DCPL
DAVIESS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Strategic Plan

Approved by: Daviess County Public Library Board of Trustees

March 17, 2021

Summary

We released this public survey at the beginning of 2020, so all of these results are pre-COVID. There were 1462 respondents.

Most public survey participants live within the city limits of Owensboro (42301 & 42303), are aged 31-40, use the library weekly, and mostly check out physical material.

They believe our top three biggest needs are to *Add More Programming and Events, A Larger and Better Collection, and More Awareness/Marketing.*

In regards to obstacles they may face in using the library, the top three selections are *Other, Location of Facility,* and *Parking Lot is Too Busy*. The comments under *Other* include a mixed selection of responses, but the most popular are that they are too busy to use the library, they need expanded hours of operation or programming, or a reiteration of the parking lot being difficult to maneuver.

When asked what they want most from us, the top three responses are *Physical Material to Checkout, Downloadable/Streaming Materials,* and *a Fun and Safe place for Kids.*

As for new services the library could explore, the top three responses are *Expand/Improve Parking Lot, Meeting Space for Groups,* and *Quiet Study Rooms.*

We also surveyed our staff and asked them the same questions we asked of the public. This survey was conducted post-COVID.

Our staff believe our biggest needs are the *Ability to Serve ALL Daviess County in a Better Way, More Awareness/Marketing, and More/Better Technology*.

They believe the biggest obstacles for our public are *Lack of Internet at Home, Parking Lot is Too Busy,* and *Owe Too Much in Fines.*

In regards to new potential offerings or services, their responses include *Quiet Study Rooms, Meeting Space for Groups,* and *Expand/Improve Parking Lot* as their top three responses.
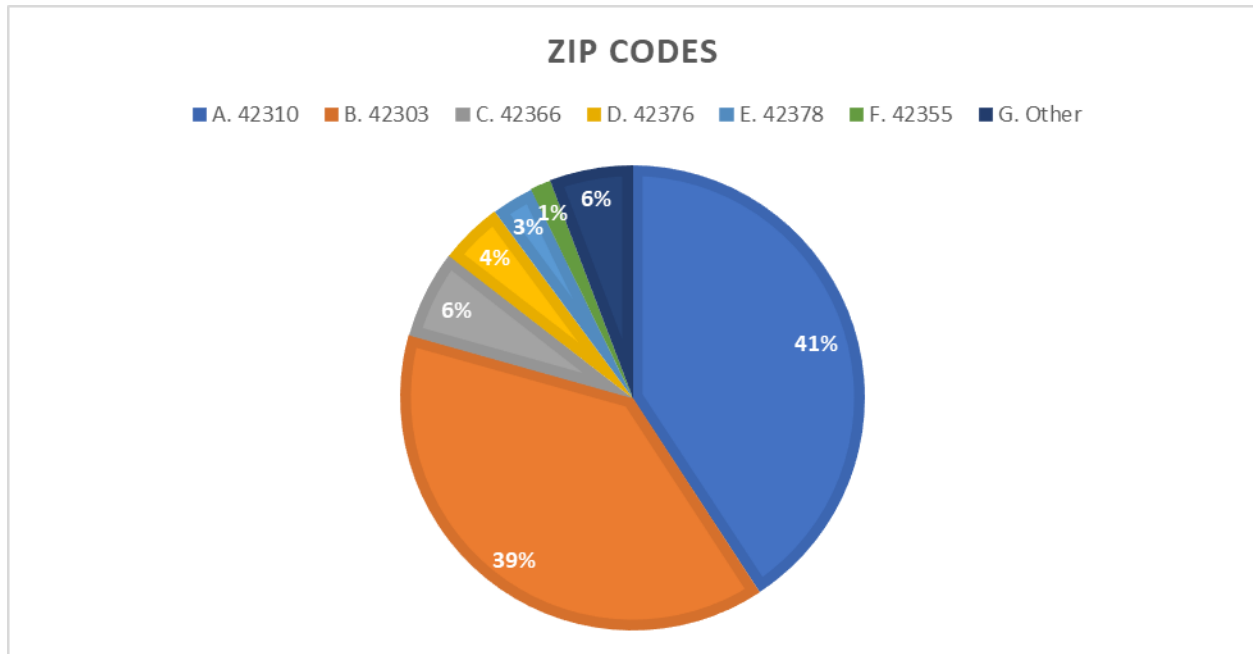
The survey for staff also includes questions in relation to staff and internal relations. These were answered in the form of short answers. Some popular feedback includes, better communication from managers and admin, more staff training, more staff in general, and activities to improve staff morale.

In response to these results, I believe our Strategic Plan should focus on 5 keys areas:

1. Administration
2. Facility
3. Collections
4. Technology
5. Programming/Marketing/Outreach
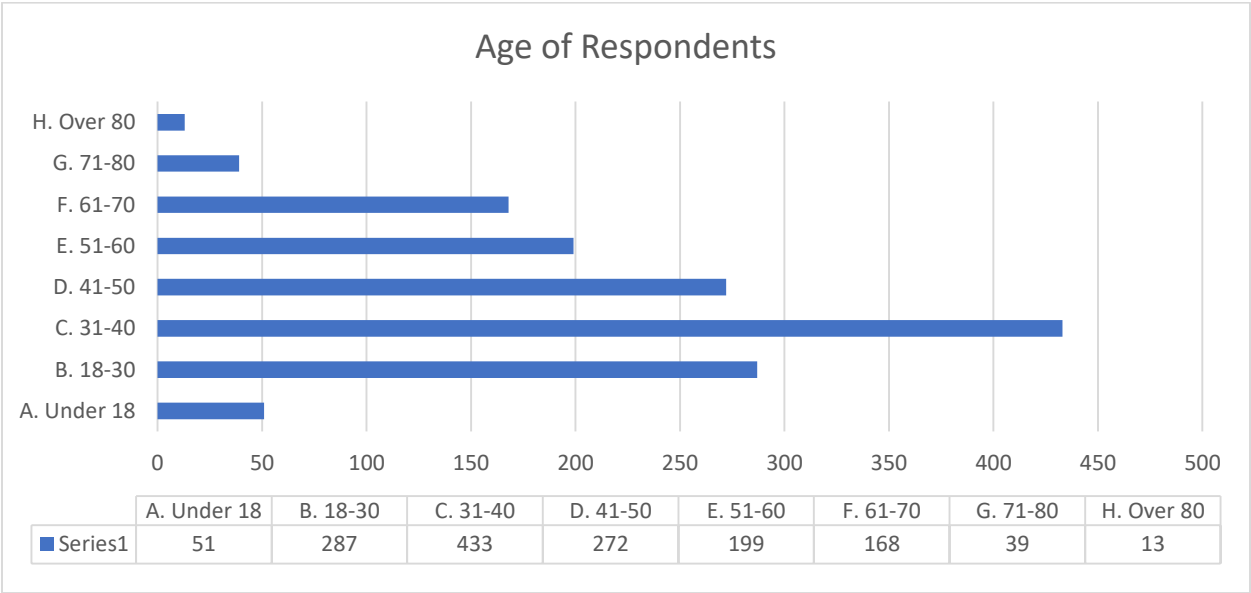
Results of Public Survey

What is the zip code where you currently reside?

ZIP CODES

■ A. 42310   ■ B. 42303   ■ C. 42366   ■ D. 42376   ■ E. 42378   ■ F. 42355   ■ G. Other

- 6%
- 1%
- 3%
- 4%
- 6%
- 41%
- 39%

1,462 respondents representing 31 cities, with the largest responses coming from the following zip codes:

1. 42301   596
2. 42303   564
3. 42366   90
4. 42376   64
5. 42378   43
6. 42355   21
7. Other   84

Choose Your Age Range

Age of Respondents

	A. Under 18	B. 18-30	C. 31-40	D. 41-50	E. 51-60	F. 61-70	G. 71-80	H. Over 80
■ Series1	51	287	433	272	199	168	39	13

1. Under 18   51
2. 18-30   287
3. 31-40   433
4. 41-50   272
5. 51-60   199
6. 61-70   168
7. 71-80   39
8. Over 80   13

How often do you use the DCPL (either by coming into the building or from home)?

Frequency of Use

Option	Value
A. Daily	143
B. Weekly	536
C. Monthly	356
D. Occasionally	316
E. Rarely	91
F. Never	20
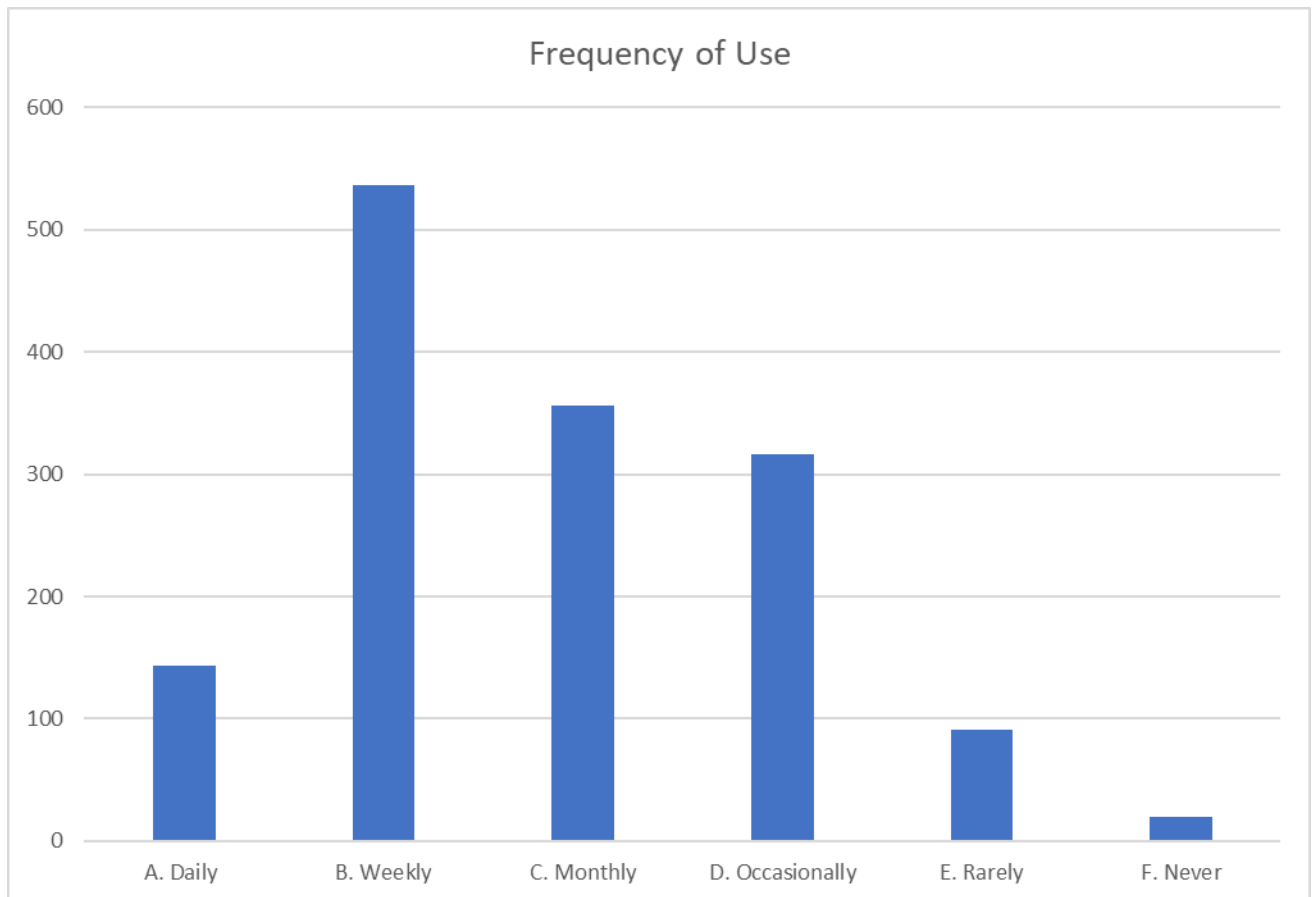
1. Daily   143
2. Weekly   536
3. Monthly   356
4. Occasionally   316
5. Rarely   91
6. Never   20

## How do you most often use the DCPL? (Select all that apply.)

TYPE OF USE
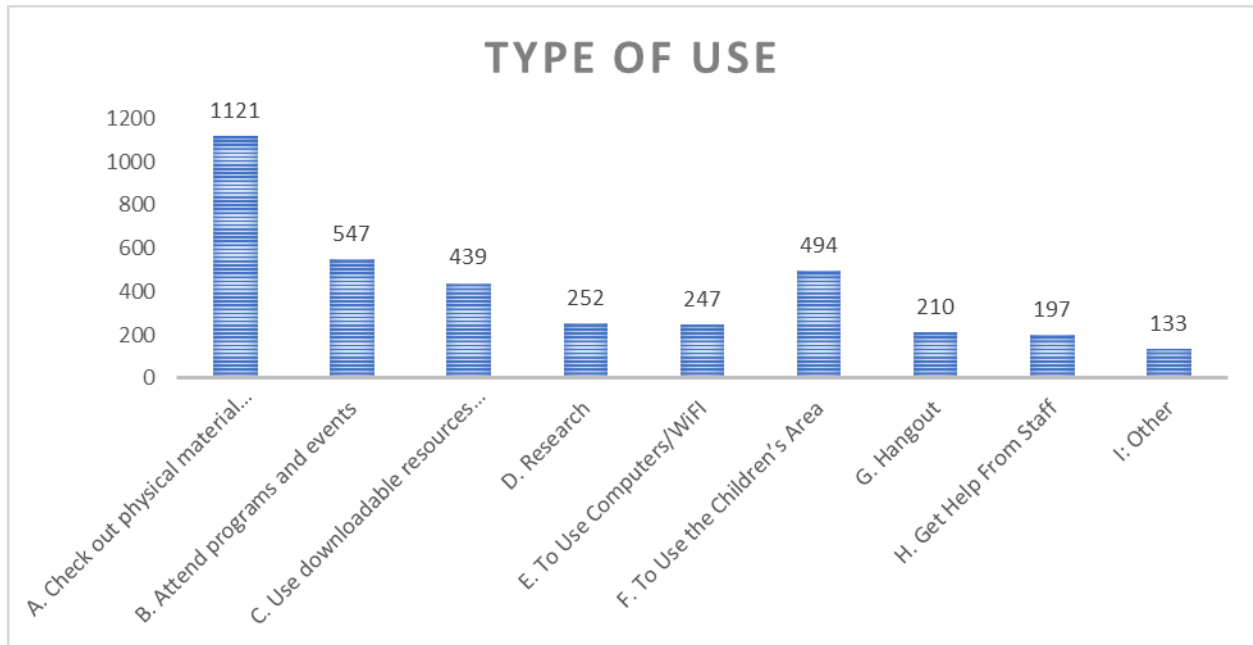
1. Check out physical material at the library	1121
2. Attend programs and events	547
3. Use downloadable resources and/or ELibrary from home	439
4. Research	252
5. To Use Computers/WiFI	247
6. To Use the Children's Area	494
7. Hangout	210
8. Get Help From Staff	197
9. Other	133

Biggest needs of the Library?
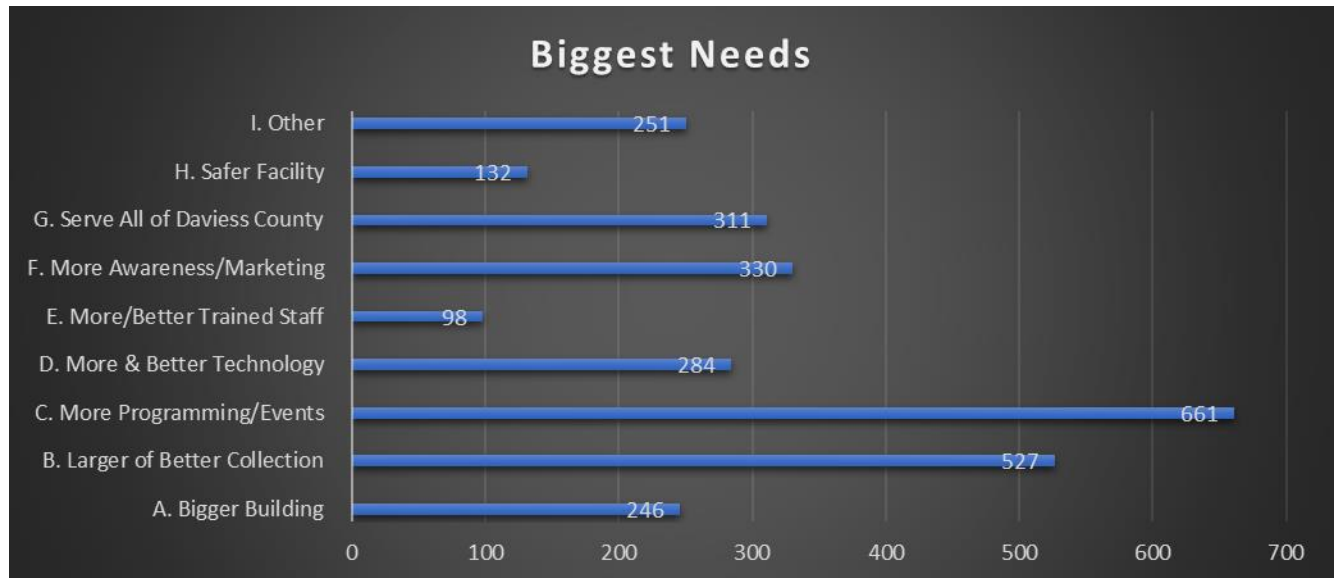

1.	Bigger Building	246
2.	Larger of Better Collection	527
3.	More Programming/Events	661
4.	More & Better Technology	284
5.	More/Better Trained Staff	98
6.	More Awareness/Marketing	330
7.	Serve All of Daviess County	311
8.	Safer Facility	132
9.	Other	251

Biggest obstacles to using the Library?

BIGGEST OBSTACLES
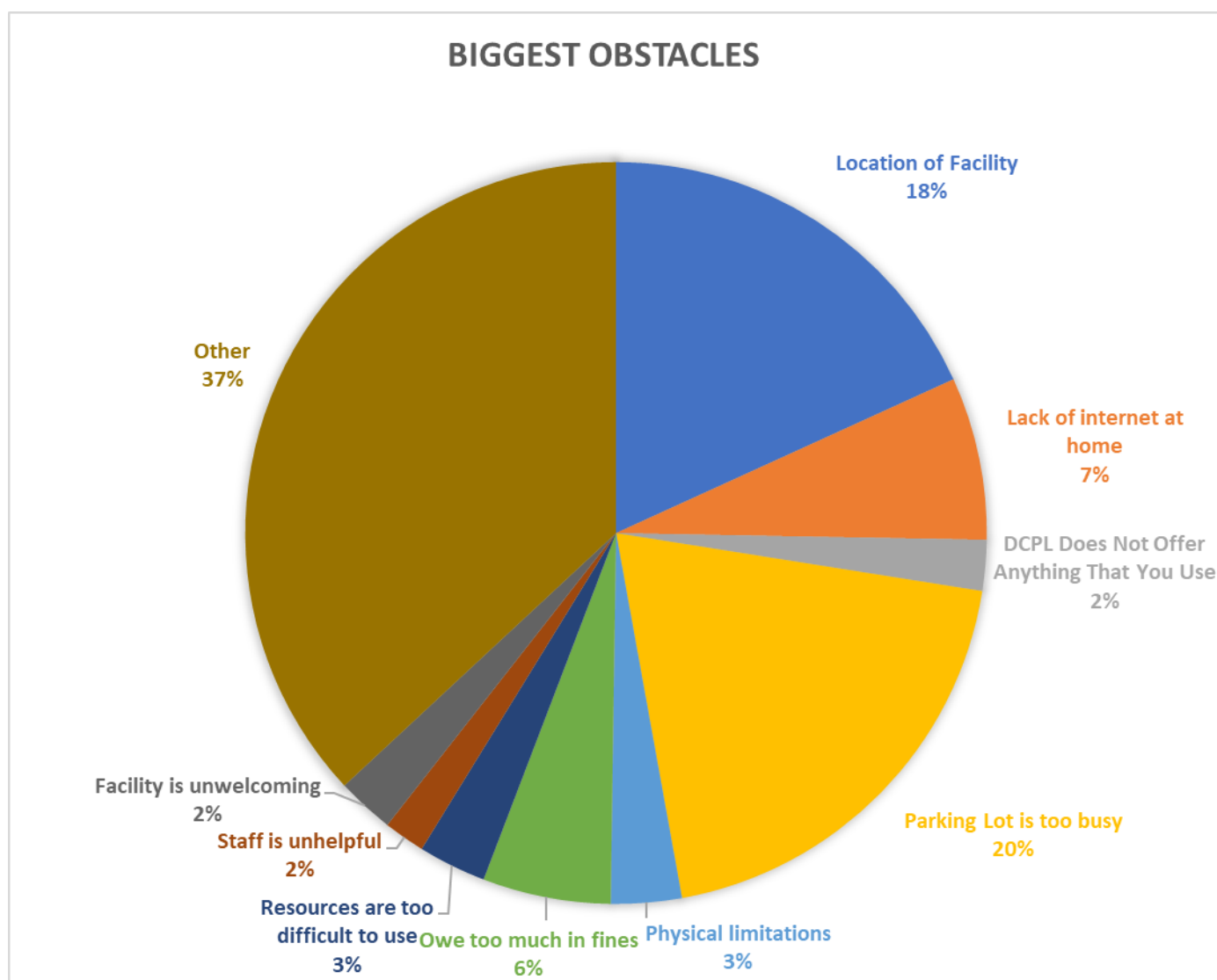
1.	Location of Facility	313
2.	Lack of internet at home	122
3.	DCPL Does Not Offer Anything That You Use	38
4.	Parking Lot is too busy	338
5.	Physical limitations	53
6.	Owe too much in fines	96
7.	Resources are too difficult to use	51
8.	Staff is unhelpful	31
9.	Facility is unwelcoming	43
10.	Other	635

What New Services would you like to see the Library add? (check all that apply)
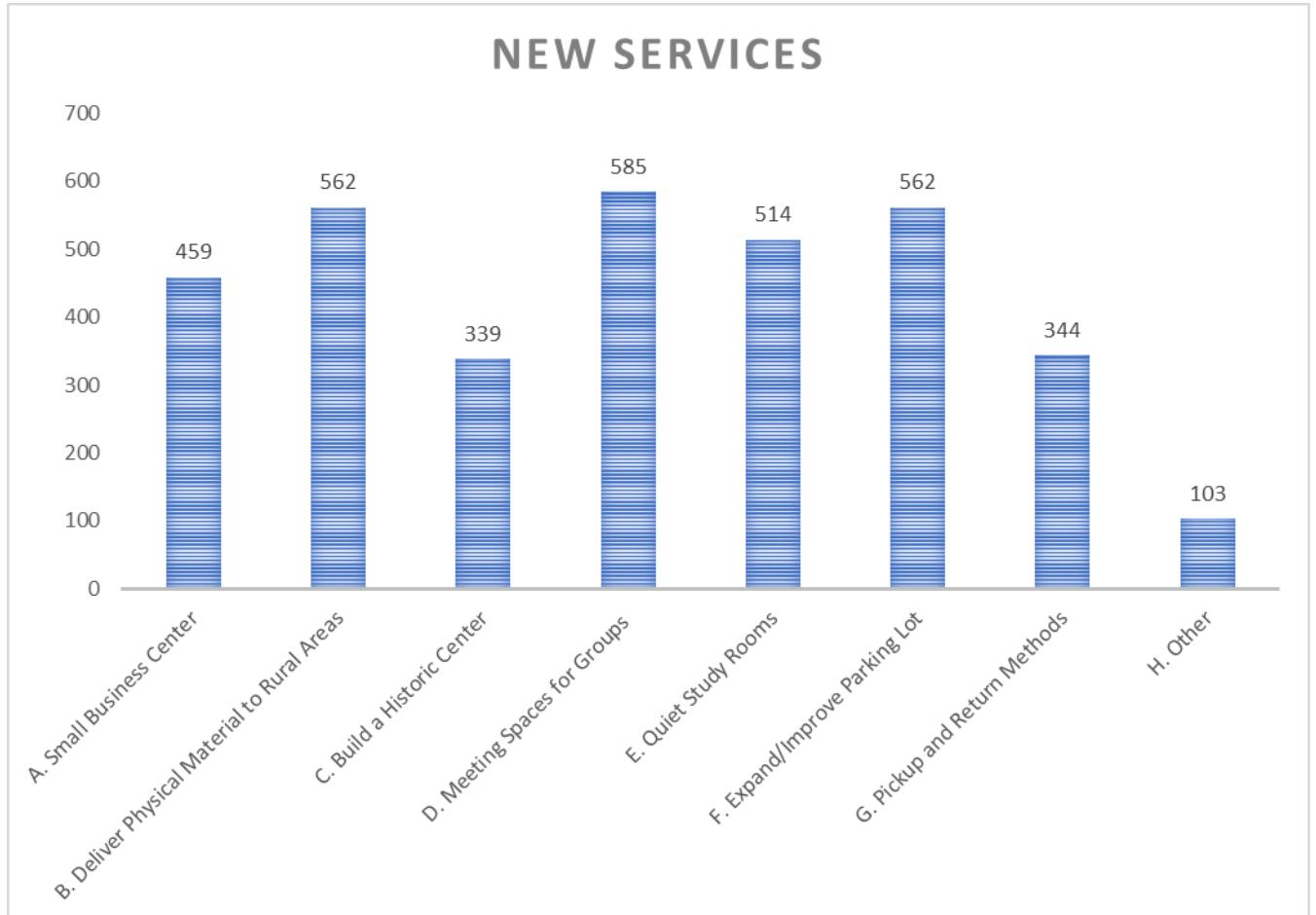
1.	Small Business Center	459
2.	Deliver Physical Material to Rural Areas	562
3.	Build a Historic Center	339
4.	Meeting Spaces for Groups	585
5.	Quiet Study Rooms	514
6.	Expand/Improve Parking Lot	562
7.	Pickup and Return Methods	344
8.	Other	103

Results of Staff Survey

What do you see as DCPL's biggest needs for the public? (check all that apply

Category	Percentage
Other	17.00%
Safer Facility	13.50%
More Awareness/Marketing	48.10%
Ability to Serve ALL DC in a better way	65.40%
More/Better Staff	32.70%
More & Better Technology	42.30%
More Programming/Events	11.50%
Larger or Better Collection	17.30%
Bigger Building	25%

■ What do you see as DCPL's biggest needs for the public? (check all that apply

1. Bigger Building—13
2. Larger/Better Collection—9
3. More Programming/Events—6
4. More/Better Technology—22
5. More/Better Staff—17
6. More Awareness/Marketing—25
7. Ability to Serve all of Daviess County in a better way—34
8. Safer Facility—7
9. Other--8

Comments under "other":

I hate to think we need a bigger building (possibly re-evaluating our space issues depending on the outcome of this survey). We don't offer color printing, laminating, etc. And I still miss the book mobile! Some I have seen have evolved into a mobile media center!

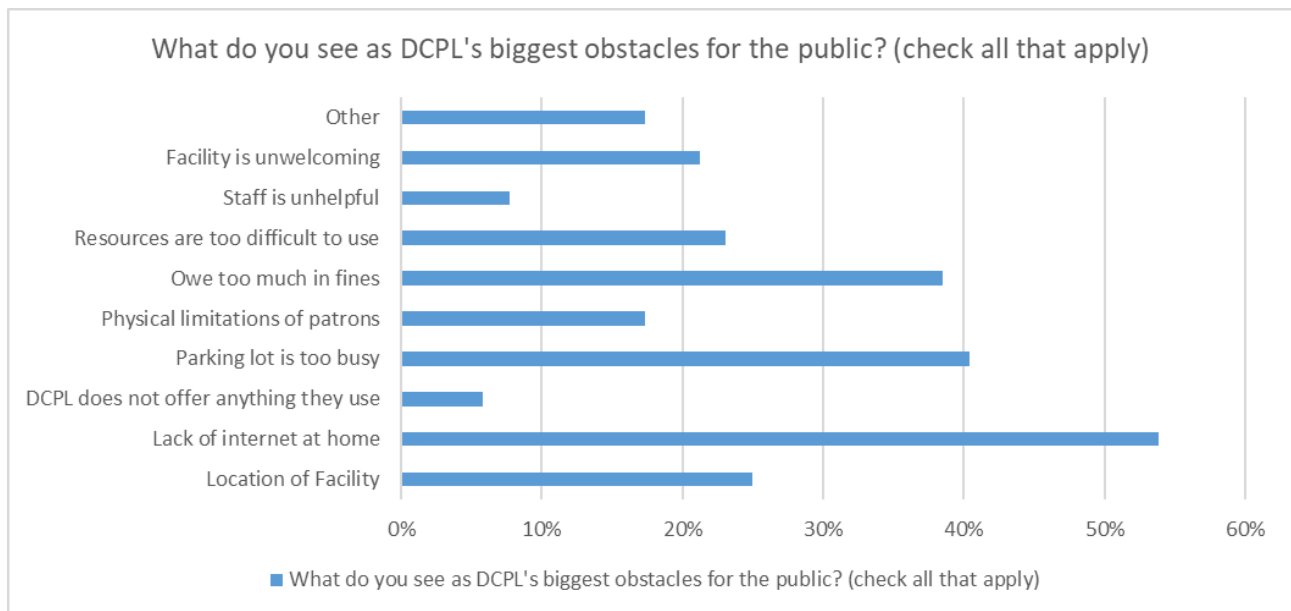*I wish we could consider going fine-free, like many other libraries are beginning to do.*

Update webpage

An enclosed area where people can study without distractions, or perhaps an auditorium for Zoom meetings / presentations.

possibly a branch library for those not in the city

fresh painted lines on the parking lot and bigger entry and exits.

Meeting room available to public

What do you see as DCPL's biggest obstacles for the public? (check all that apply)

Chart (horizontal bar) with categories and approximate percentages:
- Other — ~17%
- Facility is unwelcoming — ~21%
- Staff is unhelpful — ~8%
- Resources are too difficult to use — ~23%
- Owe too much in fines — ~38%
- Physical limitations of patrons — ~17%
- Parking lot is too busy — ~40%
- DCPL does not offer anything they use — ~6%
- Lack of internet at home — ~54%
- Location of Facility — ~25%

X-axis: 0% to 60%

Legend: ■ What do you see as DCPL's biggest obstacles for the public? (check all that apply)

1. Location of Facility--13
2. Lack of internet at home--28
3. DCPL does not offer anything they use--3
4. Parking lot is too busy--21
5. Physical limitations of patrons--9
6. Owe too much in fines--20
7. Resources are too difficult to use--12
8. Staff is unhelpful--4
9. Facility is unwelcoming--11
10. Other—9

Comments under "other":

Most of our staff are fantastic, but I wish staff would receive reoccurring training sessions for dealing with homelessness.

Not enough staff for pulling holds and curbside services.

We're always trying to make resources easier to use, but letting people know they are available is difficult. Even staff have trouble keeping up.
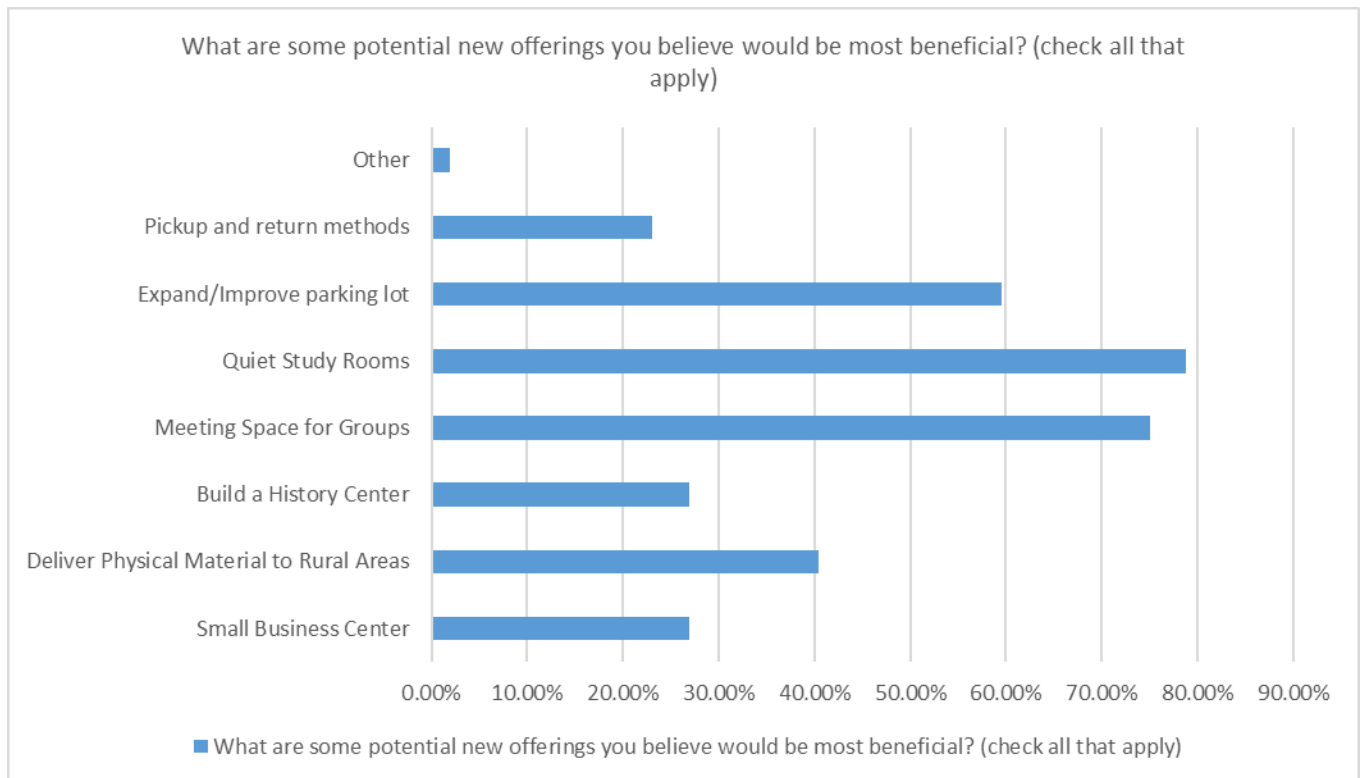
Not necessarily lack of internet. But lack of high speed and reliable internet. Lots of rural households can't get high speed.

Awareness of DCPL offerings; Lack of consistent marketing

Some Nighthawk guards can be overzealous & make people feel unwelcome. Read our Google reviews for a taste of that.

Public is unaware of what the library offers

I don't think it's a library issue. I think it's a people issue. Busy people, busy families, school activities, caregivers with kids and aging parents...where, when and how does the library fit into an already busy schedule? Of course Covid obviously is not helping.

What are some potential new offerings you believe would be most beneficial? (check all that apply)

■ What are some potential new offerings you believe would be most beneficial? (check all that apply)

- Small Business Center--14
- Deliver Physical Material to Rural Areas--21
- Build a History Center--14
- Meeting Space for Groups--39
- Quiet Study Rooms--41
- Expand/Improve parking lot--31
- Pickup and return methods--12
- Other—3

Comments under "other":

Deliver to areas and pickup and return methods could be solved with, surprise, technology: a library kiosk.

Book vending machines

Of course all of these are after the social distancing is over with.

Key Focus Areas

Administration

The DCPL staff was asked to provide further and more specific feedback for future efforts regarding Administration. Administration is defined as the internal workings of the library such as human resources, policies, and management in general.
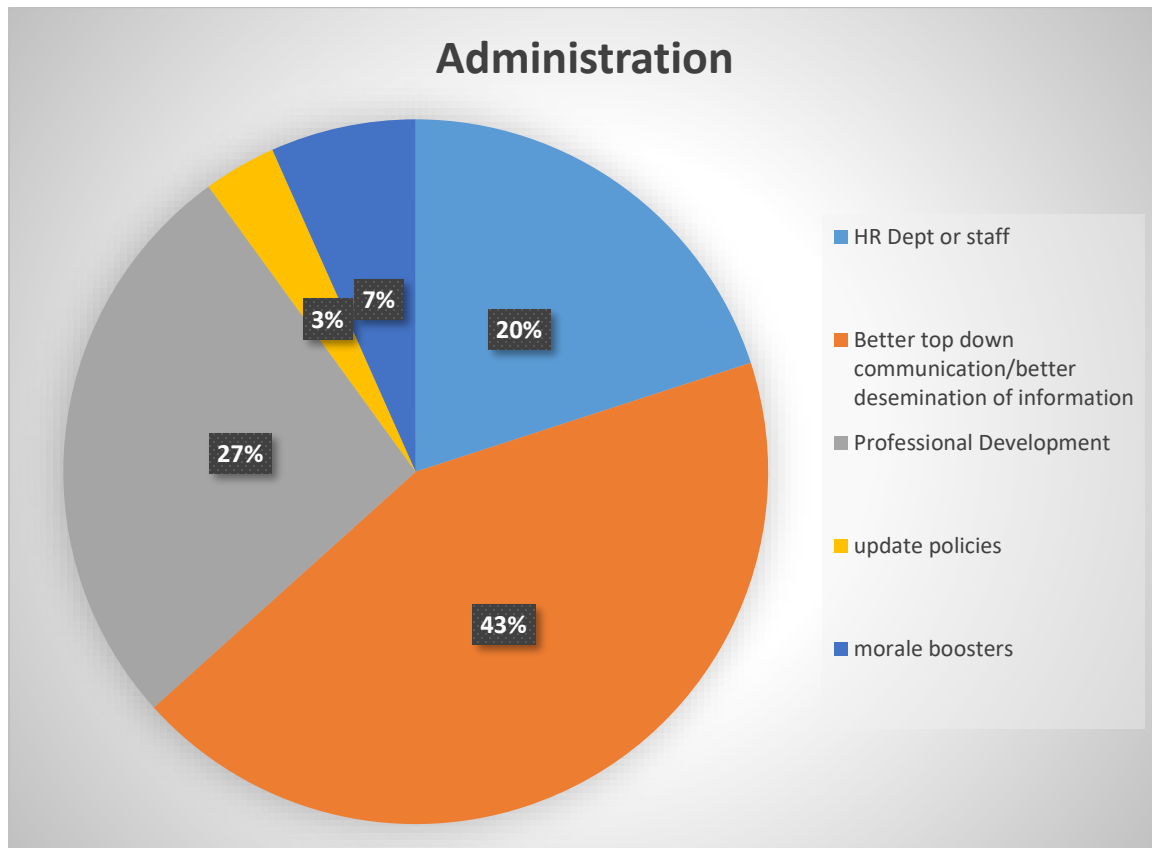
The top three areas for improvement are for communication, training, and the addition of a dedicated human resources staff.

Some examples of good feedback:

We need to have a yearly staff day. In my mind, staff day should not be primarily focused on team building. Instead, I believe staff day should focus on library policies and procedures. Too often, library staff either does not know or does not remember certain staff policies and procedures. Having a yearly refresher would only be beneficial for our crew.

We definitely need to review our policies. After all our library has experienced in the last few years (the computer hack and COVID) we need to look at what is really important. What needs to be revised? Do we really need to charge overdue fines? What would make us more customer friendly and accommodating to our customers? Staff needs to be involved in these decisions. They are the front line contacts with our customers and are the ones who hear the complaints.

Maybe form a staff committee to talk about these issues. The whole world has changed now so maybe policies we thought were important really aren't anymore.

We need to have a Human Resources staff member. Someone who can focus on just the HR aspects and act as a mediator in tough situations between staff members. Someone who isn't their manager because they don't always feel comfortable going to them about certain things. And sometimes it is a problem between a manager and a staff member but they can't address it. I know there is the grievance policy but I just think an HR person would be very beneficial to the library as a whole.

Goals and Tasks

Goal: Improve top down communication

      Task: Quarterly all staff meetings

Goal: Increase opportunities for professional development

      Task: Add Niche Academy for on-boarding of new staff and continued education for existing staff

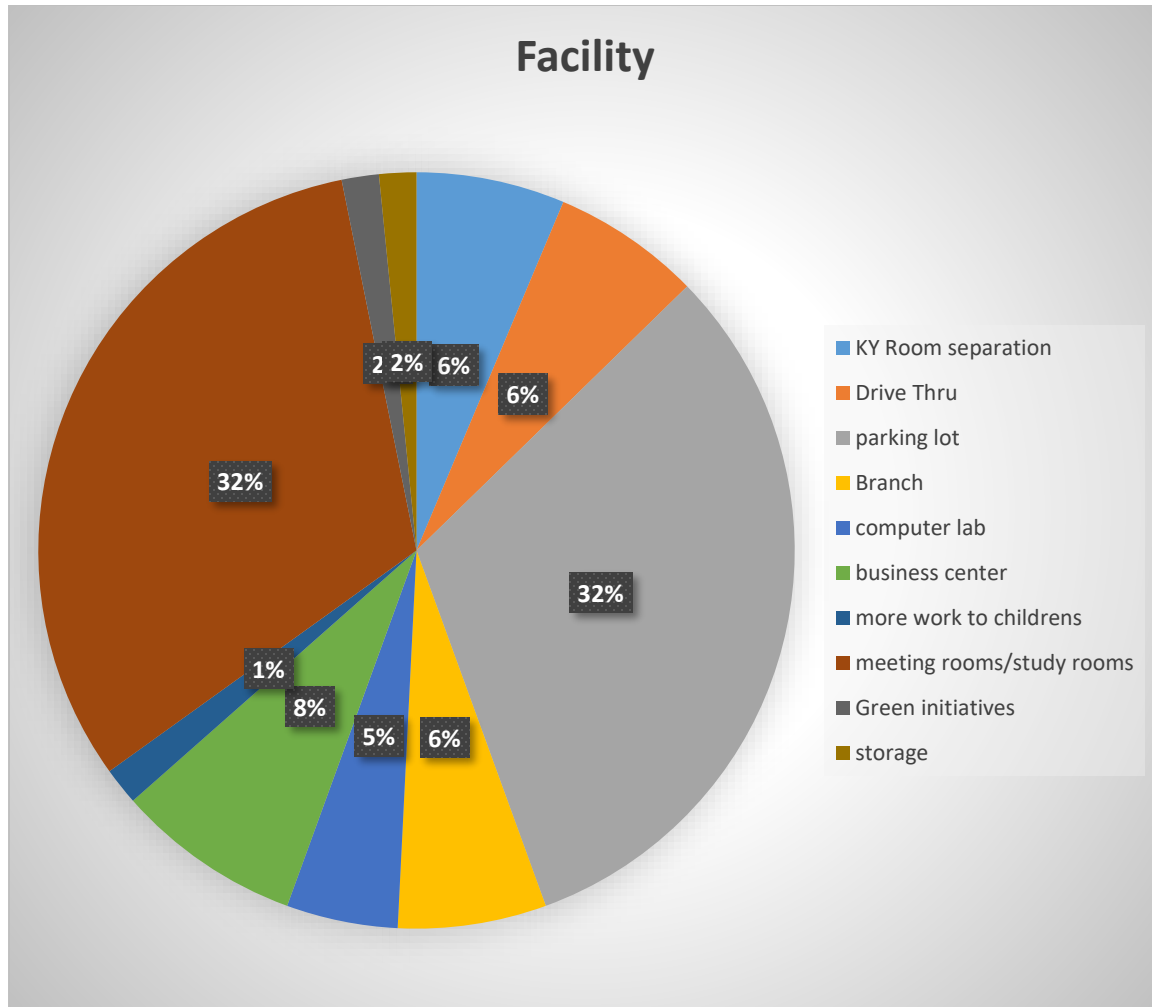Goal: Improve human resources

      Task: Investigate hiring a dedicated HR staff member or contracting with an outside firm

Goal: Enhanced policies

      Task: Develop a disaster plan and policy for the library

Facility

The DCPL staff was asked to provide further and more specific feedback for future efforts regarding the facility.

Facility

Legend:
- KY Room separation
- Drive Thru
- parking lot
- Branch
- computer lab
- business center
- more work to childrens
- meeting rooms/study rooms
- Green initiatives
- storage

Pie chart values: 6%, 6%, 32%, 6%, 5%, 8%, 1%, 32%, 2%, 2%

The top three areas for improvement are for improvements to parking lot, addition of meeting rooms and study rooms, and the addition of a business center.

Some examples of good feedback:

We definitely need to expand the parking lot. I can see the argument for doing it now and for waiting. We have been slower because of the pandemic, and cannot host large programs that make the parking lot fill up. Now also may be a good time to do it because of those reasons. Fewer people coming in would mean that it would be less of a disruption to do the expansion. As a part of Family Place libraries, we have to modify the children's area again to meet the core component of age-appropriate, family-friendly space. Meaning we need to add more of a baby/toddler focus. That might be something to consider when discussing the facility. Unfortunately, we didn't receive the Impact100 grant

to create a business center, but it could be something to consider doing on our own. It would be nice if we could figure out a way to have some quiet study rooms.

It sounds like there are three big ways to improve our facilities: a better parking lot, meeting rooms, and quiet study rooms. For the parking lot, I think it would be helpful to widen the entrance/exits on Ford and Maple avenue, since those are currently rather narrow. I know we were talking a few years back about switching the direction of the parking spaces to make more room, which I think would also be a good idea. In terms of our indoor space, I think it would be nice if we could add 2 or 3 quiet study rooms. Could we partition off some of the areas in the KY Room to create these spaces? In terms of the meeting room, I don't know how we could go about creating a large meeting space, but I think we could create a small meeting room by re-purposing the tower room on the first floor to create a small meeting space.

The parking lot. I think the Ford entrance is awkward (narrow). I wish we had a drive thru window. I would like to see an expandable meeting room to accommodate different size groups. Quiet area or study rooms (I read an article about Northeast Regional Library using acoustic panels for sound issues). I later googled those panels and found acoustic wall panels too). They looked interesting.

Goals and Tasks

Goal: Improve the parking lot

> Task: Investigate the cost and time to improve/expand parking lot using
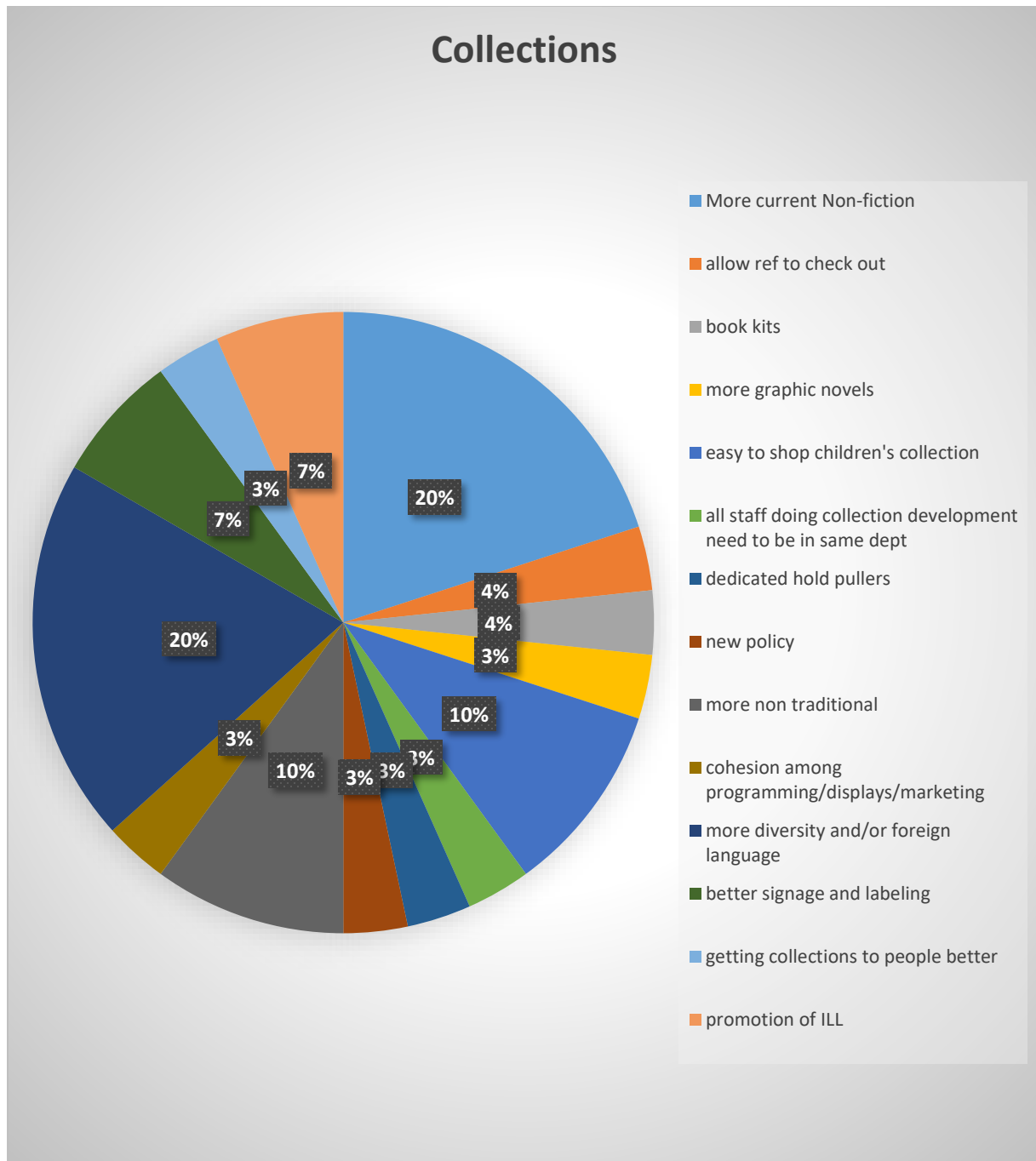
Goal: Add quiet areas

> Task: Glass in 1st floor tower room and a couple of the window bays to create quiet areas that may be reserved for small meetings or studying.

Goal: Business Center

> Task: Add equipment and furniture to new location of computer lab

Collections

The DCPL staff was asked to provide further and more specific feedback for future efforts regarding the collections.

Collections

Legend:
- More current Non-fiction
- allow ref to check out
- book kits
- more graphic novels
- easy to shop children's collection
- all staff doing collection development need to be in same dept
- dedicated hold pullers
- new policy
- more non traditional
- cohesion among programming/displays/marketing
- more diversity and/or foreign language
- better signage and labeling
- getting collections to people better
- promotion of ILL

Pie chart values: 20%, 4%, 4%, 3%, 10%, 3%, 3%, 3%, 10%, 3%, 20%, 7%, 3%, 7%

The top three areas for improvement are for improvements to non-fiction, more diverse/foreign language material, and more non-traditional items to circulate.

Some examples of good feedback:

I actually think we have a pretty great collection. If I had to give an answer I would say we need more diversity. I think the Teen section is doing great when it comes to this. The AV section has a very diverse selection as well. The only time I realized it wasn't as diverse as I thought, was during Black History Month. We had a display to fill where the main characters were black, and I actually found it hard, at times, to find movies filling these requirements. I knew I would never have that kind of trouble for white lead roles. I know it's partly Holllywoods fault, but I do hope that we can get as much diverse roles as we can. I also think it would be great if we could have more adult fiction books and movies that are based around same sex relationships, black leading roles, and controversial topics. It may not be everyone's cup of tea, but we are a public library, which means that everyone should be represented equally.

Almost all of our books and materials are English-language. We have a handful of books in Spanish, but that's it. With the growing number of refugees and Hispanic families in our community, maybe we should start looking at adding more books in Spanish, French, Burmese, etc? I don't know if this is something our community needs, but I think it would be worthwhile to explore the idea (again, maybe through creating focus groups with members from these different groups and getting their input?) I also think we could create better labeling on the shelves to designate different sections. This is a small change and wouldn't cost us anything, but I think it would really help people navigate the different areas of the collection. Finally, I think we can refresh our collection by weeding in areas (like adult nonfiction) that have a good number of outdated or worn-looking books.

Expand non-traditional lending with hotspots and laptops or tablets, make materials easier to find, more shelving, stop weeding classic literature, history/art history (things that no one has but occasionally needs access to); more socially/ethnically-diverse collections, continue digitizing ky room collections and making them more visible

Goals and Tasks

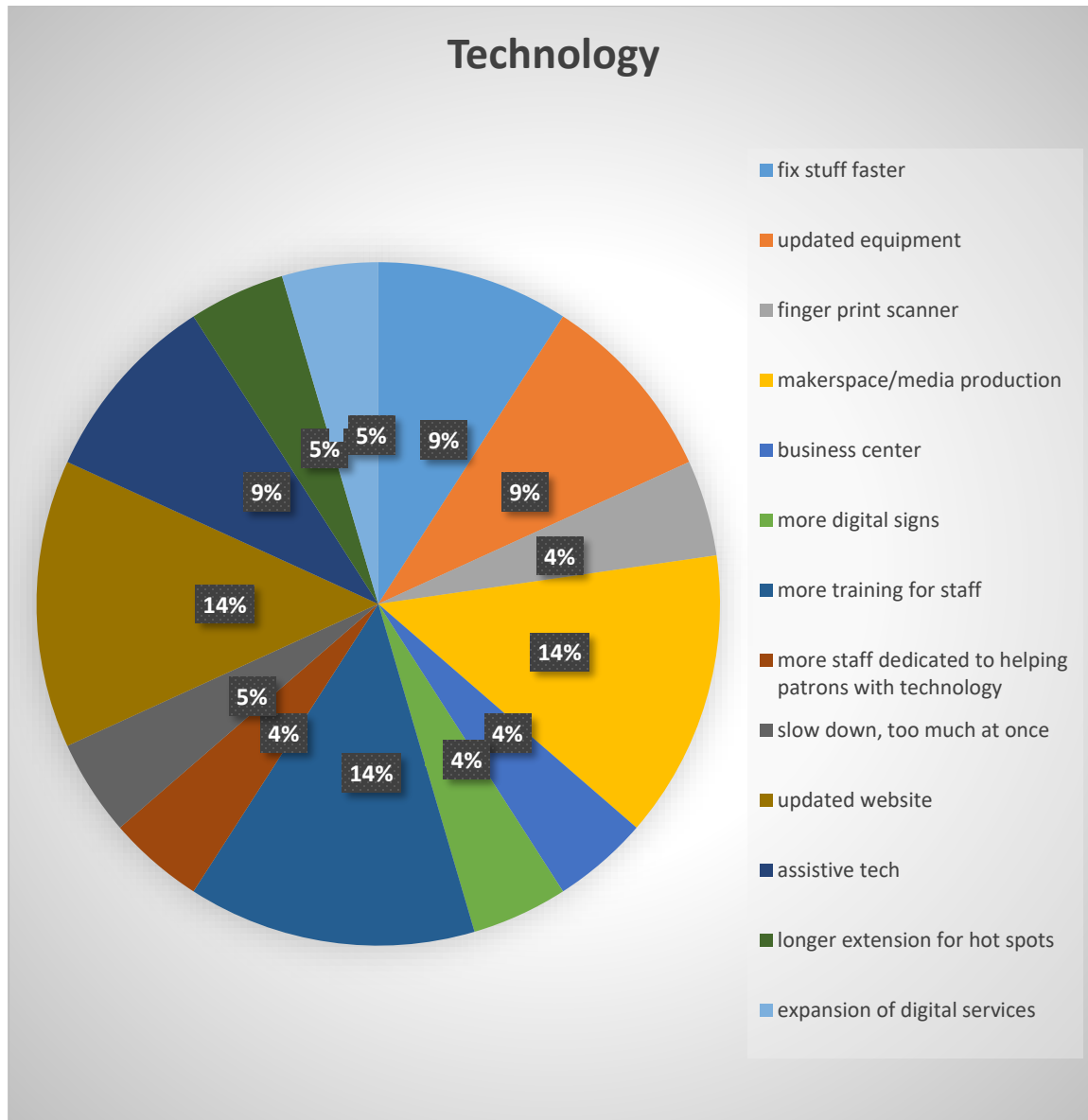Goal: Create more cultural diversity amongst the collection

      Task: Conduct a diversity audit on collection and fill in gaps

Goal: Add more non-traditional items for circulation

      Task: Research other items that may be of interest or need in our community

Technology

The DCPL staff was asked to provide further and more specific feedback for future efforts regarding technology.

Technology

Legend:
- fix stuff faster
- updated equipment
- finger print scanner
- makerspace/media production
- business center
- more digital signs
- more training for staff
- more staff dedicated to helping patrons with technology
- slow down, too much at once
- updated website
- assistive tech
- longer extension for hot spots
- expansion of digital services

Values shown: 5%, 5%, 9%, 9%, 4%, 9%, 14%, 14%, 5%, 4%, 14%, 4%, 4%

The top three areas for improvement are for adding a makerspace/media production area, more staff training, and update the website.

Some examples of good feedback:

The Small Business Center is an excellent idea - Bloomington, IN's library has a media production studio with a green screen, audio recording equipment, and more. This would be huge if we had it. - More digital signage - high grade scanner to use for marketing material creation - Replace circulation self-check PCs with new models. - I've heard Polaris has a web client that is much more user friendly. Googled it and it looks a lot better. - Remount projector in Adult Programming Room to where it isn't angled at the screen weirdly - IT should offer regular training on things like Polaris, LibAnswers, and more. It's easy to fall out of practice with these since they're so new to some of us.

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I would love it if mandated training was included every few months, to review staff's knowledge of our telephone systems, printers, LibChat, or copiers. This would ensure customer service would perform more smoothly if all staff knew the correct ways to answer telephone phones, how to quickly load paper into the printer, etc.

Goals and Tasks

Goal: Better solutions for staff training

       Task: Get Niche Academy as a tool to disseminate and organize staff training

Goal: Tackle IT projects faster

       Task: Investigate adding another full-time member to the IT department

Programming, Outreach, and Marketing

The DCPL staff was asked to provide further and more specific feedback for future efforts regarding programming, outreach, and marketing.
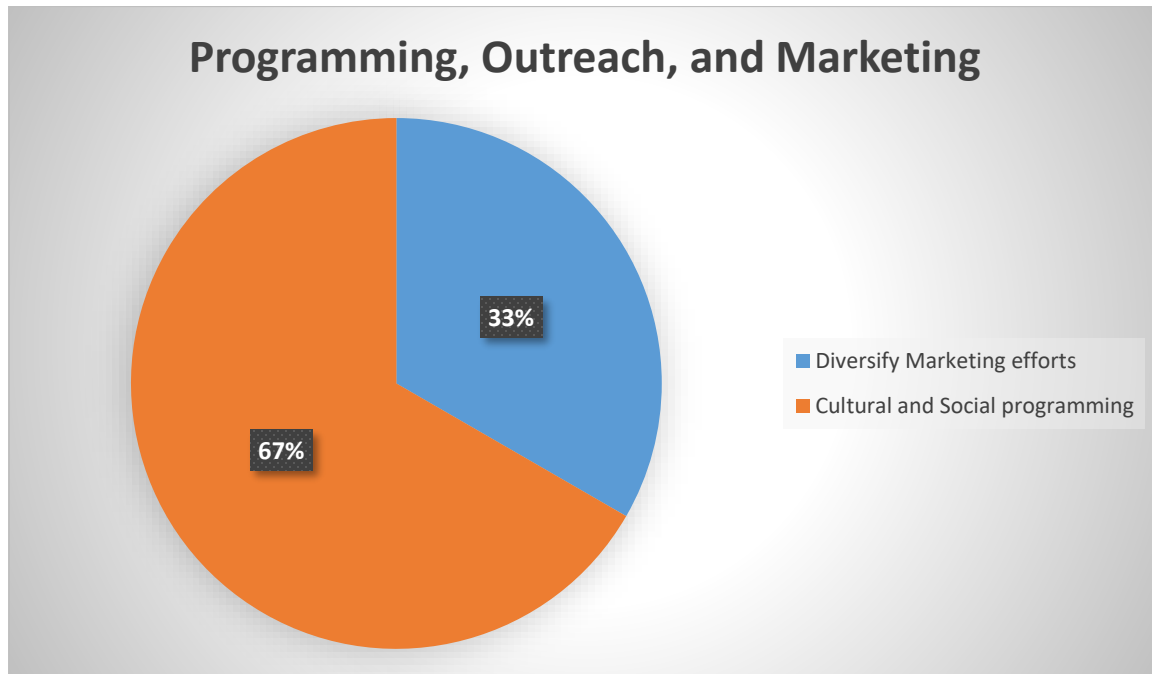
 Some examples of good feedback:

More diverse programming to draw all members of our community. We tend to have the same people show up repeatedly, which isn't necessarily bad, but suggests we're not drawing in new people. We should also try reaching out more to young adults. Most of our programs target age extremes (kids or seniors). -Reach out to underserved populations (black, Hispanic, Asian, LGBT, disabled, homeless, etc.) to see what the library can provide for them, or how we can improve services/programs. We do not seem to target most of these groups with programming, almost as if we're afraid of political ramifications. Library programming is a perfect medium to draw them in and make them welcome. -Our programming could also be more substantive. Take-home kits and how-to guides are great, but programming can also strengthen community ties and heal division. Popular past programs like Conversations on Race and the Human Library brought all walks of life together to discuss issues and expand minds, while also showing our relevance. Right now, there is no alternative in the community for these types of programs, so the library could capitalize on that need. -Social media graphics/informative posters should be tested for accessibility before being posted. There are websites that check for Section 508 compliance, colorblind readability, screen reader compatibility, etc. (e.g., CynthiaSays). Most of the posters for programs are too cluttered and overloaded with information.

All marketing by DCPL should have a consistent/professional look to it. DCPL should be its own brand. The marketing now looks random, as though it is done by many different people without a common mission. Marketing should also be in many forms on multiple platforms, not just social media. Billboards, radio, flyers around town just to name a few examples. Items that are given

away (craft bags) and freebies should also have the DCPL logo on them. We should be focusing on making a DCPL a brand that is instantly recognized. Digital collections need to be advertised much more than they are currently. Ads in both print and digital formats (Messenger Inquirer, Owensboro Parent, Owensboro Times) would be helpful in getting the word out about these collections.

<u>Goals and Tasks</u>

Goal: Create a more culturally and socially diverse and inclusive programming and event plan

      Task: Conduct a diversity audit on programming

Goal: Create more consistency and organization in marketing efforts

      Task: Investigate hiring a marketing consultant

Goal: Consider different and unique programming

      Task: Conduct a programming survey