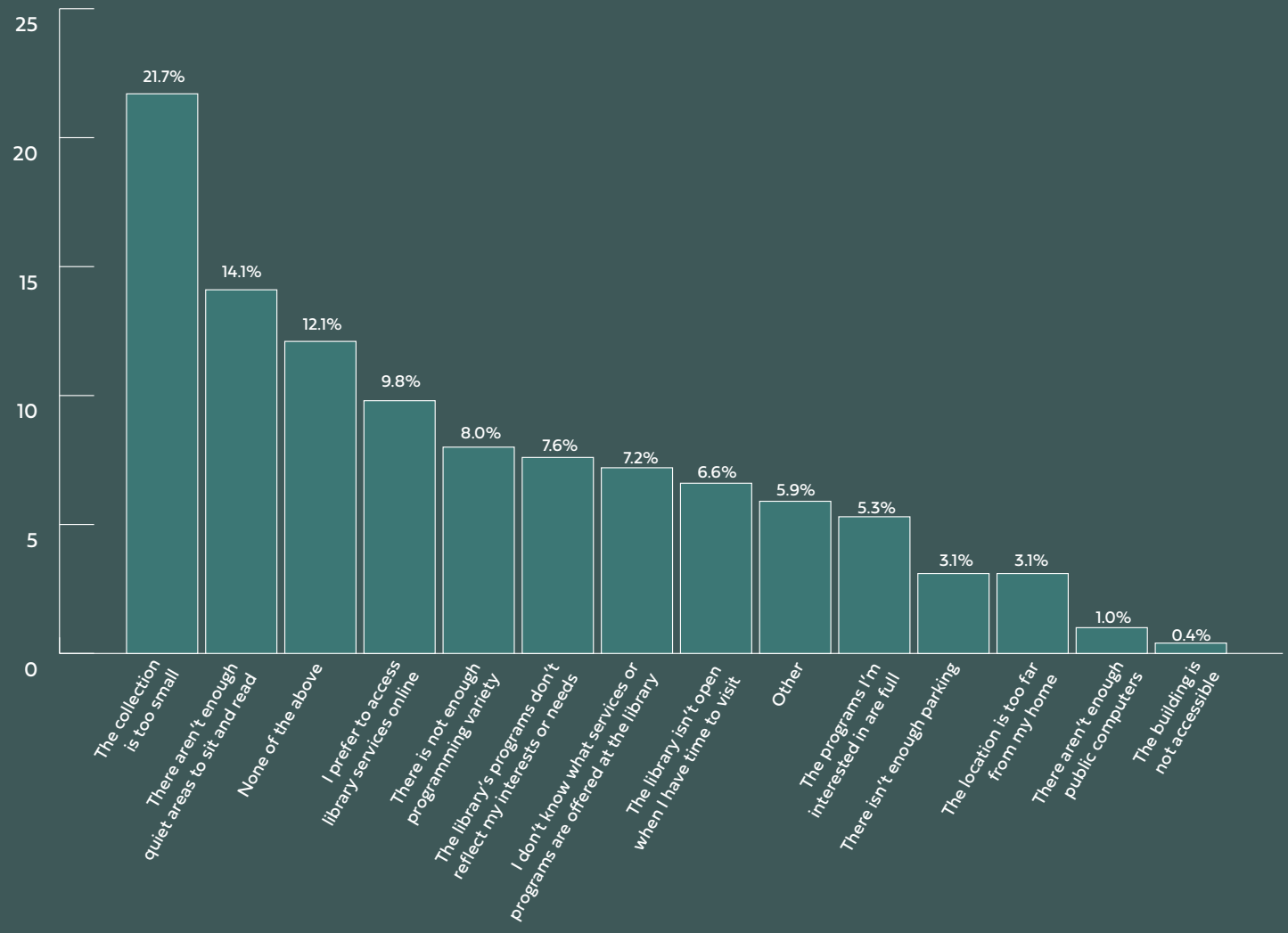
Section #2: Library Users + Non - Users

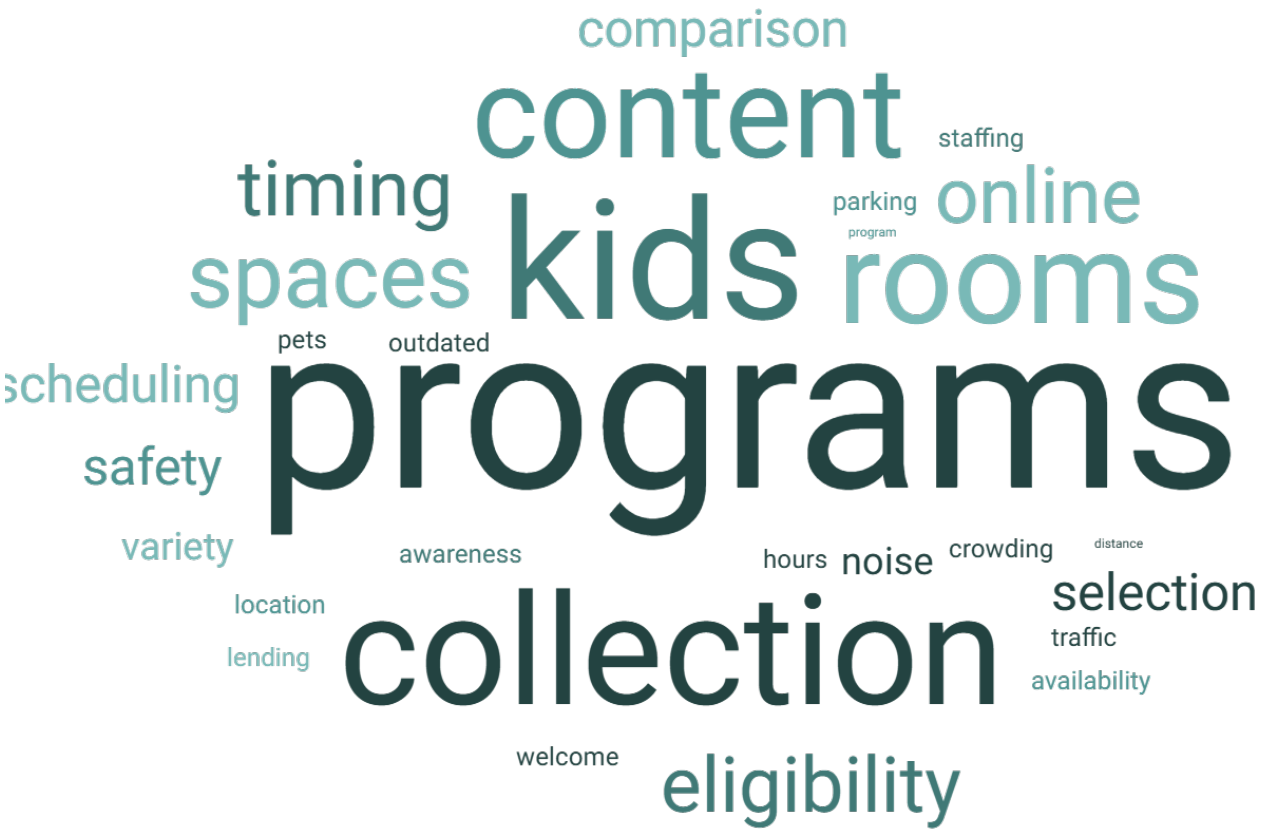
All survey participants were invited to respond to questions designed to gather insights from both library users and non-users.

This section captures perspectives that apply broadly across the community, including barriers to use, intensity of use of community spaces and facilities, and other key questions about access and future needs.

Barriers

Question: "Which of the following program or service factors, if any, limit you visiting the library as often as you would like to?"





What we Learned

A notable share of participants (12%) said they face no barriers to using the library, reflecting satisfaction with current services. Among those who reported challenges, the most common related to space and collection size: about one in five (22%) felt the collection is too small and 14% said there are not enough quiet areas for reading or study. Others mentioned preferring to access services online (10%), programs not always matching their interests or offering enough variety (around 8%), or hours that don't align with their schedules (7%). Smaller groups pointed to not knowing what programs are offered, programs being full, or practical challenges such as parking and distance (3% each).

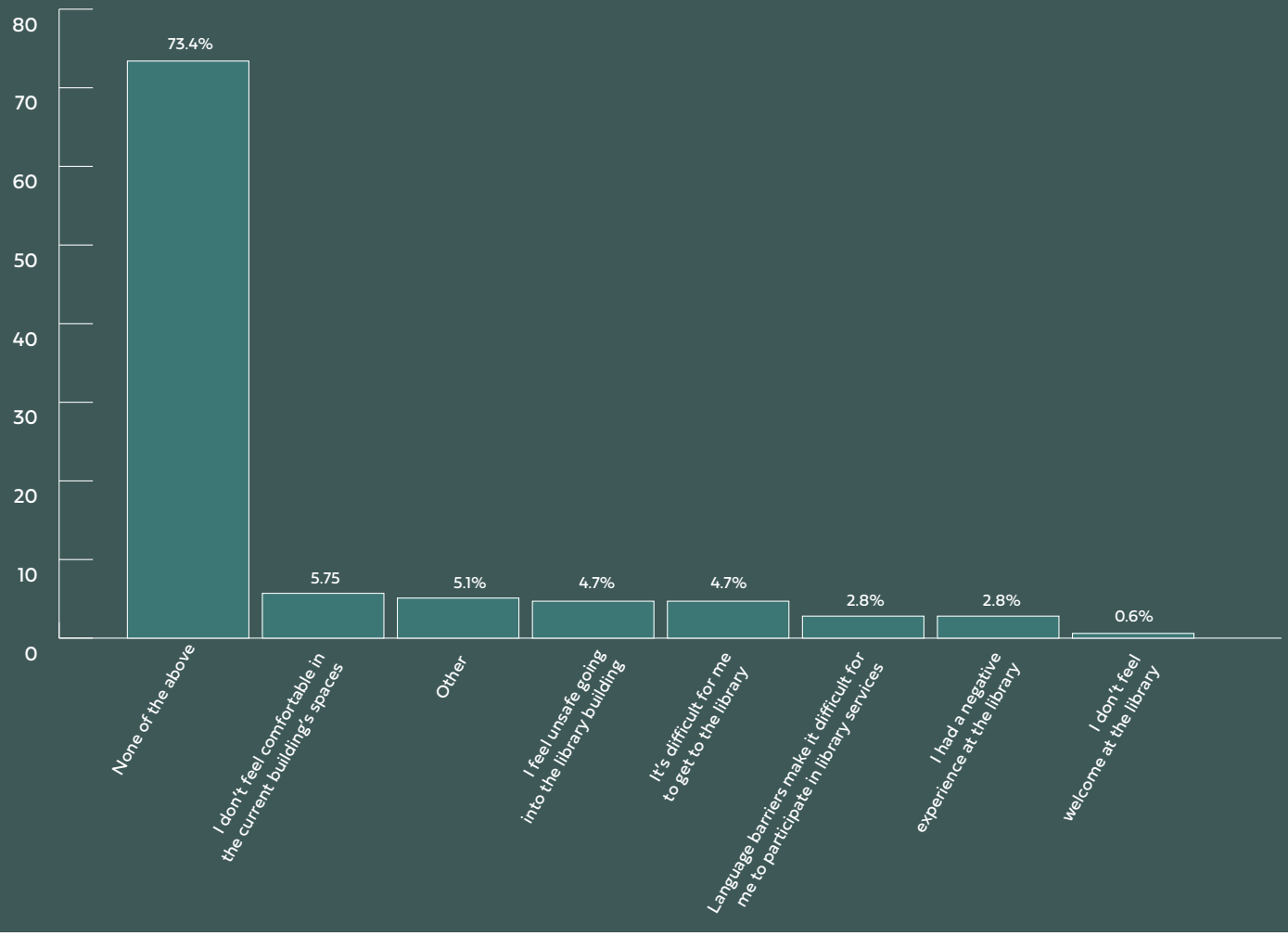
Comments reinforced these themes, with participants noting that the library can feel too noisy or congested, that there is a need for larger children's areas and meeting rooms and that program schedules and availability do not always align with community needs. Others mentioned difficulty finding program information and expressed interest in more program variety and added amenities such as a café or outdoor space. Overall, many of the barrier directly (quiet areas, etc.) or indirectly (more programming, etc.) highlight the need for more space.

"I would love to see more variety in the programming - all kinds of different interests and age groups."

"It would be great to have more weekend availability the library is a great place to take the kids."

"The library is amazing! With more space, I can only imagine what wonders this team could offer!"

Question: "What, if any, of the following personal and social factors limit you visiting the library as often as you would like to?"



What we Learned

Most participants (73%) reported that none of the listed personal or social factors limited their ability to visit the library. Among those who did identify barriers, the most common were not feeling comfortable in the current spaces (6%), feeling unsafe (5%) and difficulties with transportation (5%). Smaller shares pointed to language barriers (3%) and previous negative experiences (3%), while few noted not feeling welcome (1%). The results indicate that while the majority of residents feel welcome and safe, a small group identified concerns tied to comfort, safety and ease of access. This highlights the importance of considering these voices in planning for a future facility to build on the strong positive perception and ensure all residents feel included.

Many respondents highlighted positive experiences, emphasizing:

- Helpful and welcoming staff
- Safe and inclusive atmosphere
- Accessible and central location

The library was described as a fundamental community hub, motivating visits rather than limiting them. Some participants living outside Cochrane said they combine library visits with errands when in town. Overall, the sentiment reflects the library as a trusted, valued community resource.

Additional barriers highlighted by participants

..noise and disruption...

- Children's programs and activities make the library loud at times.
- Limited separation between areas reduces opportunities for quiet study or reading.
- Active play can spill into reading or study spaces.
- Requests for designated quiet areas or a separate children's zone to balance needs.

... space and comfort...

- The library is too small to accommodate current use.
- Lack of privacy and comfortable seating reduces appeal for longer stays.
- Meeting and program rooms are too limited in size for community needs.
- The open layout makes it difficult to browse certain sections comfortably.

...safety and security...

- Loitering and substance use near the entrance and bathrooms create safety concerns.
- Encounters with impaired individuals inside or near the library make it feel unsafe.
- Entrances and washrooms lack visibility, leaving some users feeling vulnerable.
- Proximity to the transit hub contributes to perceptions of safety issues.

...transportation and access...

- Long walking distances in winter deter regular visits.
- Limited and inconsistent bus service reduces accessibility.
- Lack of bike lanes and continuous sidewalks discourages active travel.
- Rural residents only visit when combining trips into Cochrane.

... programming and scheduling...

- Greater program variety is needed for adults, teens and niche interests.
- Difficulty finding program information and navigating the website limits participation.

...future improvements...

- Renovations are needed to create a more modern, trendy and comfortable space.
- Enclosed children's areas and quieter adult spaces are desired.
- Amenities such as outdoor patios, coffee spaces, or reading gardens would add value.
- Expanding the overall facility would allow staff to grow programming and services.

Community Spaces and Facilities

Question: "How often do you visit the following facilities and spaces in Cochrane?"



Facilities and Spaces	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	Never
Recreation & Fitness *(recreation centres, Health/fitness orgs)*	9%	27%	15%	29%	20%
Community and Seniors' Spaces *(community centres, seniors' centres, social service orgs)*	2%	3%	8%	27%	60%
Parks & Playgrounds *(parks, playgrounds, community gardens)*	13%	20%	18%	17%	32%
Cultural & Arts Venues *(theatres, music venues, art exhibits, museum/ heritage sites)*	1%	3%	20%	52%	24%
Shops & Social Spaces *(bookstores, coffee shops, restaurants, markets)*	3%	31%	38%	25%	3%
Specialty & Program Spaces *(community kitchen, other programs/events)*	0%	1%	0%	13%	86%

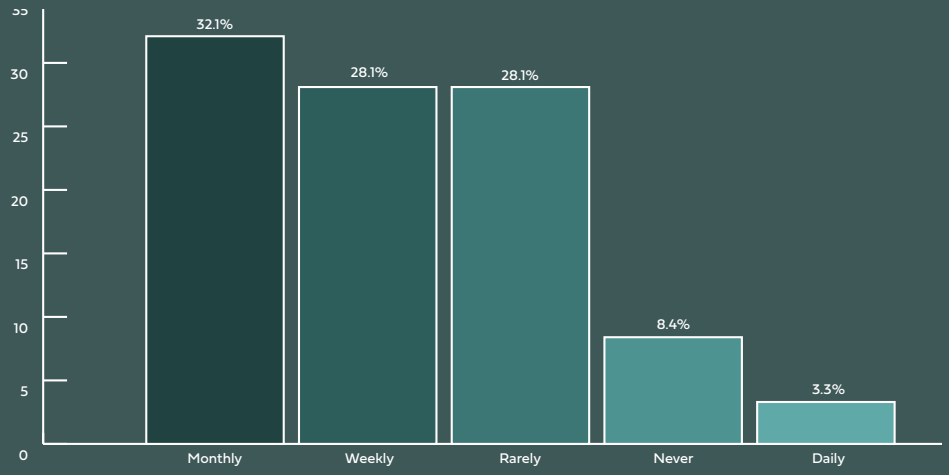
What we Learned

Participants reported a wide range of use across community facilities and spaces. Outdoor and everyday destinations stand out as the most frequented, while cultural and specialized facilities are less commonly visited.

Importantly, these results reflect both use and the different levels of supply in Cochrane, so less frequent visits do not necessarily signal lower value.

- Parks & Playgrounds: Nearly three-quarters visit parks weekly or daily, and more than half use playgrounds monthly or more, reflecting their wide availability.
- Shops & Social Spaces: Restaurants (49% weekly, 37% monthly), coffee shops (37% weekly, 31% monthly), and markets are heavily used, while bookstores see more occasional visits, consistent with limited local options.
- Recreation & Fitness: About 42% use recreation centres weekly or monthly, alongside 29% for health and fitness organizations. These rates are notable given Cochrane has only one major public recreation facility, with some private options.
- Community and Seniors' Spaces: These see very limited participation, which may relate to fewer facilities and programs available.
- Cultural & Arts Venues: Theatres, museums, art exhibits, and music venues are often visited rarely or never, likely reflecting limited supply, there is only one theatre, though arts and cultural activities occur in other spaces.
- Specialty & Program Spaces: Community kitchens, gardens, and similar spaces have the lowest use, consistent with their very limited availability.
- These patterns suggest opportunities for a future library to complement existing facilities, by reinforcing the spaces residents already frequent and helping fill gaps where supply is limited, making activities more convenient locally.

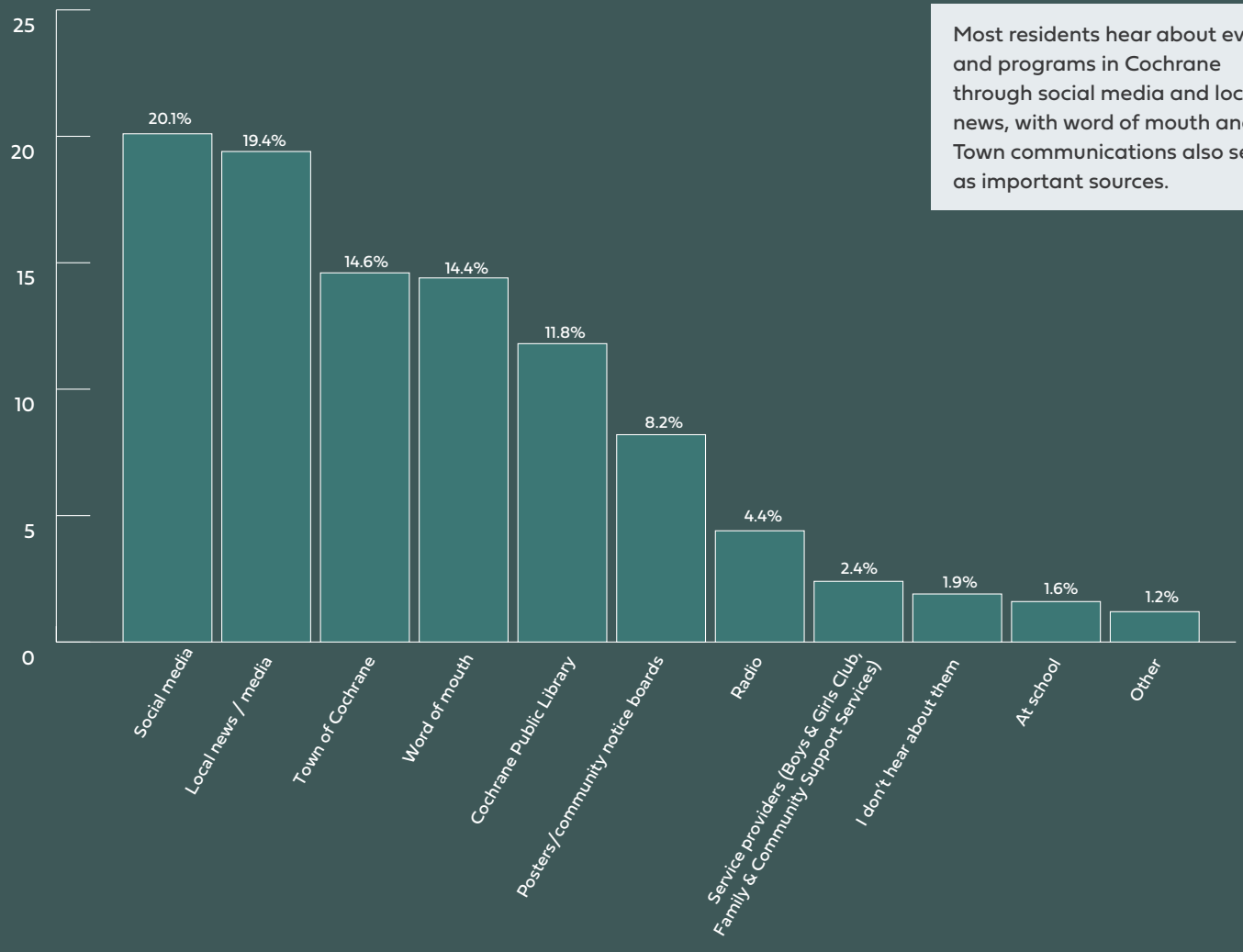
Question: "How often do you travel outside of Cochrane to visit facilities and spaces in other communities?"



Participants most often travel outside Cochrane monthly or weekly to visit facilities in other communities, while fewer do so rarely or never.

This high proportion highlights an opportunity to expand these types of spaces locally to reduce the need to leave town.

Question: "Where do you find information about events, programs and services in Cochrane?"



Most residents hear about events and programs in Cochrane through social media and local news, with word of mouth and Town communications also serving as important sources.

Question: "Is there anything else you would like us to know about your current use of library services and community spaces in Cochrane?"

... positive experiences...

- Many praised the library as a vibrant, welcoming community hub.
- Staff were repeatedly described as friendly, helpful and knowledgeable.
- The interlibrary loan and lending programs (books, tools, games, equipment) were highly valued.
- Several noted that the library offers inclusive and diverse programming that enriches community life

... programming...

- Families appreciated children's programs but asked for more weekend and evening options.
- Suggestions included STEM, art, writing and cultural programs tailored to different age groups.
- Some felt the library could expand its role in hosting cultural events, performances, or speaker series.

... location and access...

- The current central location was considered ideal by many, with strong interest in keeping the library downtown.
- Some suggested exploring satellite locations or mobile services to reach more residents.
- Transit, traffic and accessibility were mentioned as ongoing challenges for certain users.

... space and facilities...

- A recurring theme was the need for more quiet study areas, additional meeting rooms and updated or larger spaces to reduce noise and crowding.
- Participants compared the Cochrane Library to larger facilities in Canmore and Calgary, expressing a desire for a similarly modern and spacious environment.
- Ideas included dedicated children's spaces, maker labs and even rooftop reading areas.

... collection and resources...

- Requests were made for a larger and more diverse book collection, including new releases, adult fiction, children's resources and homeschooling materials.
- Some participants emphasized the need for longer loan periods, more copies of popular items, or a wider range of formats such as Hoopla.

... community role...

- The library was consistently described as essential to community identity and growth.
- Some called for stronger integration with cultural and recreational amenities to create a multi-purpose hub.
- A few noted that financial constraints limit their ability to use other community facilities, making the library's free and accessible services especially important.

Future Vision

Question: "What three (3) keywords describe your vision for a multi-purpose library building?"



Accessible	44
Welcoming	39
Community	38
Books	30
Space	29
Inclusive	21
Quiet	20
Variety	15
Spacious	13
Inviting	12
Programs	11
Spaces	11
Comfortable	11

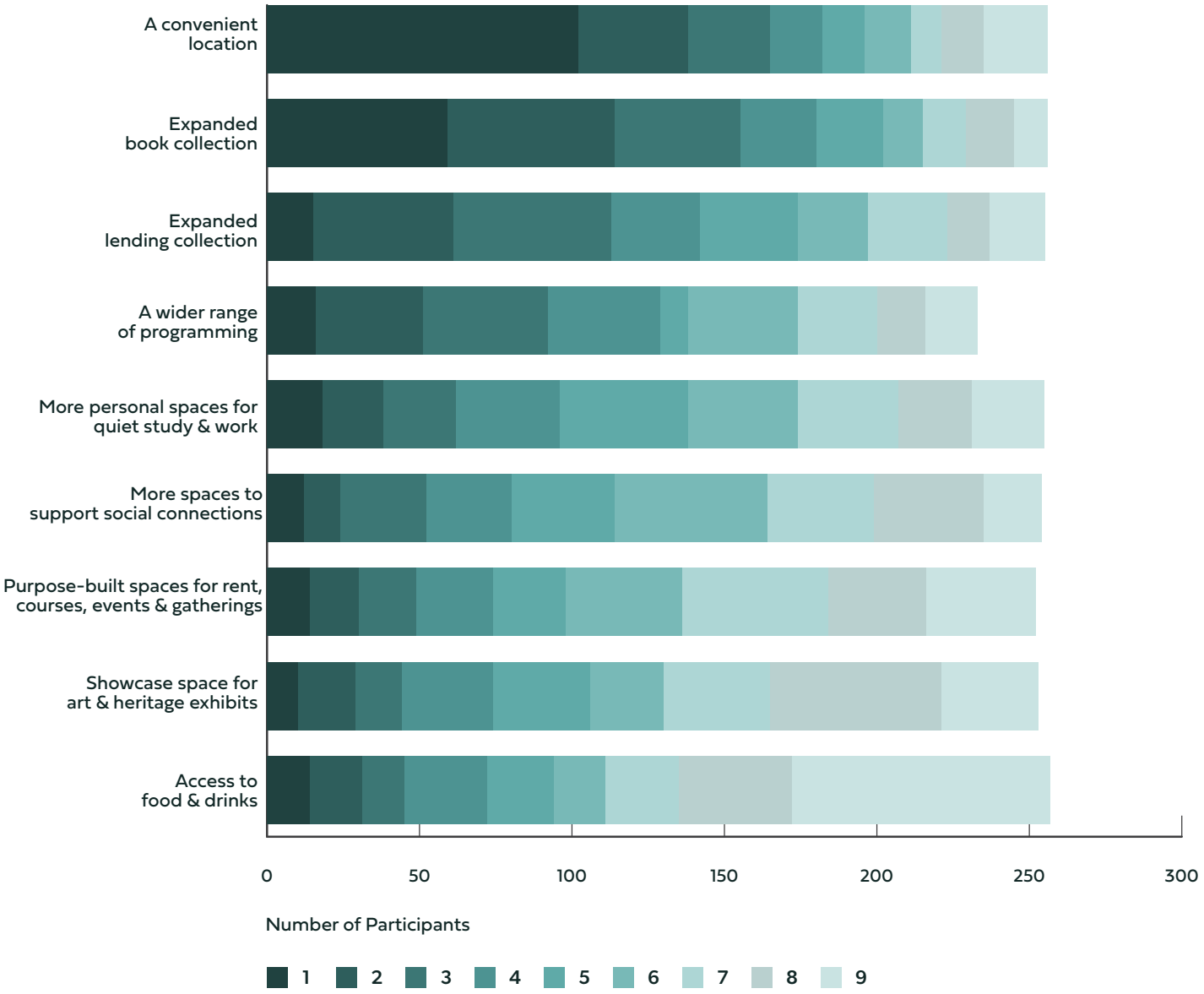
What we Learned

Common themes in how participants envision a future library include openness, comfort and belonging. The most common keywords included "accessible," "welcoming," "community," "books," "space," "inclusive," and "quiet."

These responses reflect a vision of the Cochrane Library as a modern, adaptable and community-centered facility that is easy to access and navigate, provides comfortable and inclusive spaces for learning and gathering and balances traditional roles of reading and study with vibrant opportunities for connection and creativity.

Community Spaces and Facilities

Question: "Which features would you rank from 1 (most preferred) to 9 (least preferred) for a new multi-purpose library in Cochrane?"

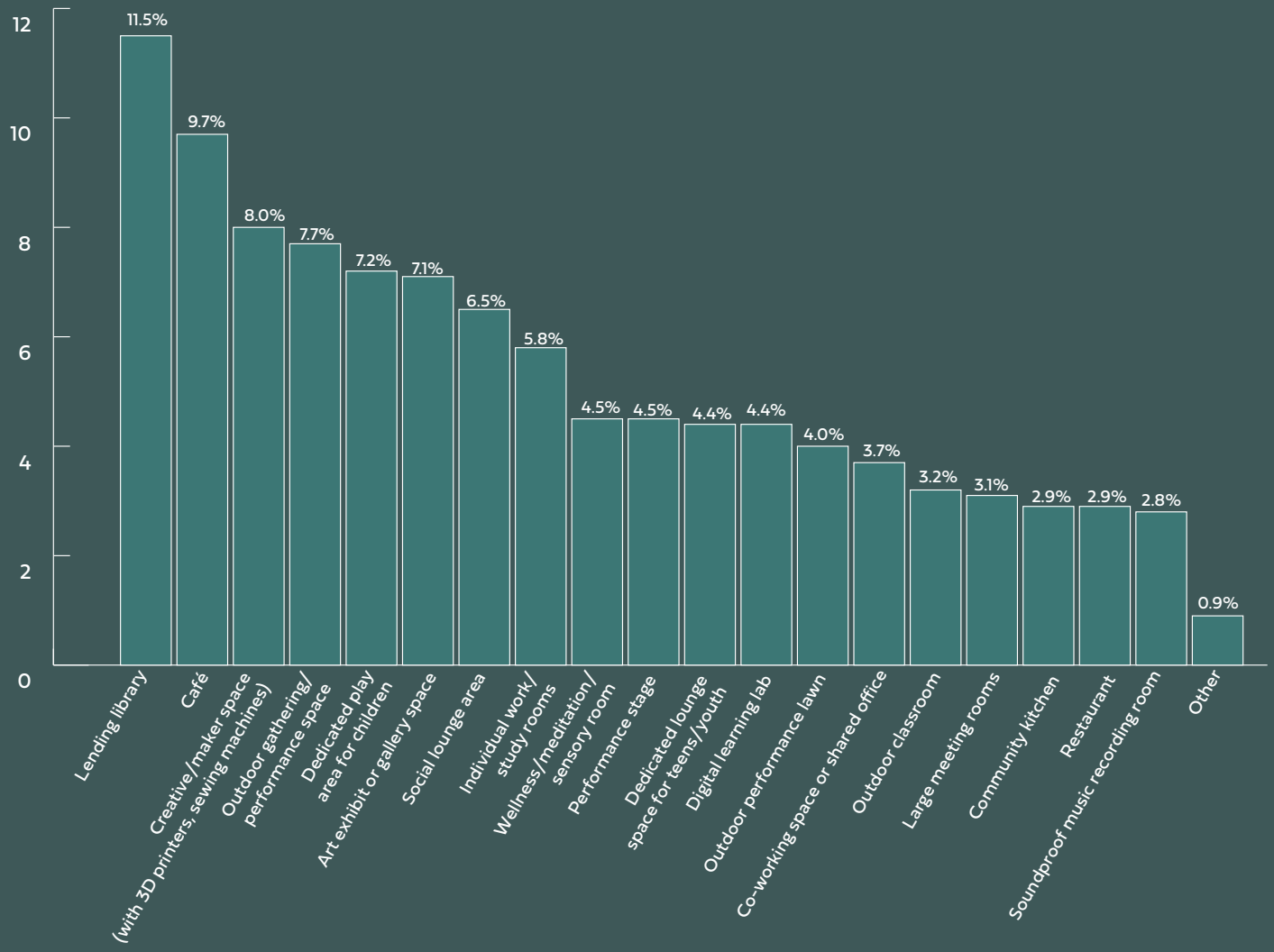


What we Learned

A convenient location emerged as the top priority, with 36% ranking it first, followed by an expanded book collection (21% first choice). Expanded lending options and a wider range of programming each drew around 5–6% of first-choice rankings but appeared frequently in the top three. Personal study/work spaces and areas for social connection were placed in the middle, while food and drink access (30% ranked last) and art or heritage exhibit space were least prioritized.

Together, these results highlight that residents see the future library first and foremost as a central, accessible hub with strong collections, while also valuing opportunities to expand programming and flexible spaces.

Question: "If available, which of the following spaces would you use in a new multi-purpose library building?"



What we Learned

Participants most often selected a lending library (12%) and a café (10%) as preferred spaces. Other highly chosen options included a creative/maker space (8%), outdoor gathering/ performance space (8%), children's play area (7%) and art exhibit or gallery space (7%). Moderate interest was shown in social lounge areas (7%) and individual study rooms (6%), while a performance stage, wellness/sensory rooms and digital learning labs drew smaller shares (around 4–5%). Larger facilities such as community kitchens, restaurants and large meeting rooms were least prioritized, with fewer than 4% of participants selecting them.

A smaller number of participants suggested unique or alternative spaces, such as an atrium/greenhouse for reading, indoor classrooms, kids' indoor playgrounds, museum or exhibition spaces and senior-focused programs. A few respondents also emphasized keeping the library focused on books and reading spaces rather than expanding too broadly.

These results show strong interest in broadening the library's role with creative, social, and flexible spaces, while also enhancing its traditional functions as a place for books and quiet study.

Community Spaces and Facilities

Question: "Do you have any other suggestions for a new multi-purpose library facility?"

...collections & learning...

- Calls for a larger book collection, newer titles and more diverse resources.
- Suggestions for writers-in-residence, author events and more homeschooling connections.
- Emphasis from some that the library should remain focused on books and learning.

... children, youth & families...

- Indoor play areas, splash parks, baby/toddler climbing zones and toy libraries.
- Expanded children's programming and intergenerational activities with seniors.
- Strong desire for dedicated spaces separating kids, teens and adults.

... spaces & facilities...

- Requests for quiet study rooms, private workspaces and tutoring areas.
- Suggestions for sensory rooms, wellness/meditation spaces and more washrooms.
- Ideas for rooftop gardens, outdoor patios, puzzle/game areas and fireplaces.

...community & social uses...

- Meeting rooms for community groups, seniors' activities and social meet-ups.
- Ideas for cafés, repair cafés and skill-sharing workshops.
- Support for satellite library branches in Sunset Ridge and Fireside.

... cultural & creative features...

- Interest in maker spaces, art galleries and black box theatres.
- Proposals for music practice rooms, performance spaces and cultural programming.
- Suggestions for artist residencies and community exhibitions.

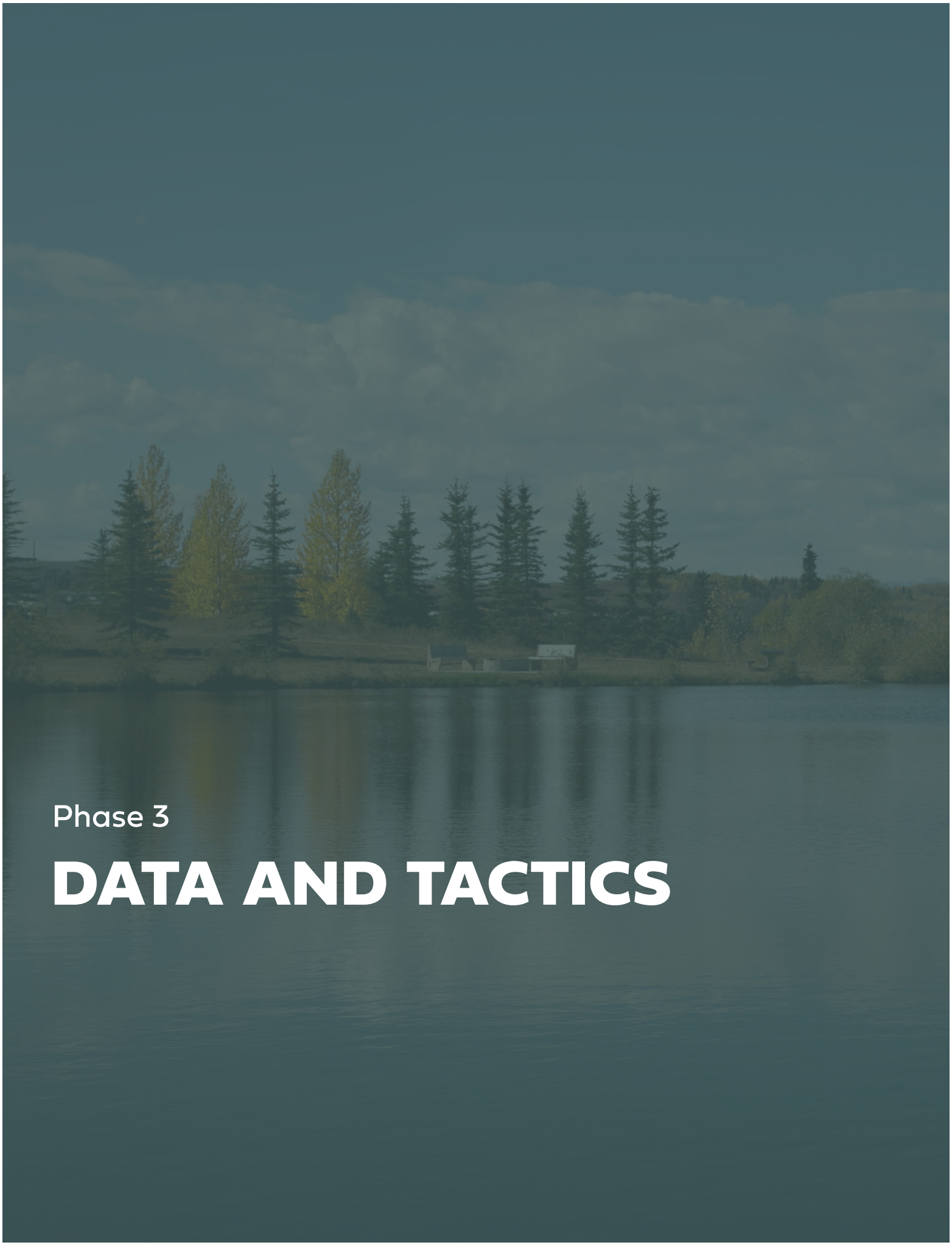
...location & accessibility...

- Clear preference for a central, downtown location with good parking.
- Requests for better accessibility, bike lanes and dog tie-up areas.

What we Learned

The responses reflect broad support for a larger, centrally located library that expands collections, adds flexible study and social spaces and incorporates child- and family-friendly amenities. Many envision the library as a cultural and community hub, while others stress maintaining its core role as a place for books and learning.


gallery room designated
WHAT WE HAVE - DO NOT LOSE OUR LIBRARY + GARDEN SPACE
• garden addition
• bookable study rooms
Pedestrian Bridge Overpass connecting library to
Theatre Story Telling
"magical" entrance to the kids area.
groceries + retail amenities
outdoor / greenery area + coffee shop with light snacks!
Teen space / hangout area
Study Space
3D Printing Workshop
Outdoor Reading + Garden + Coffee Table
Art Display areas + exhibitions
same day Room Rentals
Seed Library
Free printing/ photo copies
Community Services
Study space
Quiet Study Rooms + Studying + Room for Classes
art space play event spaces.
Kids play zone + story time readings
VR place to game
Podcast Rooms
Workspaces meeting rooms
A safe place for kids/
Multiple locations. South + West neighbourhoods don't have amenities
EXHIBITS
Puppet shows interactive activities



Phase 3

DATA AND TACTICS

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

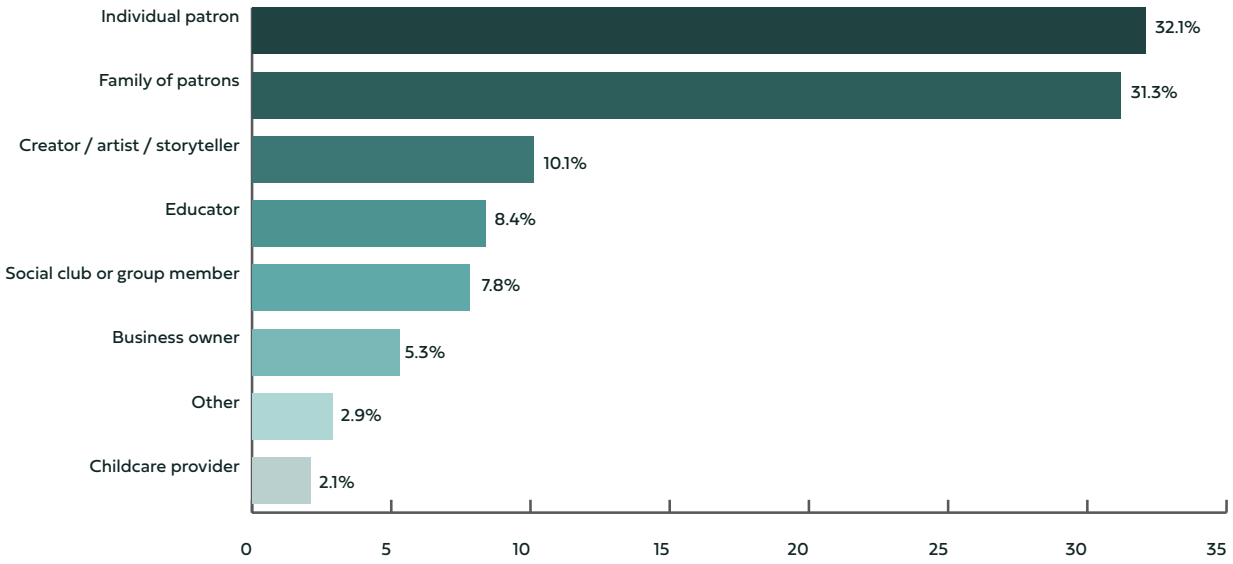
Collection Method

Online survey participants were invited to respond to optional demographic questions. Demographic information was limited to paper and online survey responses only and was not collected for other in-person or place-based tactics to allow people to participate quickly through those methods. Questions were asked regarding role/identity, age, household composition, years in Cochrane, and languages spoken.

These results are not considered representative of Cochrane at-large, rather assist in understanding who responded to the survey and who was reached through communications tactics.

Demographic Findings

Question: "Which of the following best describes you?

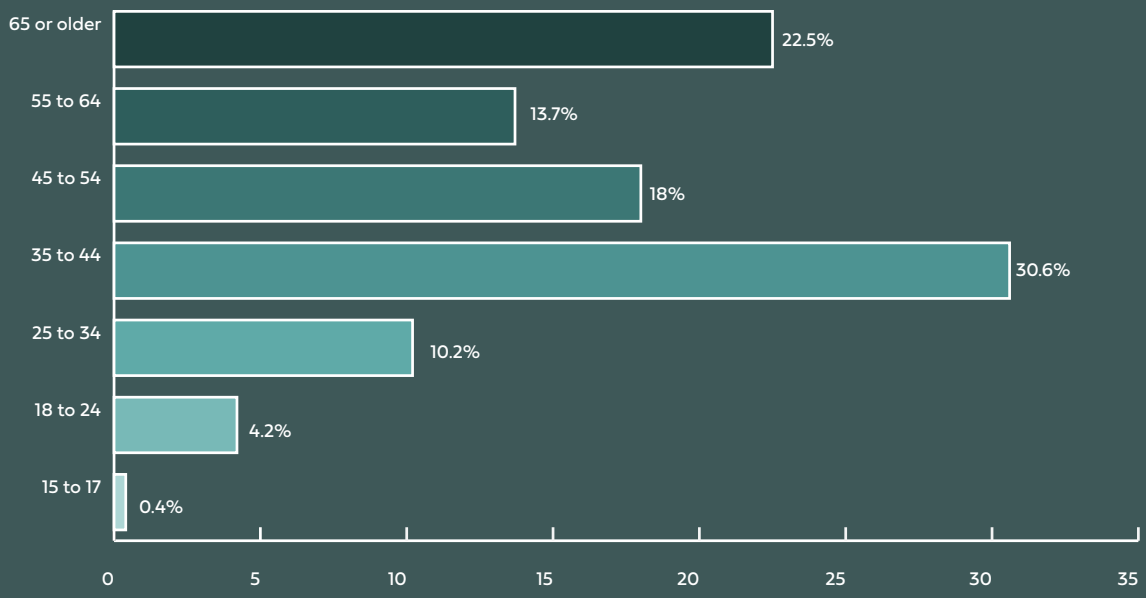


32.1%
Individual Patron

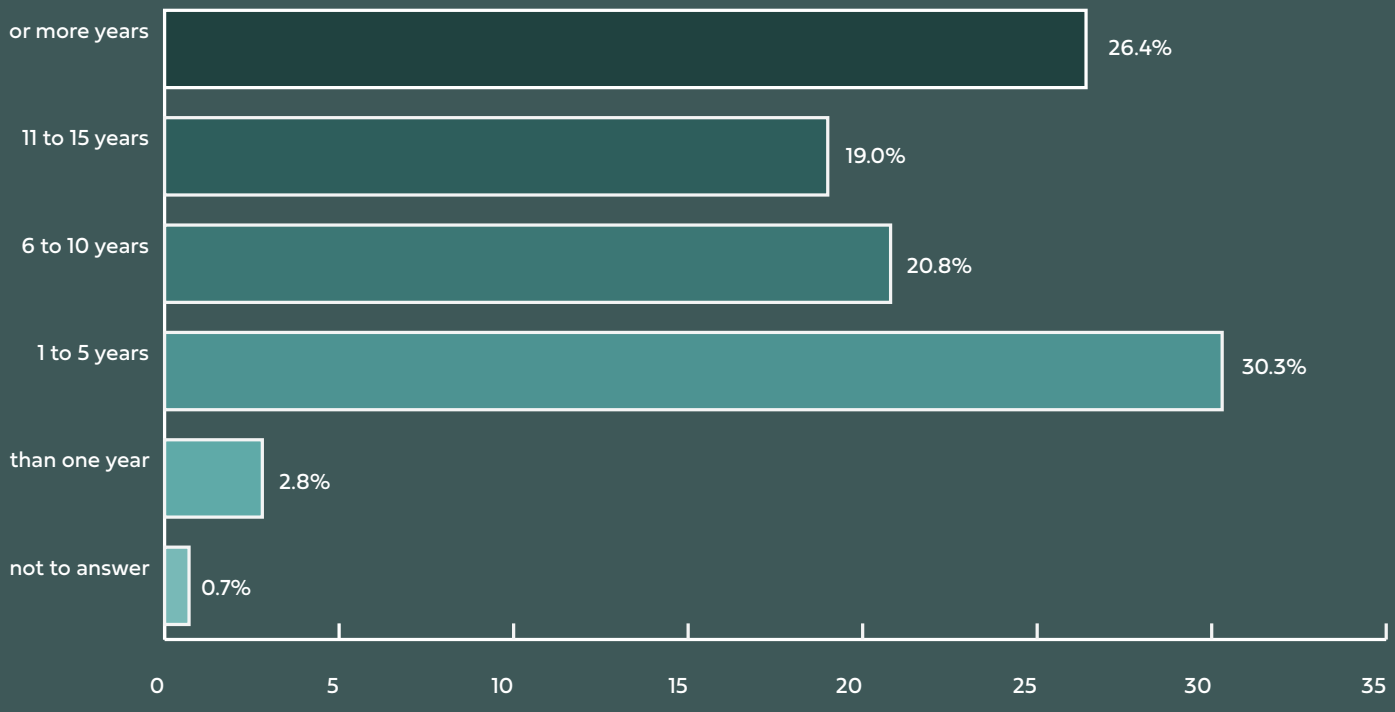
31.3%
Family of Patrons

10.1%
Creator/ Artist/ Storyteller

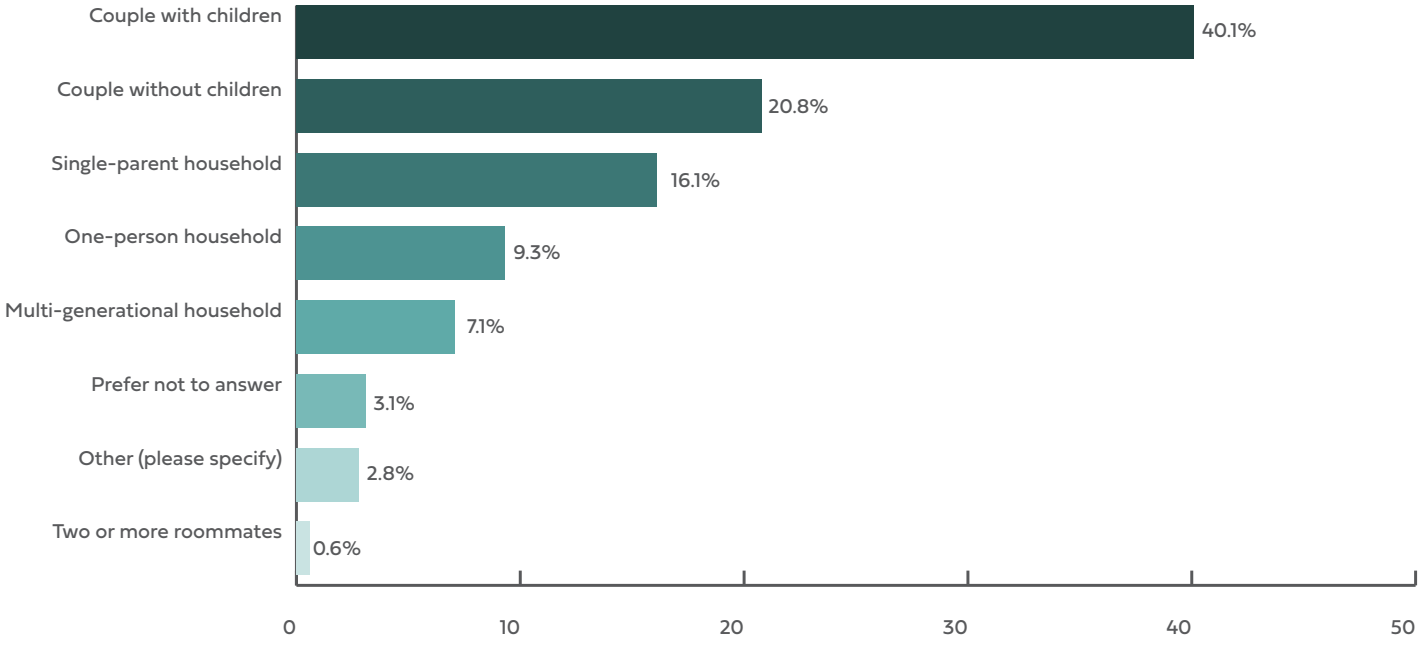
Question: "How old are you?"



Question: "How long have you lived in Cochrane?"



Question: "Which of the following best describes your household?"



Additional Respondent Characteristics

Respondents who selected "other" to describe their household identified couples with adult children, or single-parent households with older children.

A few also noted more specific family compositions, such as living with parents and siblings or being part of a two-parent, two-child household.

Question: "What language(s) do you speak at home?"

84.2%
English

8.3%
French

2.7%
Spanish

0.3%
Tagalog

0.3%
Punjabi

Additional Respondent Characteristics

Telugu	Slovak	Nakoda
Italian	German	Portuguese
Dutch	Mandarin	Korean
Afrikaans	Nepali	Polish
Hindi	Estonian	Hungarian

PARTICIPATION DATA

350+
Total Respondents

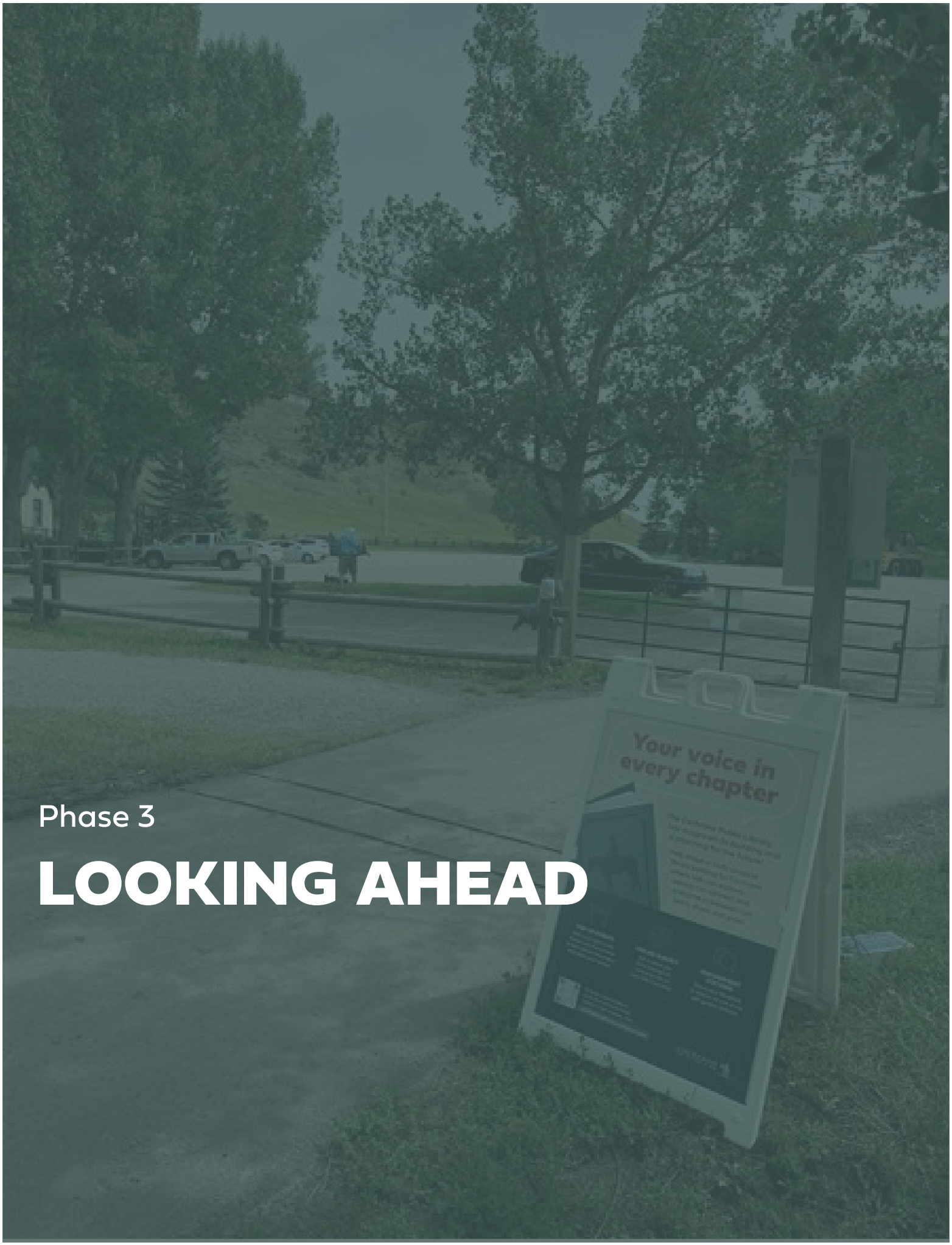
66
Sticky Notes

20
Topic Cards

100
Community Conversation Attendees

40
Paper Survey Responses

226
Online Survey Responses



Phase 3

LOOKING AHEAD

What's Next?

Phase 1: Assess gave us an opportunity to hear how Cochrane residents use the library today and what they imagine for the future.

We learned that borrowing books and accessing digital resources remain the most common activities, while many families, students and remote workers also rely on the library for programs, study areas and social connection. At the same time, participants highlighted important limitations, from a collection that feels too small, to limited program and study space and uneven access across Cochrane's neighbourhoods.

Now, in fall 2025, the project team will use this feedback to assess needs and identify opportunities for partnerships, co-location and potential sites. This work will inform a draft concept plan that balances the community's call for welcoming, inclusive and flexible spaces with the practical requirements of location, design and operations.

Thank you to everyone who shared your voice this summer through surveys, pop-ups and community conversations. Your input is shaping the next steps for a future library and community space that will serve as both a place of learning and a hub for connection, creativity and community life.