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INTRODUCTION

Today's libraries are subject to high levels of scrutiny from their constituent groups pertaining to budgeting, allocation of resources, and response to user needs and desires. As the strategic planning process begins, it is vital to be in tune with the thoughts of all of these groups – users, taxpayers, and community partners. An effective community needs assessment provides a framework for the library to allocate resources most effectively according to the needs of its community, remain relevant to its patrons, and help position it to react to changing trends in the future.

This report will provide information on circulation statistics, use of library services and programs, and district demographics, as well as feedback from Itasca residents, staff members, community leaders, and board members of Itasca Community Library.

CIRCULATION TRENDS

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	Change from 2011-2012 to 2013-2014
Books - Fiction	67,057	65,983	55,583	-17.11%
Books - Nonfiction	24,556	22,020	18,916	-22.97%
DVDs - Fiction	31,162	29,672	23,215	-25.50%
DVDs - Nonfiction	1,793	1,599	1,247	-30.45%
CDs - Audiobooks	3,390	3,120	3,217	-5.10%
CDs - Music	6,825	6,071	5,294	-22.43%
Magazines	3,131	2,755	2,152	-31.27%
Other Formats	11,344	12,170	10,243	-9.71%
Electronic Books	1,428	2,639	3,057	114.08%
Electronic Audiobooks	917	931	1,209	31.84%

Change in Circulation from 2011-2012 to 2013-2014
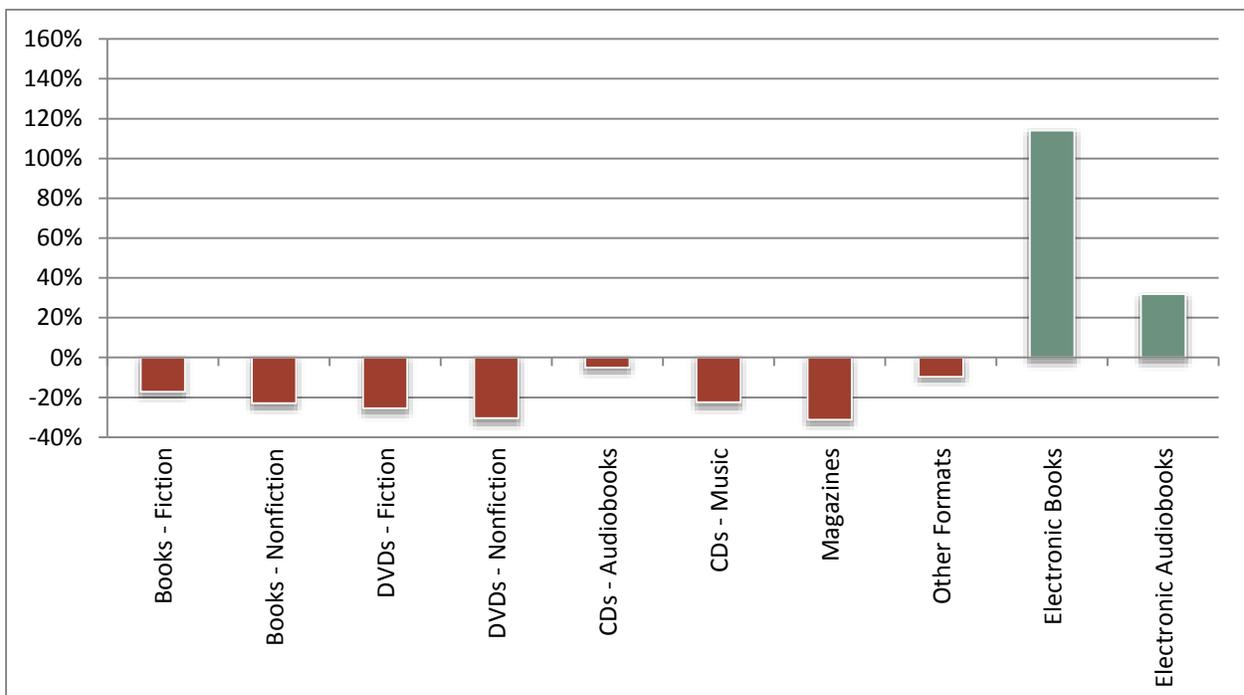
DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Population Age by Geography
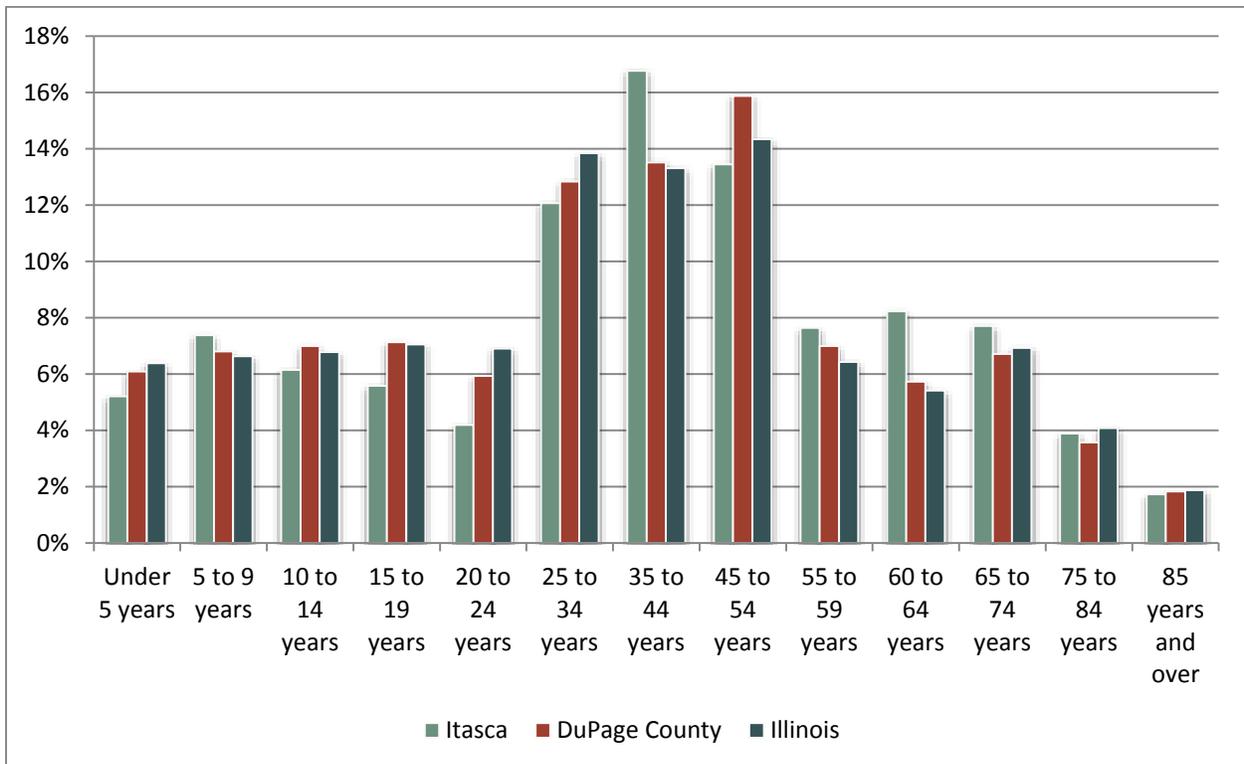
Source: 2009 – 2013 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

Home to 8,442 residents, Itasca's population is slightly older than that of DuPage County and the State of Illinois. The median age of Itasca's population is 40.9 years compared to 38.4 years for DuPage County residents and 36.8 for those throughout Illinois (American Community Survey, 2009-2013 Five-Year Estimates).

Nearly one in four Itasca residents is an immigrant: 1,986 (23.5%) Itasca residents are foreign-born, with 53.7% of these being naturalized U.S. citizens and 46.3% non-U.S. citizens (American Community Survey, 2009-2013 Five-Year Estimates). The large majority of the immigrant population entered the U.S. before 2010 (97.6%).

Educational Attainment of the Population 25 Years and Over
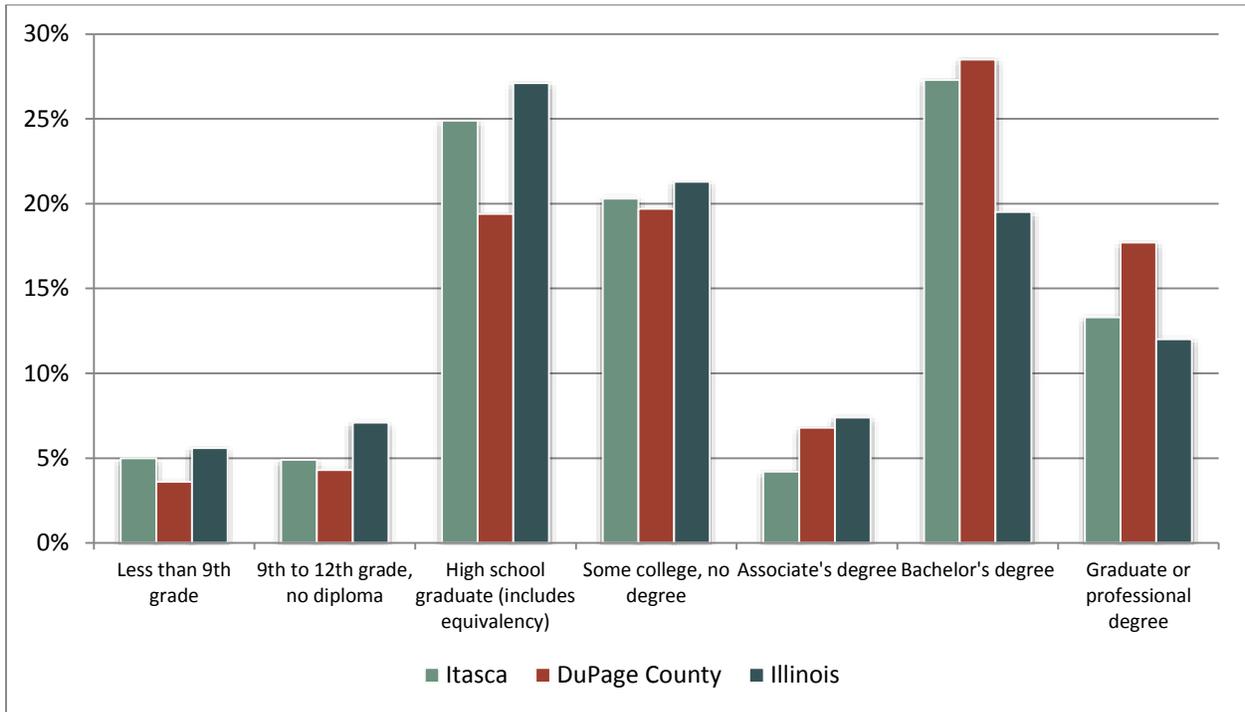
Source: 2009 – 2013 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

As illustrated the chart above, Itasca is a well-educated city, with 40.6% of its population over 25 holding a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 46.2% of DuPage County and 31.5% of Illinois.

Number of Households by Income
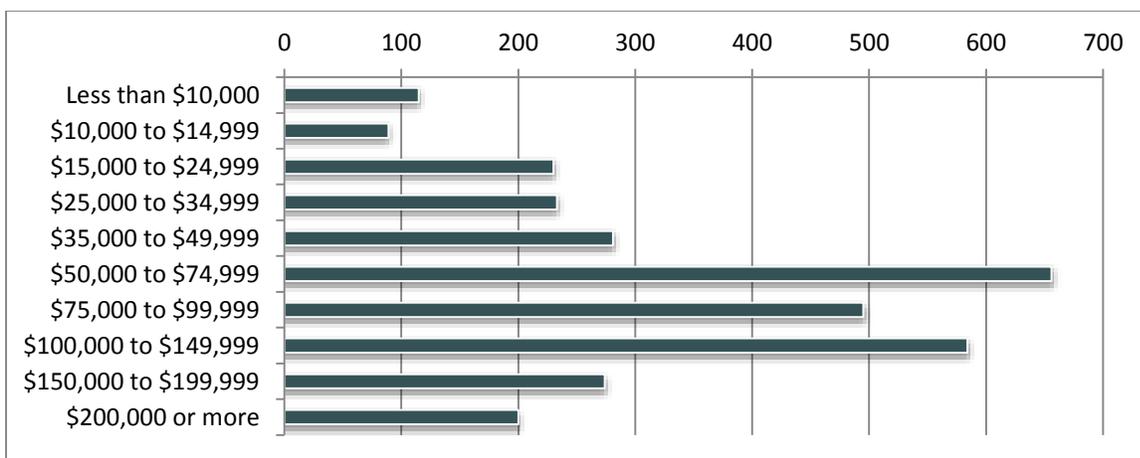
Source: 2009 – 2013 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

The median household annual income of Itasca residents, according to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, was $74,387. In comparison, the median household annual income was $78,487 for DuPage County and $56,797 for Illinois.

Race and Ethnicity

Race	Number of Itasca Residents	Percent of Itasca Population
White	6,814	80.7%
Black or African-American	56	0.7%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0	0.0%
Asian	879	10.4%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
Some Other Race	291	3.4%
Two or More Races	402	4.8%
Total	8,442	100%

Source: 2009 – 2013 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

The racial makeup of the Itasca population is listed above. In addition, 14.7% of the population identifies as Latino.

Language Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and Over

|	Speak English "very well"	Speak English less than "very well"
Spanish or Spanish Creole	427	250
French (incl. Patois, Cajun)	32	14
Italian	177	108
German	78	0
Greek	53	31
Polish	418	312
Other Slavic languages	2	0
Gujarati	25	93
Hindi	109	0
Urdu	160	69
Other Indic languages	33	17
Other Indo-European languages	21	0
Chinese	27	0
Japanese	26	25
Korean	112	43
Tagalog	22	0
Other and unspecified languages	10	0

Source: 2009 – 2013 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Community Survey

The survey was returned by 436 individuals, representing 1,192 household members. Please note that throughout this report, survey responses are reproduced without alteration unless denoted by bracketed additions for clarity.
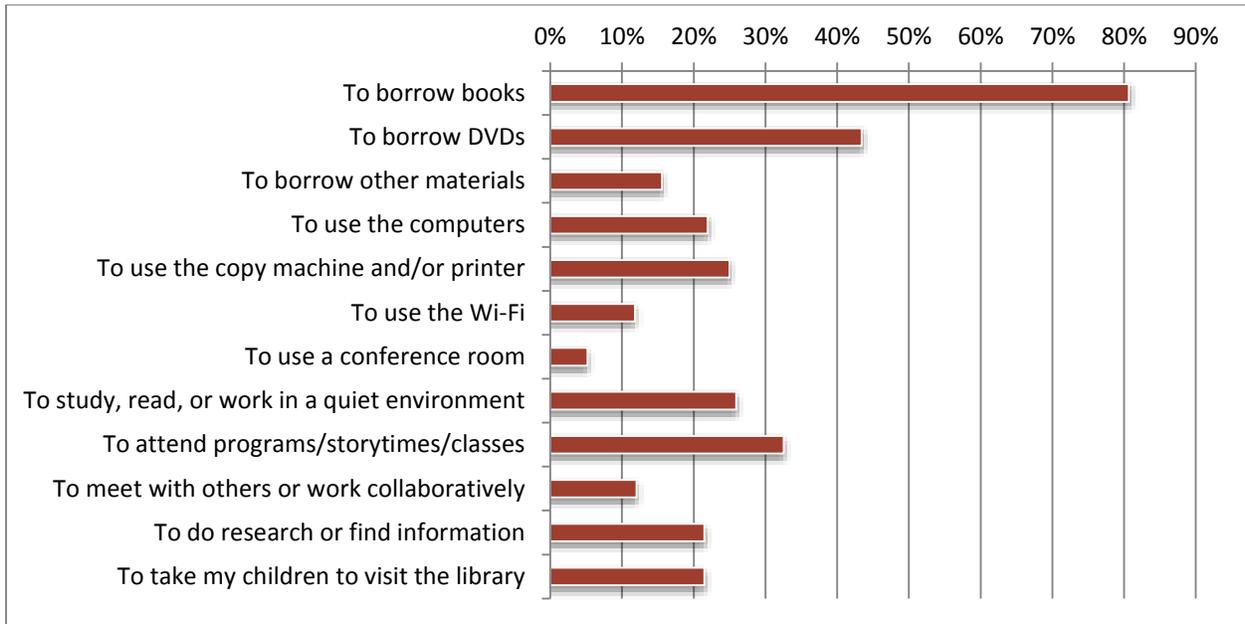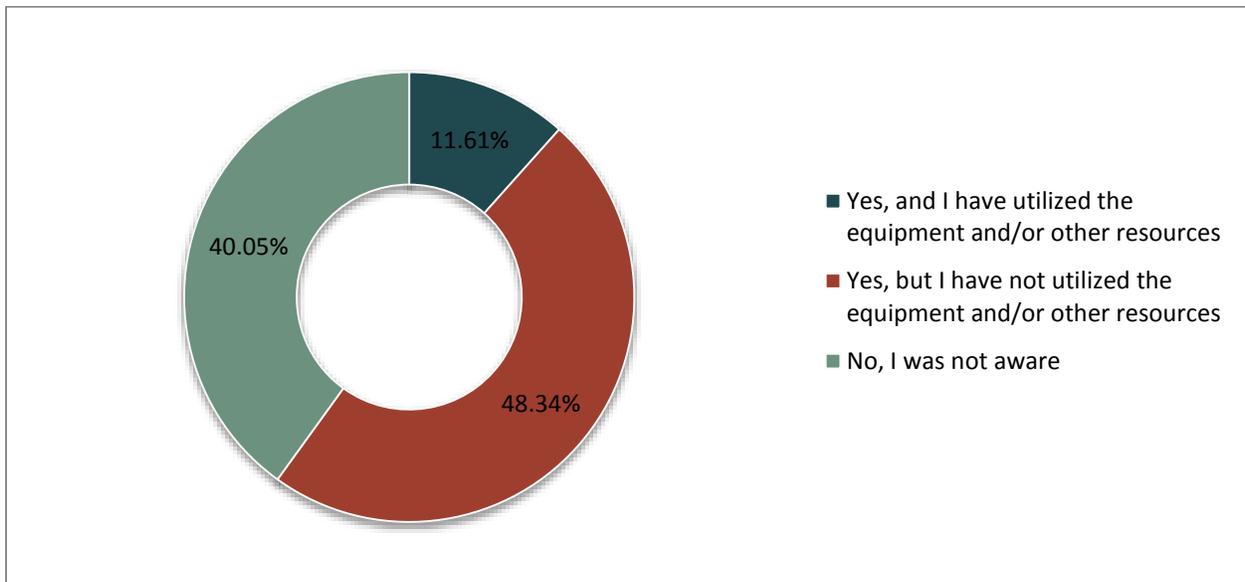
How often do you visit the library?
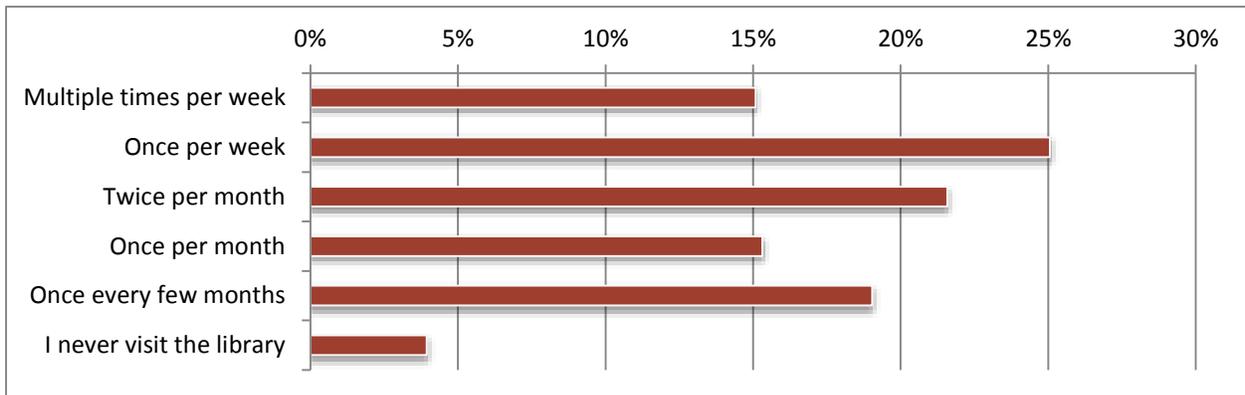
Which factors prevent you from using the main library more often, if any? (Please check all that apply.)
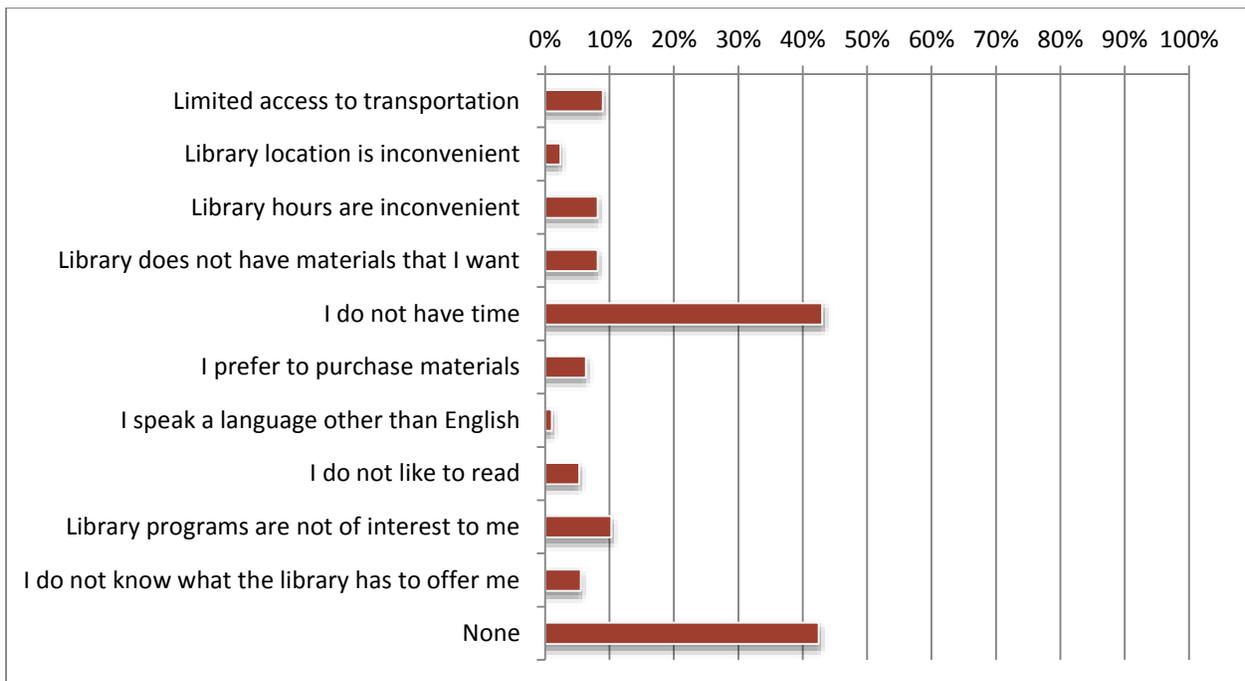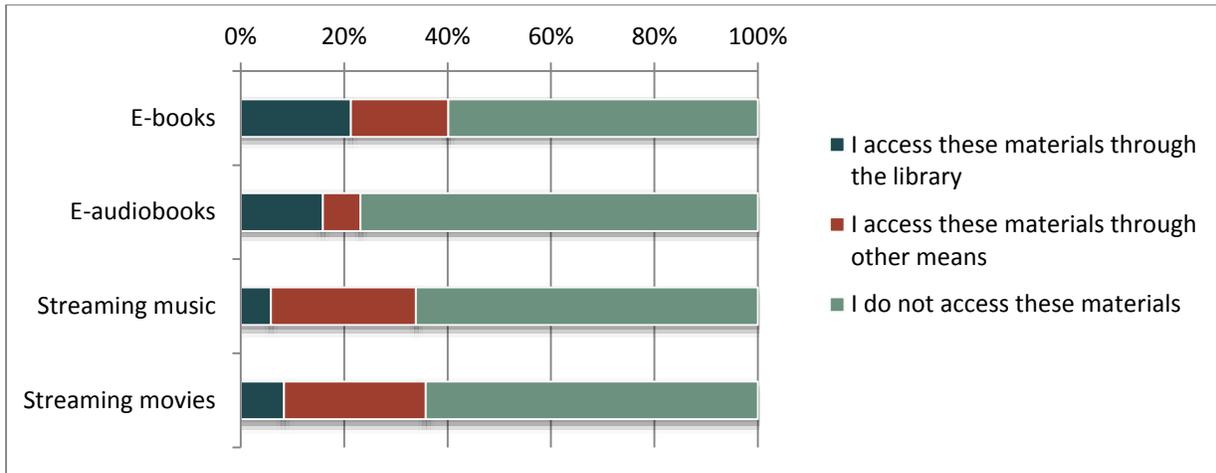
Which are your primary reasons for visiting the library? (Please check all that apply.)

Are you aware that the library has equipment and other resources for persons with visual impairment?

Please indicate which electronic materials you use and how you access them.

Participants were asked whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed, or were neutral regarding four statements regarding their opinions of the library. Responses were predominantly positive regarding all four statements:

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral/N/A	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I find the programs offered through the library to be interesting and appealing to attend.	26.37%	40.38%	26.37%	4.75%	2.14%
The library's collection of materials meets my needs.	28.67%	44.79%	19.91%	5.21%	1.42%
It is important for the library to devote resources toward preserving and promoting the history of Itasca.	34.61%	37.47%	22.43%	3.34%	2.15%
I am aware that I can visit the Itasca Historical Gallery at the library.	32.45%	34.87%	22.03%	7.26%	3.39%

On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely would you be to use the following services if they were added to the library?

	1 = Extremely unlikely to use	2 = Somewhat unlikely to use	3 = Neutral	4 = Somewhat likely to use	5 = Extremely likely to use
Self check-out machine	13.27%	9.00%	18.72%	22.75%	36.26%
Digital equipment to create music	31.80%	17.23%	21.84%	15.53%	13.59%
Digital equipment to create movies	32.11%	15.69%	22.06%	14.95%	15.20%
3D printer and digital creation equipment	24.46%	11.99%	19.42%	16.55%	27.58%

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.
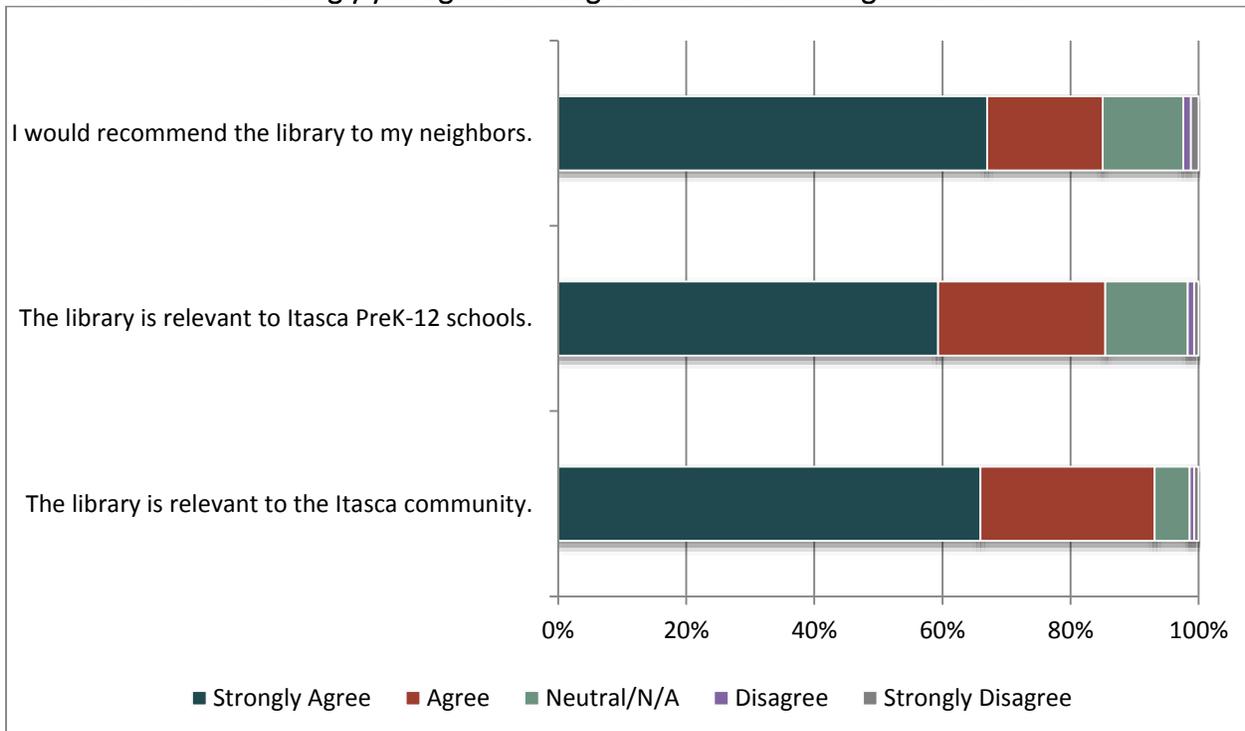
When asked, "What physical improvements would you like to see to the library, if any?" responses included:

Interior
- A general talking social area.
- A kiosk map showing where things are.
- A new area for mid teens
- An isolated reading area, free from ambient noise, talkers,and cell phone users.

- Coffee area.
- Exterminator. Bugs in area by coffee pot.
- General social area.

- I like that you added snack and pop machines and the new paint looks nice. Nothing I'd really add.
- I think the library could use updated furniture and more quiet study rooms.
- I would like more improvement to the young adult section. Currently there is limited shelf-space devoted to a growing population of readers/literature.
- I would like to see all the books on the shelves together, not separated by Mystery, Fiction, etc
- I would like to see more study rooms, Or if we can reserve it for an hr. I have seen just one person in the one for a group of 6   Just reading. And the one for 2, empty.
- I'd like to see those comfy chairs and couches and stylish furniture.
- It smells kind of bad. And there are bugs. Please improve the bug problem and the smell.
- It's the most embarrassing bit of architecture on the face of the planet and the least functional. Start over and kick off that so-called architechect.
- Larger and separate kids area.
- Larger children' s library center.
- Less clutter.
- Make it more quiet?
- Make the kids center somewhere not as loud

Parking
- Better parking.
- Larger parking lot.
- More parking and/or a back exit by the pool so you don't have to turn around with cars behind you

Technology
- 3D PRINTERS
- Add self checkout
- Better access to electrical outlets at tables
- Computers

- Maybe signs to tell where certain sections are.
- More comfortable chairs to just sit and read.
- More private study rooms.
- More seating in children's area.
- More seats.
- More study rooms.
- More tables in children section for adults with children.
- New furniture!
- NEW FURNITURE!!!!
- New furnitures, esp. chairs put a person upstairs
- some more decorations
- The painting and addition of a chalk board are great! The colors make it feel warmer. Otherwise, can't think of anything.
- Update and more interactive young children's area.
- Music CD's are not displayed well. Movies are mostly so low you have to be on the floor to see the selection.
- New books
- To get new books as soon as thy come out and have more than one copy of the more popular books because almost every time I go and look up a popular book its already checked out
- To get new books that are needed for some

- Parking - tough to put cars sometimes.
- Parking is bad.
- Parking lot improvement. When the pool opens, parking is worse.

- I think that at the library we should get more computers for kids to work at because sometimes when I come to use them they are all taken
- Install a self checkout
- More computers

- Outlets being fully functional. Many of the ones recessed in the floor just don't work.   Wifi is just OK - often pretty

- weak or jumpy for when I do my on-line classes (admittedly are bandwith hogs).
- Self checkout

Other

- A new library. The design of this current library is not conducive to the desired functioning of a library. A normal library has a children's library where you do not need to worry about the sound echoing throughout the entire building. The layout of the collection is impeded by the faulty physical design of this building. It would be nice to have more meeting rooms, and have the tables and the physical collection arranged in a more functional manner.   As mentioned in question 1, I find parking at the building to be downright hazardous. The spots are tight, and the lot is odd shaped. Especially in the winter it is very difficult to park/get out of a parking spot or to turn around if there are no spots. Having it connect to the back lot by the pool would make sense. I realize there is not a lot of space, but it seems the designers were shortsighted in the functionality in so many ways. With funds so limited I realize that a redo would not be possible, but perhaps building walls in certain areas and increasing smaller meeting rooms in addition to working on expanding the parking lot would take much needed steps to improving the physical functionality of the library.

Facility

- Add more of a modern aspect.
- Be bigger.
- Be bigger. And have more activities for people40-50
- Get new furniture actually use the data taken from surveys.
- Get rid of the coffee corner where people go to sleep.
- Have a bigger parking lot.
- Have a more noticably marked sections for books.
- Have like a chase liunge that I can lay back and read my book.
- HAVE MORE LITTLE PLACES TO SIT
- Have more parking
- Have nicer furniture, get rid of odor, get rid of bugs, take the market research data seriously to improve library experience for community. Do not pick and choose what you want to improve and what you don't feel like doing.

- Have nicer furniture. The furniture is old and just very off putting and is not kept. definitely needs an update. there is also a foul odor as well.
- post some quiet signs around. There are a few people who think this is a meet and greet area and it is disturbing to tolerate a few rude indiviudals. There are two people who show up every day and have loud conversations, Even though they move from the computer room, I can hear them having a conversation that goes on a very long time.
- Remove loiters and people sleeping there.
- Sell coffee.
- Serve food
- Smell better & have better furniture. I also hope they actually use this research.

How do you prefer to receive information about the library? (Please check all that apply.)
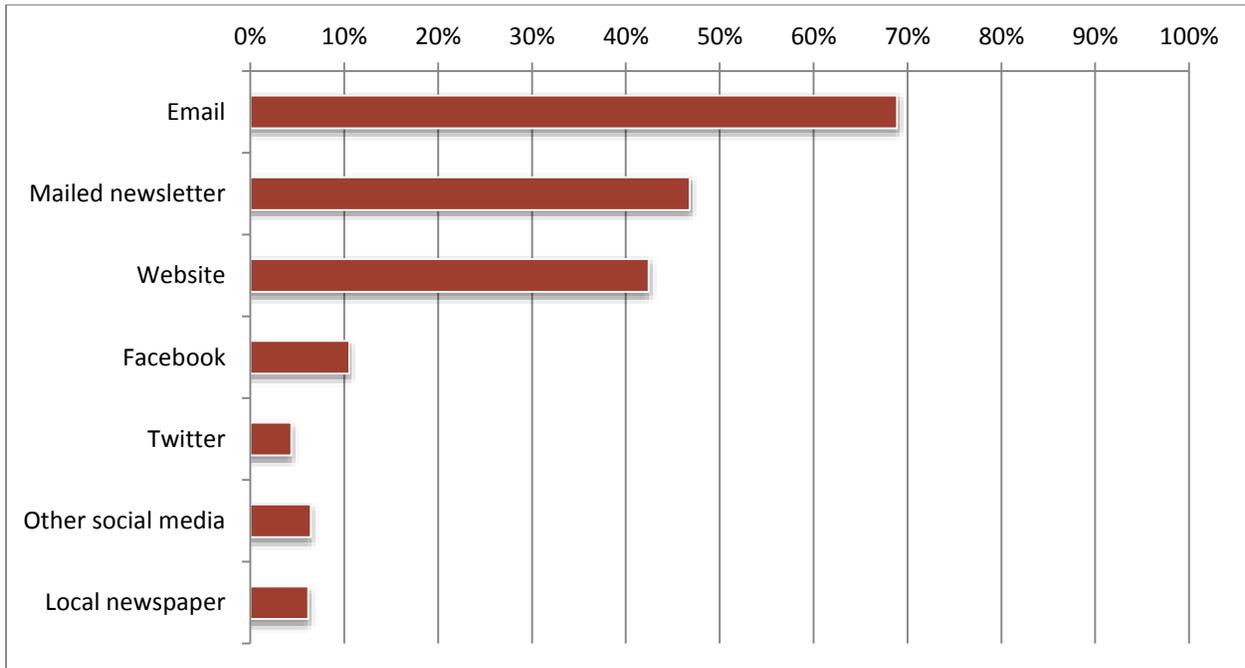
Which of the following services do you subscribe to at home? (Please check all that apply.)
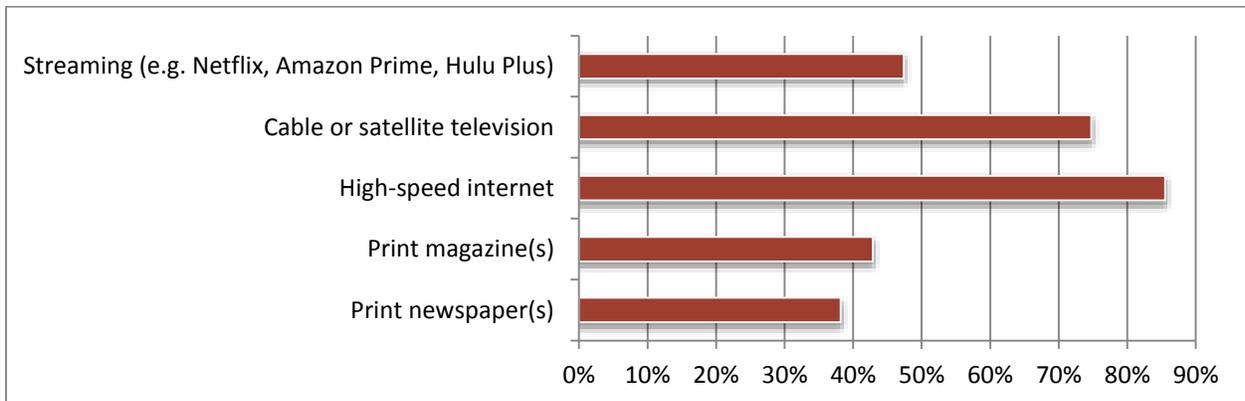
What languages other than English are spoken in your household?

Language	Number of Responses
American Sign Language	1
Arabic	2
Bulgarian	1
Chinese	2
Czech	3
Dutch	2
French	2

German	6
Greek	2
Gujarati	4
Indian	1
Italian	12
Japanese	2
Korean	2
Latin	1
Polish	19
Romanian	1
Serbian	1
Slovak	1
Spanish	38
Swahili	1
Tagalog	3
Telugu	1
Ukrainian	1
Urdu	3
Vietnamese	1

Please select your gender.

5.01%

30.83%

64.16%

■ Male
■ Female
■ Prefer not to answer
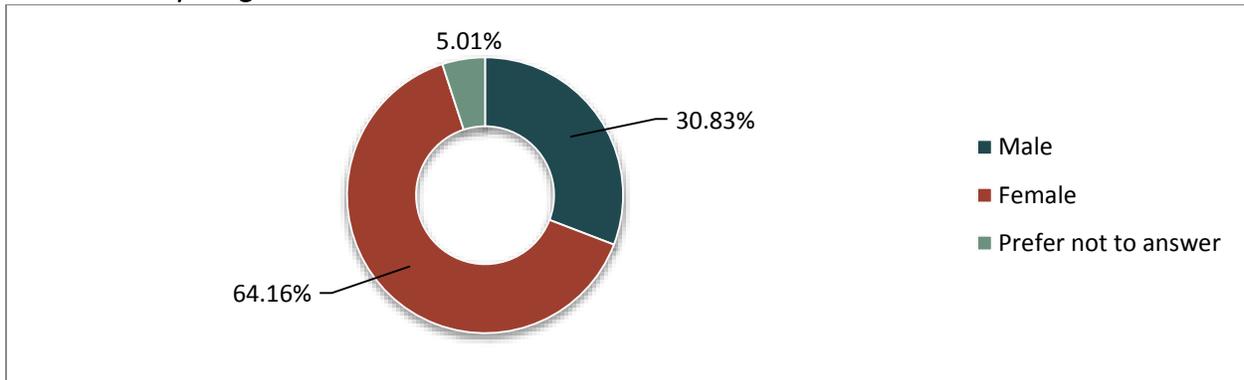
Please select your age range.
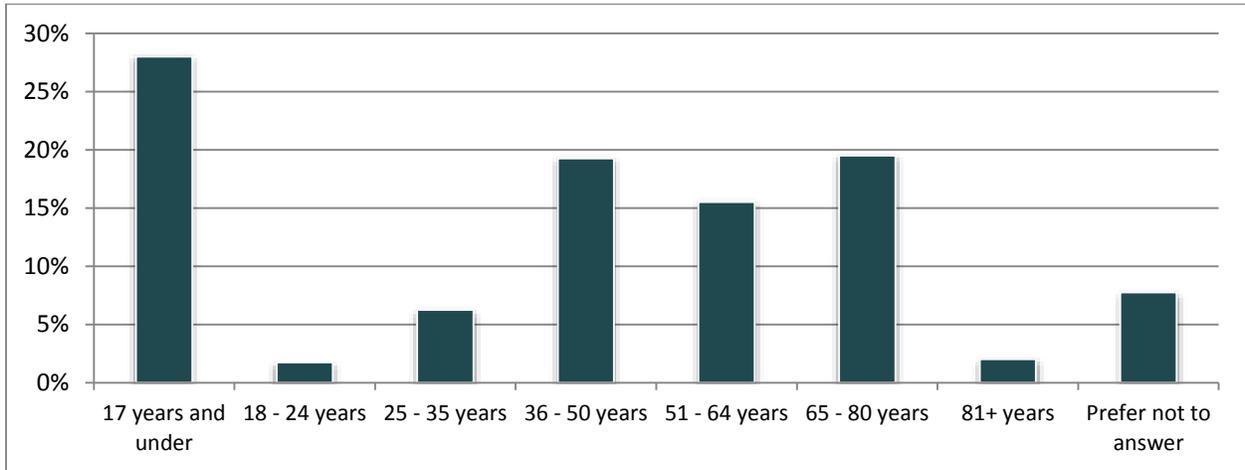
Please select the ages of the people in your household. (Please check all that apply.)
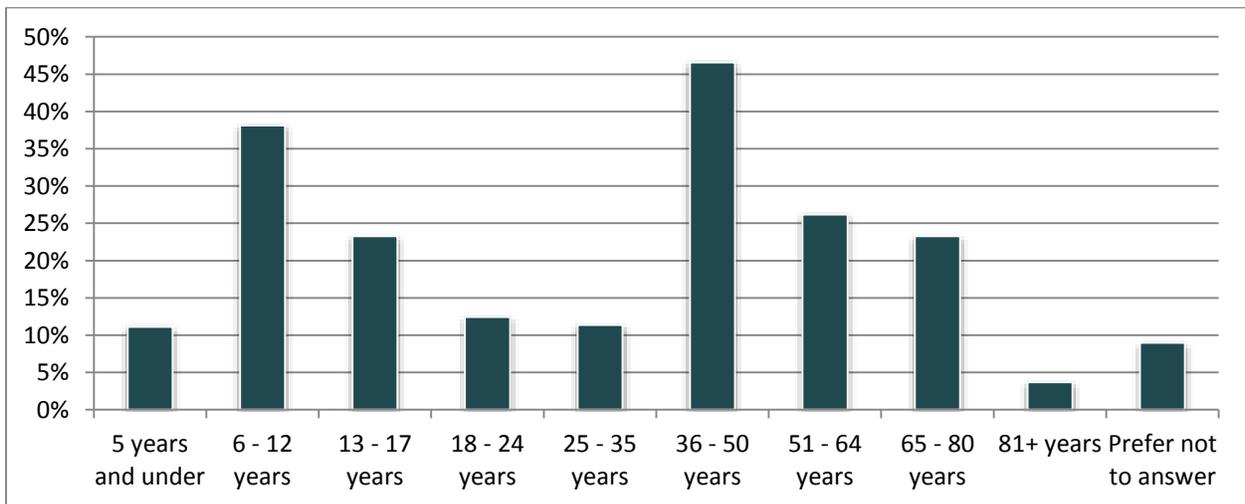
Please select the highest level of education someone in your household has attained.

- Less than a high school diploma or equivalent (0.51%)
- High school diploma or equivalent (e.g. GED) (5.64%)
- Some college (no degree) (10.51%)
- Associate's degree (3.59%)
- Bachelor's degree (29.74%)
- Master's degree (28.21%)
- Doctoral or professional degree (6.15%)
- Prefer not to answer (15.64%)
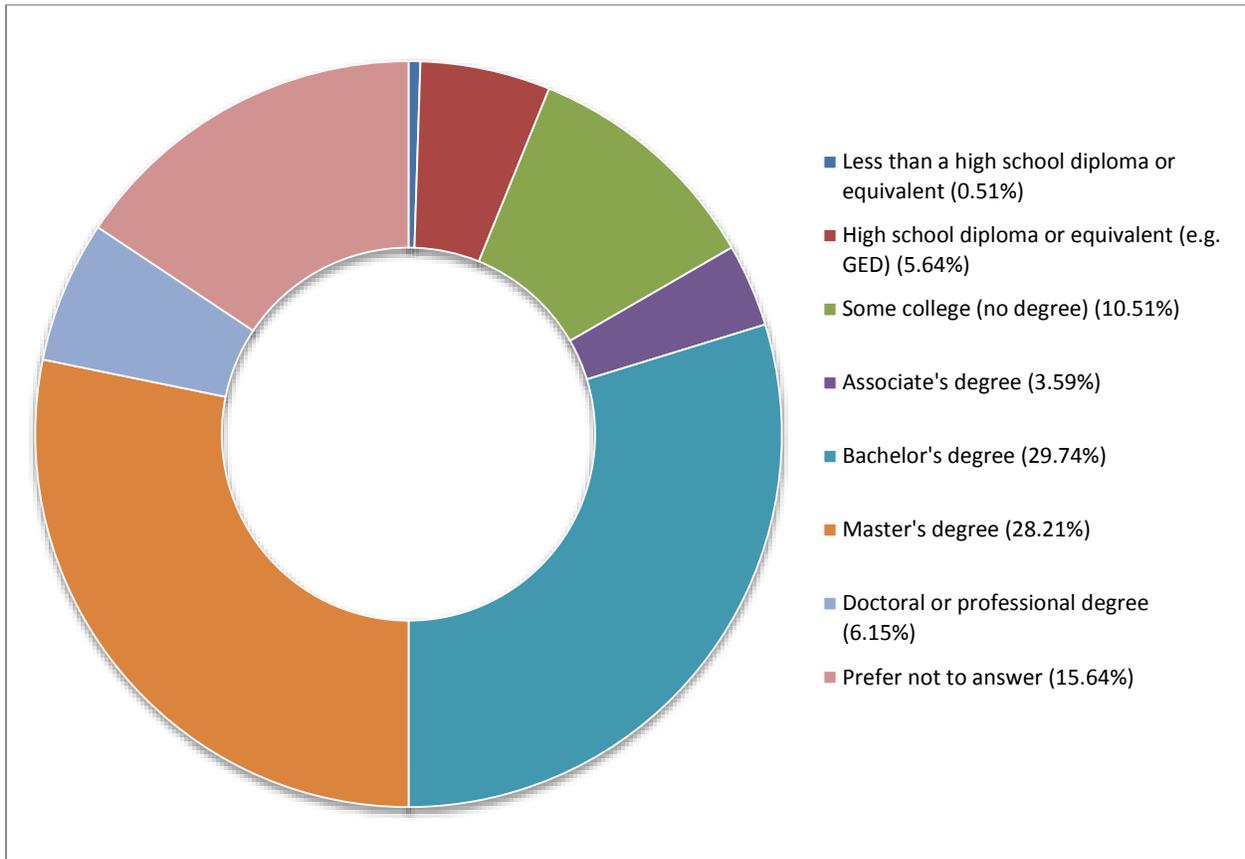
Focus Groups

Six focus groups and one interview were held in August 2015 with 39 individuals including residents, library staff, and community leaders. The following community organizations were represented in the focus groups:
- Benson Primary School
- Itasca Chamber of Commerce
- Itasca Park District
- Lake Park High School East Campus
- Peacock Middle School
- Senior Club
- Village of Itasca

Focus groups were held at the library. Each focus group was conducted in a discussion-style format and lasted for approximately one hour.

Residents

Residents were overwhelmingly positive in their comments about the library. While many focus group participants said that they also use other neighboring libraries (Elk Grove Village, Schaumburg, and Glen Ellyn), they viewed Itasca Community Library as a "safe place to meet people," and particularly enjoyed the programming, book clubs, and "friendliness" in Itasca. Many residents appreciated the "helpful" staff who "got to know them," as well as the children's area. One participant said, "Kids can grow with the library, and the library has kept pace with them." Another respondent felt that the library "is a comforting place" and "very Itasca," suggesting a friendliness associated with the library.

Focus group participants enjoyed the library's meeting space, although some said that it is "possibly not enough," especially when discussing study space for high school students. Residents viewed the library as "a community gathering point" and a "focal point for the community – not just for reading books."

Participants were occasionally disappointed in the available selection of ebooks, noting that there were "slim pickings." They also felt that the library's music CD collection was in "poor condition," and the DVD selection "could be better." Lastly, some participants with young children said that having children's programming during the daytime excluded some families with working parents from participating. Focus group participants also were interested in a more robust refreshment area.

Another weakness identified by residents was difficulty marketing to non-library users. One resident explained the challenge of being involved with the library when faced with other commitments such as work and family: "When I worked and got the library newsletter, it just went into a pile, and I wouldn't even read it." Another participant said, "If you don't come to the

building very often, you don't know what's going on." There was also some perception that "the library is for kids and old people, so there is a need to communicate other things."

Many focus group participants were enthusiastic about new technology, noting that "it's important to keep up with technology." While some residents said they personally would not use one, one participant said, "I would never be able to get my kid to leave if there were a 3D printer." While they tended to prefer interaction with the staff and feared a self checkout machine might "take away from personalization," participants suggested that some patrons may appreciate making the option to use one available.

Community Leaders

Community leaders reported viewing the library as a resource for information, rather than simply a place to check out books and other materials. Focus group participants also viewed the library as "safe place for kids" and a "meeting place for adults." The said the library staff is "collaborative," "friendly," and "fabulous!" They appreciated the library's willingness to collaborate with community organizations, especially schools and the Itasca Park District. One participant said, "They take the community part of their name very seriously," another considered the library the "glue that holds this community together," and another participant said the library was like a "conduit" for community information. Community leaders also expressed interest in collaborating to host an author visit in conjunction with programming and displays at school libraries.

Focus group participants identified a few weaknesses of the library, including limited parking during popular times for visiting and what was considered by some to be a "challenging" process for downloading ebooks. Community leaders appreciated the library's role in introducing new technologies to the community, providing adult education, and maintaining continuous outreach to Itasca residents. They felt that patrons would appreciate a self checkout machine. They were unsure of how popular other digital media and a 3D printer would be, although they noted that students already know how to use this equipment.

Community leaders also provided some insight into reasons why Itasca residents may not use the library, including "already having a lot at home," "having busy schedules," and "being busy with an extensive amount of homework and extracurriculars." Despite thoughts that the 1:1 initiatives of providing students with tablets in schools may "lessen the need for library visits," focus group participants felt that the increased presence of technology "doesn't replace the need for community space," noting the need for study rooms and meeting space at the library. Lastly, participants felt that the Itasca business community could benefit from increased library usage, suggesting that business owners were largely unaware of the databases available through the library.

Itasca Community Library Staff

Staff reported that patrons primarily use the library for circulation of materials, attendance at programs, and use of the free Internet. They said that the staff "works well together," which is reflected in the "diverse range of programming" and "focus on patrons to make sure they are satisfied."

Staff also reported being pleased with services provided to Itasca's teen population, including the introduction of regular makerspaces and sponsoring a Teen Advisory Board during the summer months. They felt that the Millennial population could be better served by the library and expressed interest in hosting a trivia night aimed at residents in their twenties.

Staff felt that one weakness of the library is the library's small size. While the small size contributes to a "feeling of welcoming" for patrons, staff felt that the library's budget limits the type and quantity of programming they can provide. In addition, a need for increased marketing and outreach, particularly to infrequent users of the library, was suggested as an area for improvement, with staff members identifying a growing immigrant population in Itasca and senior citizens as segments of the population that could benefit from increased outreach efforts. One staff member said, "People don't realize what they could be getting from the library," and another noted that "some residents think there's nothing from the library they need." Staff members were interested in increasing the library's presence at community events and hosting more community meetings in the library's meeting rooms. One staff member said, "We should embed ourselves in this community," and suggested the library explore the idea of engaging the Friends of the Itasca Community Library and the Board of Trustees as ambassadors for the library in the community. Staff felt that the library is becoming more "community-oriented" with more "collaboration and work with other organizations in Itasca" and were optimistic that the library will continue on this path.

Staff also identified areas of the library building that could benefit from a redesign or repurposing. For example, they reported that the second floor is "not being utilized" as much as it could be, and the "first floor is often congested." While the displays of local Itasca history on the second floor were not considered "a destination" for patrons, staff felt that this aspect of the library could be a catalyst for increased community partnerships and library services, such as offering genealogy resources and hosting a community volunteer to serve as liaison to this area of the library. Lastly, there were many comments about poor noise control on the second floor of the library, which staff felt also negatively affects noise levels on the first floor.

Other areas for improvement suggested by staff members included developing a increased Spanish and Polish language collection, soundproofing a room for group meetings and/or programming, creating a library app, painting the staircase a different color to alert patrons of the second floor's existence, and creating more meeting space and quiet study rooms, as well dedicating space for a refreshment center.

Staff felt that the community is receptive to new technology and would use a self checkout machine, although they encouraged the library to maintain the presence of circulation staff to give residents a choice to use an automated machine (to avoid a "sense of obligation of interaction") or have the opportunity to speak to a staff member while checking out. However, some staff members were hesitant to recommend purchase of a 3D printer without knowing the exact costs of the technology.

NEXT STEPS

Based on the survey results and feedback collected during the community focus groups, Itasca residents value traditional library service and are simultaneously interested in the changing role of the public library as a community meeting space and purveyor of new technologies. Despite concern for controlling local property taxes, there is an expectation among Itasca residents that the library evolve with the needs of the Itasca community. Analyzing trends of usage and applying these suggestions to its upcoming strategic plan will help Itasca Community Library position itself to continue providing the services beloved by long-time library users while concurrently offering new technologies and programming that will maintain the library's status as a center point of the Itasca community.