The Newest Chapter

A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR HELEN HALL LIBRARY

2025-2029

Helen Hall Library is Your Community's Library

In 1972, League City's first library opened its doors. At 7,000 square feet and offering approximately 3,000 items for checkout, the library served a community of roughly 11,000 residents. Although not the tiniest town in Galveston county, League City had more populous neighbors to its south, including Galveston, Texas City, and La Marque.

More than fifty years later, Helen Hall Library serves one of the fastest-growing communities in the nation, with a population exceeding 124,000. This past year over 500,000 items were checked out and over 176,000 visitors walked through our doors. Over the five decades and as our community has grown, the library has responded with new services, unique programs, improved technology, and expanded collections.

In planning for the library's future, we aim to take as our guide our community's continued development and the emerging and even unanticipated needs that come with it. And as League City grows, there is also a desire to preserve its distinctive charm and small-town feel.

Helen Hall Library's strategic plan for 2025 through 2029 reflects the need to ensure access to quality library services across an expanding service area and population. It also reflects the need to strengthen those core services our residents value and have come to expect. Our plan has been informed by focus groups with the Library Board of Trustees, the Friends of Helen Hall Library, the Teen Advisory Board, and library staff. Conversations hosted in the community and a community survey brought feedback from over 450 residents.

The plan that follows is the result of many meetings, many minds, many voices, and many hands. A community came together to develop it because Helen Hall Library is League City's library. Helen Hall Library is your community's library.

Meredith M. Layton
City Librarian

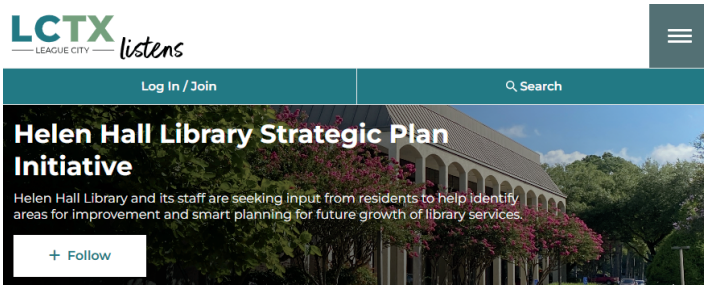
Our Strategic Planning Process

Timeline

APRIL-MAY 2024
Establish Mission and Goals

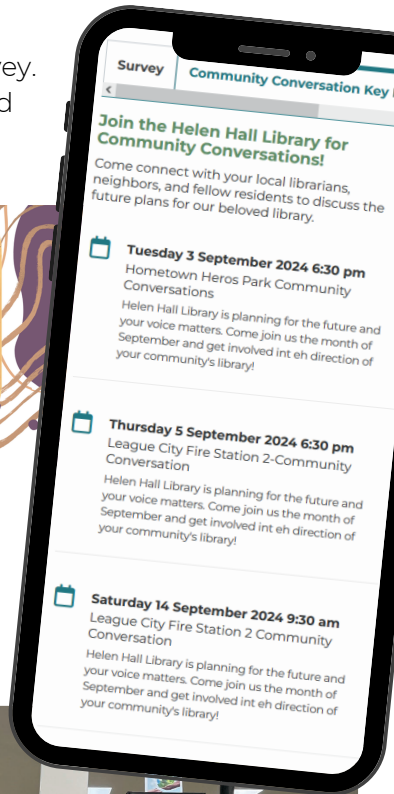
In April 2024, Library leaders launched a new strategic planning endeavor. Leaders developed a vision statement and logo to inspire the process and worked with League City Communications staff on strategies to promote community engagement.

the Newest Chapter



In May 2024, a Strategic Planning Advisory Group was formed. The group included Trustees from the Library's Board, Friends of Helen Hall Library members, Teen Advisory Board members, and library staff. The advisory group provided feedback on the strategic planning vision, timeline, and survey, as well as reviewed content for a community engagement landing page hosted on the League City Listens website. Stakeholder and community groups were identified for their outreach potential.

The Library Board of Trustees were presented with the strategic planning strategy and provided feedback on the League City Listens engagement tools and community survey. After incorporating recommendations from the Strategic Planning Advisory Group and Library Board, the survey and data-gathering stage were set to launch in June 2024.



JUNE-SEPTEMBER 2024
Listen to and Engage with Stakeholders

From June through September 2024, Library staff promoted the strategic planning survey in programming, inside the library, on social media, and through outreach efforts. The online survey was completed by 404 residents.





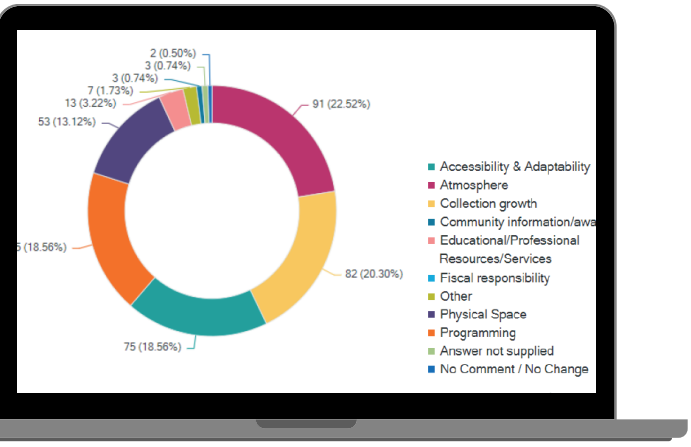
SHARE YOUR VISION FOR THE LIBRARY'S FUTURE

Focus groups were conducted with residents at The Crossings retirement community, the Library Board, Teen Advisory Board, Friends of Helen Hall Library, and library staff. Four Community Conversations scheduled on evenings and weekends were hosted for all residents and held offsite at Hometown Heroes Park and League City Fire Station 2. Seventy-four individuals participated in focus groups and community discussions.



Our Strategic Planning Process

Timeline



OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2024
Analyze, Identify, and Compose

Beginning in October 2024, library staff consolidated results from online surveys, focus groups, and community conversations. Broad categories and common findings were identified. Initial results were presented to the Library Board.

From October through November 2024, the Strategic Planning Advisory Group members were presented with both sorted and raw data. Specific themes, common concerns, and priorities were identified and recommended for inclusion in the draft plan.

Informed by the Strategic Planning Advisory Group's analysis, Library leaders created a strategic framework. This framework included four core values of access, literacy, adaptability, and community, as well as three strategic priorities with example initiatives.

Core Values

Access · Adaptability · Literacy · Community

Strategic Areas of Focus

WHAT WE HEARD
People want more and larger physical spaces to accommodate studying, meetings, and programs. People also want a place to meet community members and foster connections.

Priority 1: Library As Space and Place

Example initiatives could include: facility assessment; evaluation for potential offsite service points and feasibility of bookmobile services; deepening community partnerships; and promoting the library as a community hub and vital "third place."

WHAT WE HEARD
People enjoy and value the library's collections, programs, and services. They want access to larger collections, more programs, and additional services.

Priority 2: Amplified Service, Enhanced Access

Example initiatives could include: standardized assessment of programming, services, and collections for all ages; foot traffic study and evaluation of library hours of operation; digitization of local history collections; and a comprehensive communications strategy.

WHAT WE HEARD
People see the community growing and changing, and they want their library to grow, change, adapt, and innovate to meet evolving needs and expectations.

Priority 3: Future-Ready Staff and Organization

Example initiatives could include: professional development plans for staff at every level within the organization; creation of a technology evaluation, replacement, and expansion plan; and implementation of targeted programming surveys evaluating impacts and outcomes.

NOVEMBER 2024-FEBRUARY 2025
Present and Implement

In November 2024, the Library Board of Trustees voted unanimously to approve the strategic framework as presented by Library staff. With this approval, Library leaders drafted the strategic plan as presented below, including recommended initiatives, opportunities, and measures for success. The strategic plan for 2025-2029 was presented for Board approval in February 2025.

What We Heard from You

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT HELEN HALL LIBRARY?

> A great place for people of all ages to learn and meet friends with similar interests.

Community members enjoy the library's welcoming atmosphere and the friendliness of library staff. Respondents appreciate having spaces for quiet study, cozy areas for reading and relaxation, places to meet others, and dedicated sections for kids and teens. Community members appreciate the variety of materials and formats available in the library's collections, including books, electronic content and audiovisual items. Respondents value the programs offered for all ages and highlight the ease of access to library services.

> ... a fantastic community resource.

IF YOU COULD CHANGE ANYTHING ABOUT HELEN HALL LIBRARY, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

> Our library should be exciting, fresh, and should reflect what our community has to offer.

Respondents overwhelmingly mention space, the need for more space and a desire for separation between different activities and functions, as something they would like changed. Community members would like more programs and more variety in programming, larger collections, and a continued expansion on the types of items available for checkout. Respondents would like to see technology updates, new equipment for use at the library, and improved access to virtual learning tools. While some appreciate the library's current location, other respondents feel the library is not as accessible and more difficult to get to as the community has grown. Many identify parking as inadequate. Community members would like a library presence in more parts of the community.

SELECT YOUR TOP 5 LIBRARY SERVICES.

Community members were provided with a selection of sixteen core library services and asked to select and rank their top five. The library services identified as most important by respondents are:

- Reading, viewing, and listening for pleasure
- Literacy for all ages
- Supporting early literacy with storytimes, collections, and caregiver support
- Lifelong learning
- Providing internet and technology access
- Connecting residents to community information and services
- Reference services and information help

What We Heard from You

WHAT COMMUNITY NEEDS OR ASPIRATIONS SHOULD HELEN HALL LIBRARY BE ADDRESSING OR SUPPORTING?

> Making it easier for families to learn, grow, and thrive.

Above and beyond the Library's mission of supporting literacy and lifelong learning, respondents feel the library should play a role in providing space for community gathering, in bringing people together across generations, and in fostering a sense of community. Respondents identified youth programming, resources for homework help, and services in support of homeschool families as important community needs. Respondents also identified the homebound, seniors, and people with special needs and disabilities as populations who would benefit from more targeted Library services. Community members see the Library's role in providing technology access, in teaching digital literacy skills, and in supporting small businesses and workforce development. Respondents feel the Library should help address health, wellness, and safety topics through programming, as well as provide connections with local and City services. As the community grows, residents see a need for library services to also grow, expanding into neighborhoods and westside developments.

WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF LEAGUE CITY'S LIBRARY?

Some community members have a vision of a new or larger library, additional library locations, or bookmobile services. Others envision the Library coexisting with other amenities, such as café spaces, outdoor play areas, and walking and biking paths. Above all, respondents want to see the Library continue as a place that offers collections, programs, and community. They want their Library to support growth and learning for all ages by being accessible and technologically-equipped, as well as by acting as a hub for knowledge sharing and community connection.

> Continue to be a community space that welcomes everyone and provides great resources for learning, spaces for all sorts of groups to meet, and encourages citizens to make a difference in their community.

> A place that makes it easy to connect with your neighbors in meaningful ways.

Strategic Framework

Mission

THE MISSION OF THE HELEN HALL LIBRARY IS TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND FUEL FOR IMAGINATION, IN AN AGE DEFINED BY THE UNPRECEDENTED IMPORTANCE OF BOTH.

STRATEGIC PLANNING VISION

In working with and in service to the community, Helen Hall Library and its staff actively seek to build on what came before, to create a foundation for what might follow, and to provide shared opportunities through which to find common ground.

Core Values

The following core values represent our common ground through which we will make decisions, approach new opportunities, and carry the library's mission into the future. These core values reflect shared ideals of library staff and our community's fundamental expectations for library services.



ACCESS

Ensure everyone in our community can obtain the library resources and services they need, where and how they need them.



LITERACY

Support and strengthen education in our community by cultivating a culture of lifelong learning, literacy, and curiosity.



ADAPTABILITY

Seek out new and different methods, technologies, and services to meet changing needs and expectations.



COMMUNITY

Create a sense of belonging within the community by providing experiences that bring together residents and a space where all feel included.

Strategic Priorities

Priority 1: Library As Space and Place

WHAT WE HEARD

People want more and larger physical spaces to accommodate studying, meetings, and programs. People also want a place to meet community members and foster connections.

The library is both a physical space and a place of social and personal connection. This priority and the following initiatives are supported by three of our four core values:

- Ensuring access to library services, including physical and digital points of service.
- Adapting to changing needs.
- Creating a sense of community.

Initiatives

FACILITY ASSESSMENT

Assess the library's current facility for accessibility, safety, capacity, and maintenance. Develop a forward-looking plan to enhance the longevity of our space.

COMMUNITY HUB

Develop and promote opportunities, resources, and collections to connect community members to one another, to community services, and to the world beyond us.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Identify organizations with aligned missions and values for future partnerships and strengthen and revitalize current partnerships. Develop collaborations that extend library reach and elevate services.

OFFSITE SERVICES AND SERVICE POINTS

Evaluate potential for offsite services and service points, including possible locations, equipment, vehicles, partnerships, staffing models, and funding sources. Develop and implement a mobile services plan that expands reach of services.

Strategic Priorities

Priority 1: Library As Space and Place

Measuring Success

FACILITY ASSESSMENT

- Assessment identifies renovation projects or maintenance efforts to enhance usability and longevity of current facility.
- Community members value the space and City staff's stewardship. Patrons continue to see the space as welcoming and capable of meeting multiple needs.
- Increase in library usage metrics, including foot traffic, room reservations, and program attendance.

COMMUNITY HUB

- Partnerships with community organizations and other City departments position the Library as the "go to" place for community information.
- Programs and collections provide community members opportunities to share knowledge and expertise with their neighbors.
- Increase in library usage metrics, including new member registration, technology use, program attendance, and materials circulation.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Community partnerships extend beyond outreach and advertising opportunities to include collaborative programming and services.
- Increase in library usage metrics, including new member registration, library card use, program attendance, and materials circulation.

OFFSITE SERVICES AND SERVICE POINTS

- Library "footprint" is extended beyond the current facility through in-person, digital, or combined services.
- Increase in library usage by new members, new residents, and groups previously underrepresented in active borrower metrics.

Strategic Priorities

Priority 2: Amplified Service, Enhanced Access

WHAT WE HEARD

People enjoy and value the library's collections, programs, and services. They want access to larger collections, more programs, and additional services.

Throughout the surveys, focus groups, and community conversations that informed this strategic plan, we heard that community members love what Helen Hall Library provides - they just want more of it! These findings are also supported by the most recent Citizen Satisfaction survey conducted by the City of League City. By amplifying our services and enhancing access, we are inspired by all four core values.

- Ensuring access to library services, including physical and digital points of service.
- Supporting literacy and lifelong learning
- Adapting to changing needs.
- Creating a sense of community.

Initiatives

ASSESSMENT

Create and conduct standardized assessments of core services, programming, and collections. Community feedback will be included in evaluation of current service and development of new initiatives.

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Develop a comprehensive communication strategy to encourage engagement, foster trust, and increase discoverability of library programs, collections and services. Our strategy will establish consistency, encourage collaboration, and inspire experimentation.

DIGITAL SERVICES

Strengthen digital services to meet evolving needs and improve access. Efforts will include expanded media literacy and online options for library programming, exploration of digital content providers and online self-service options, as well as continued digitization of the local history collection to preserve and enhance long-term access.

EXPANDED COLLECTIONS

Continue expanding collections of both traditional and unique items and resources that align with our community's expectations, interests and needs, inspire creativity and lifelong learning, and support a sense and feeling of community.

Strategic Priorities

Priority 2: Amplified Service, Enhanced Access

Measuring Success

ASSESSMENT

- Evaluations of program design and implementation, service delivery, and collection strengths and gaps are conducted regularly. Areas for improvement are identified and addressed.
- Collection development, service design, and program availability are supported by community feedback. The Library continues to rate highly in terms of user satisfaction.
- Increase in library usage metrics, including materials circulation and program attendance.

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

- Strategy is consistent with City of League City style and extends editorial and graphic standards to Library communications and marketing.
- Messaging aligns with and reinforces Library mission and values.
- Increase in community engagement and awareness of library services and value.

DIGITAL SERVICES

- Library strengthens role as community resource for digital literacy, connected learning, and technology access.
- Investment in digital and digitized collections and programming extends library reach.
- Increase in library usage metrics, including technology and electronic resource use, materials circulation, program attendance, and virtual engagement.

EXPANDED COLLECTIONS

- Collection development is data-informed and community-driven.
- Increase in library usage metrics, including materials circulation, in-house use, new member registration, and library card activity.

Strategic Priorities

Priority 3: Future-Ready Staff and Organization

WHAT WE HEARD

People see the community growing and changing, and they want their library to grow, change, adapt, and innovate to meet evolving needs and expectations.

No one can know the future. But by equipping and empowering our staff, fostering continuous operational improvements, and investing in systems that support our services, we can better position ourselves to take on new challenges. All four core values can help inform how we future-ready ourselves and our organization.

- Ensuring access to library services, including physical and digital points of service.
- Supporting literacy and lifelong learning
- Adapting to changing needs.
- Creating a sense of community.

Initiatives

TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

Create a technology assessment plan that evaluates current equipment, software, and connectivity points. Provide recommendations for potential replacements, added services, new equipment, and funding opportunities.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Lifelong learning extends to library staff. Provide development plans and learning opportunities for every staff member. Promote collaborative learning, leadership at every level within the organization, and experimentation.

CONTINUAL FEEDBACK

Promote an environment of continual feedback, regularly soliciting feedback from the community and from our staff, both formally and informally. Include opportunities to evaluate impacts and outcomes in addition to inputs and outputs.

Strategic Priorities

Priority 3: Future-Ready Staff and Organization

Measuring Success

TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

- Library maintains technology relevance in ways that are operationally and financially sustainable.
- Community members see their library as a partner in digital literacy and a space to explore and experience new technologies.
- Increase in library usage metrics, including technology and electronic resource use, program attendance, and virtual engagement.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Learning and leadership opportunities are available for all staff.
- Staff are provided space and time to discover and experiment.

CONTINUAL FEEDBACK

- Planning informed by community input and staff feedback is best practice and standard operating procedure.
- Reporting and evaluation present qualitative measures in additional to traditional metrics.

Helen Hall Library — Strategic Plan 2025-2029

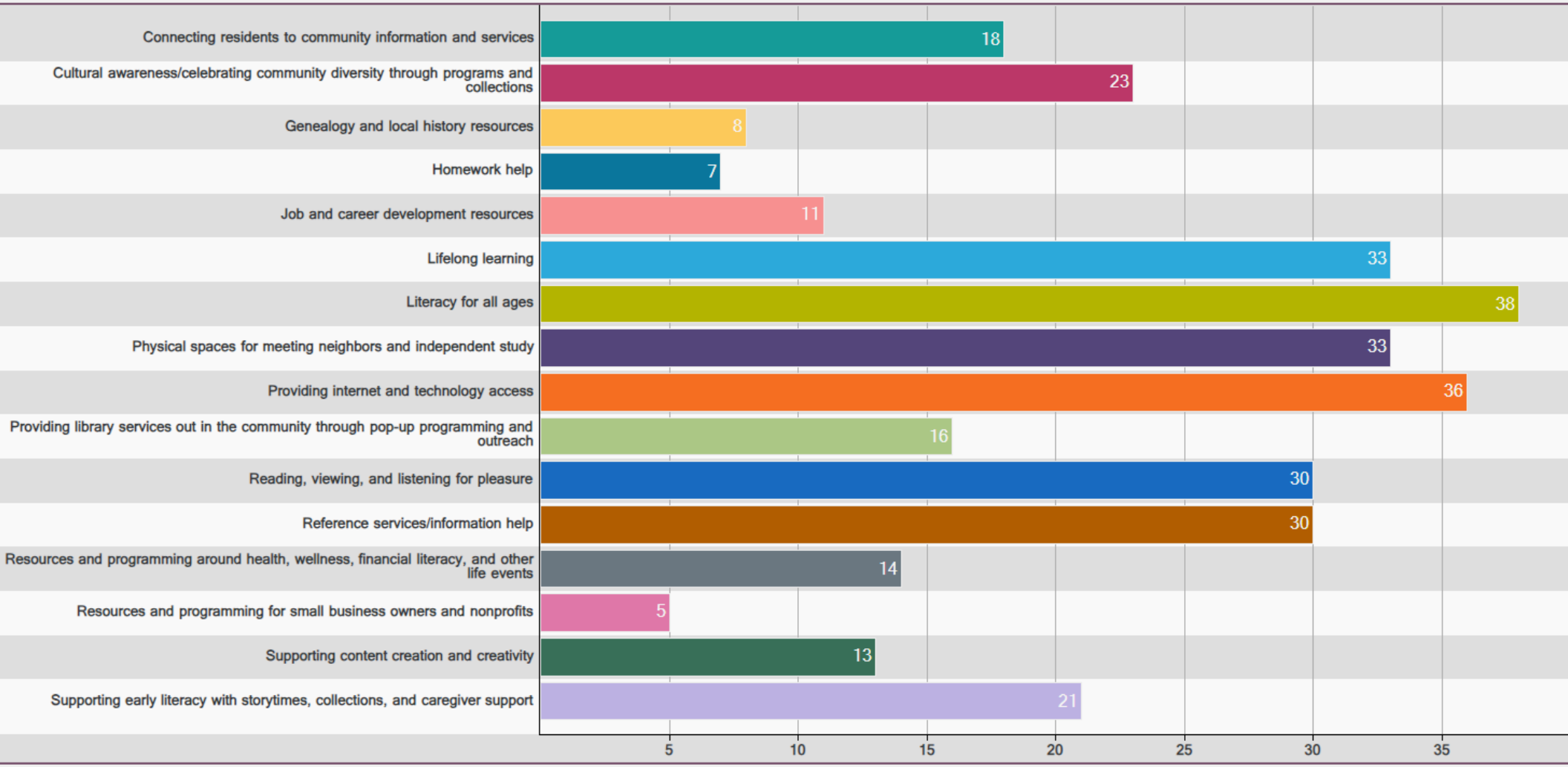
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- Overall Total 16

Strategic Plan Focus Groups
Top 5 Priorities

October 2024



Total Responses

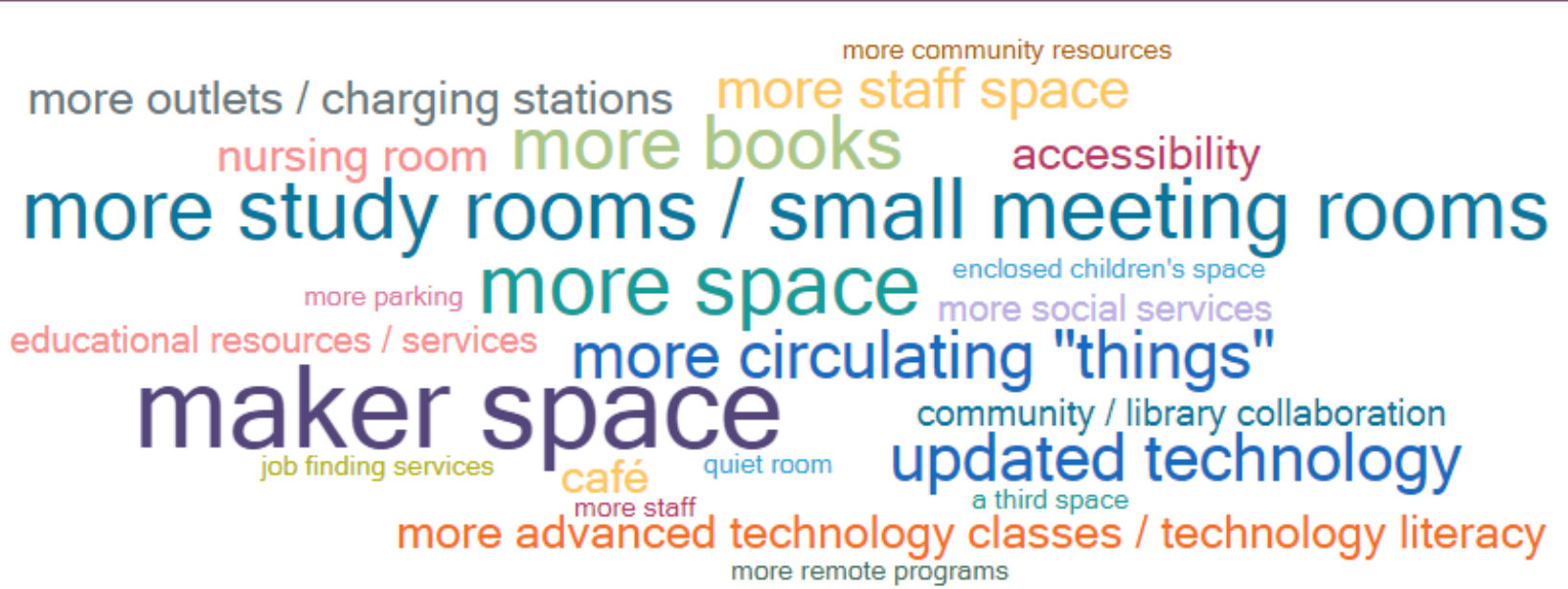
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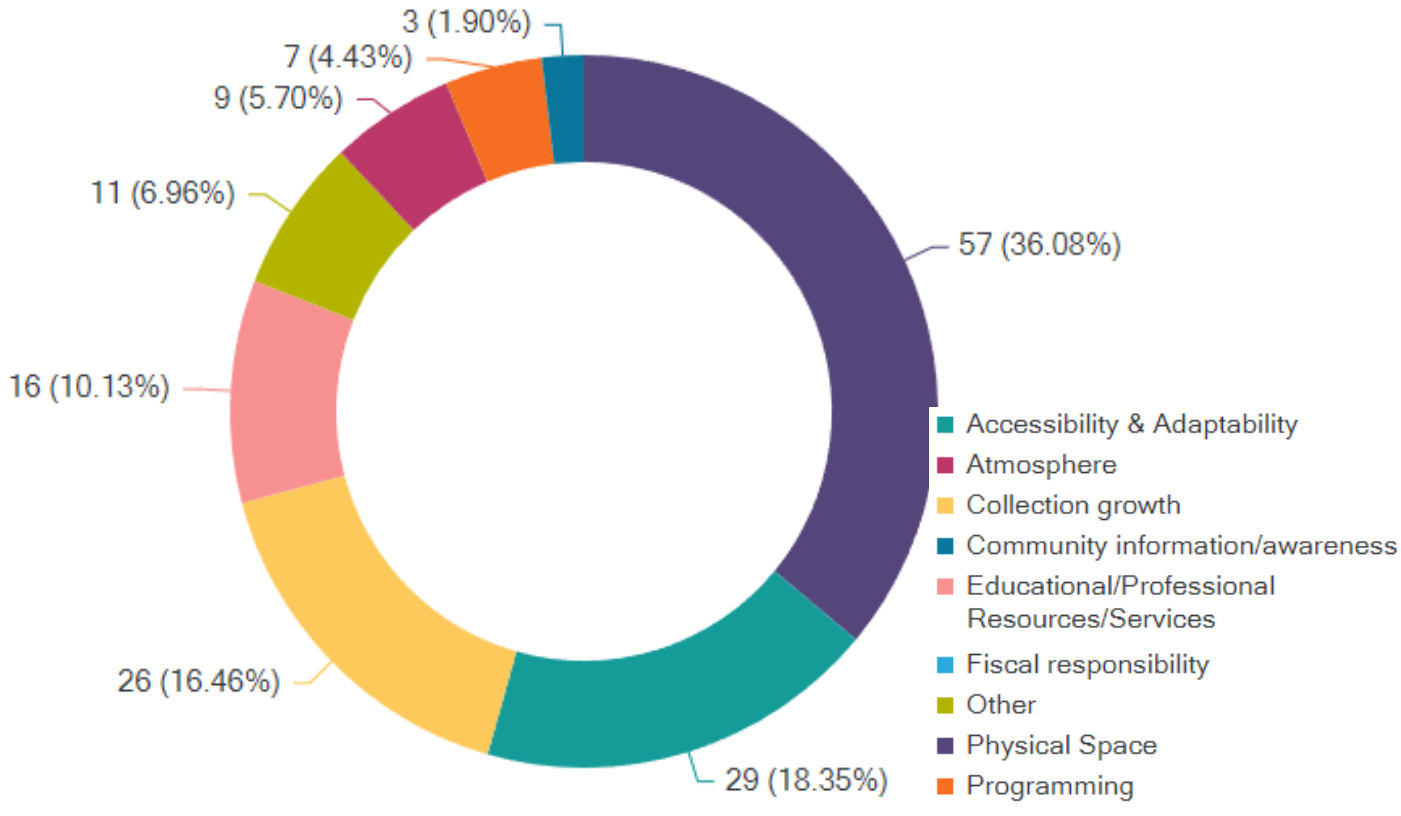
Participants

64

October 2024

The Library of the Future Should Have...



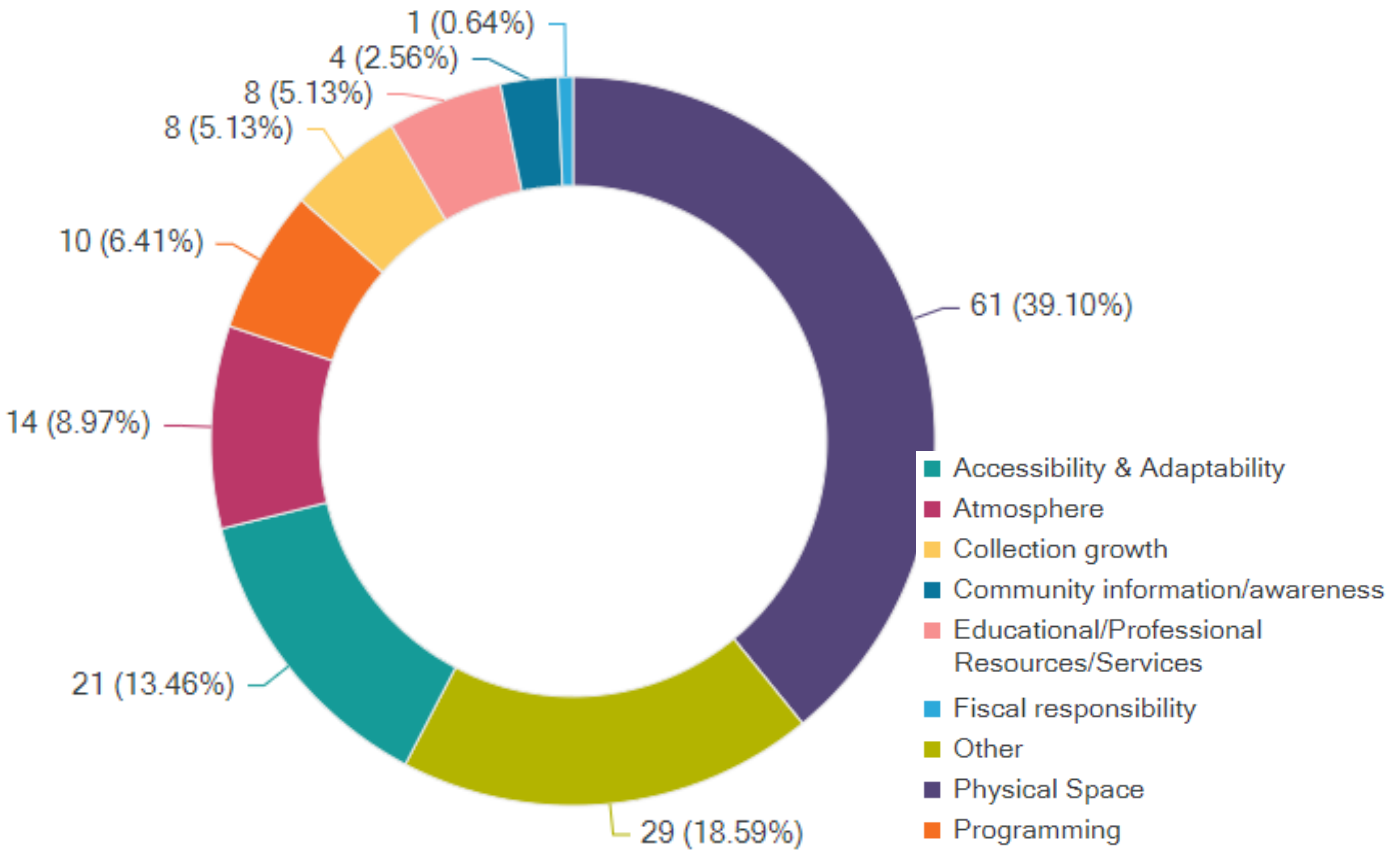


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What do you like least or what would you change about HHL?

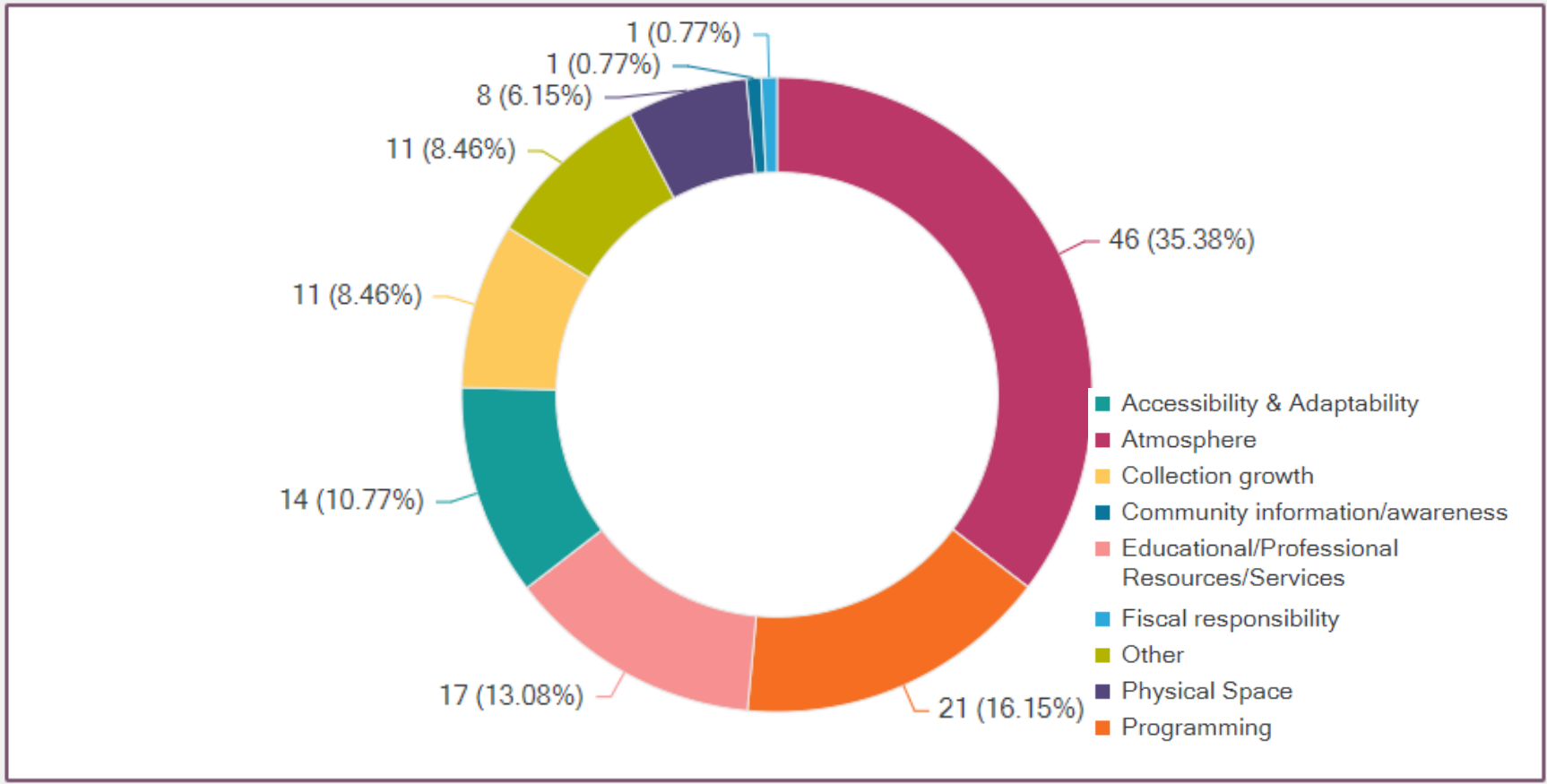




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What do you like most about HHL?

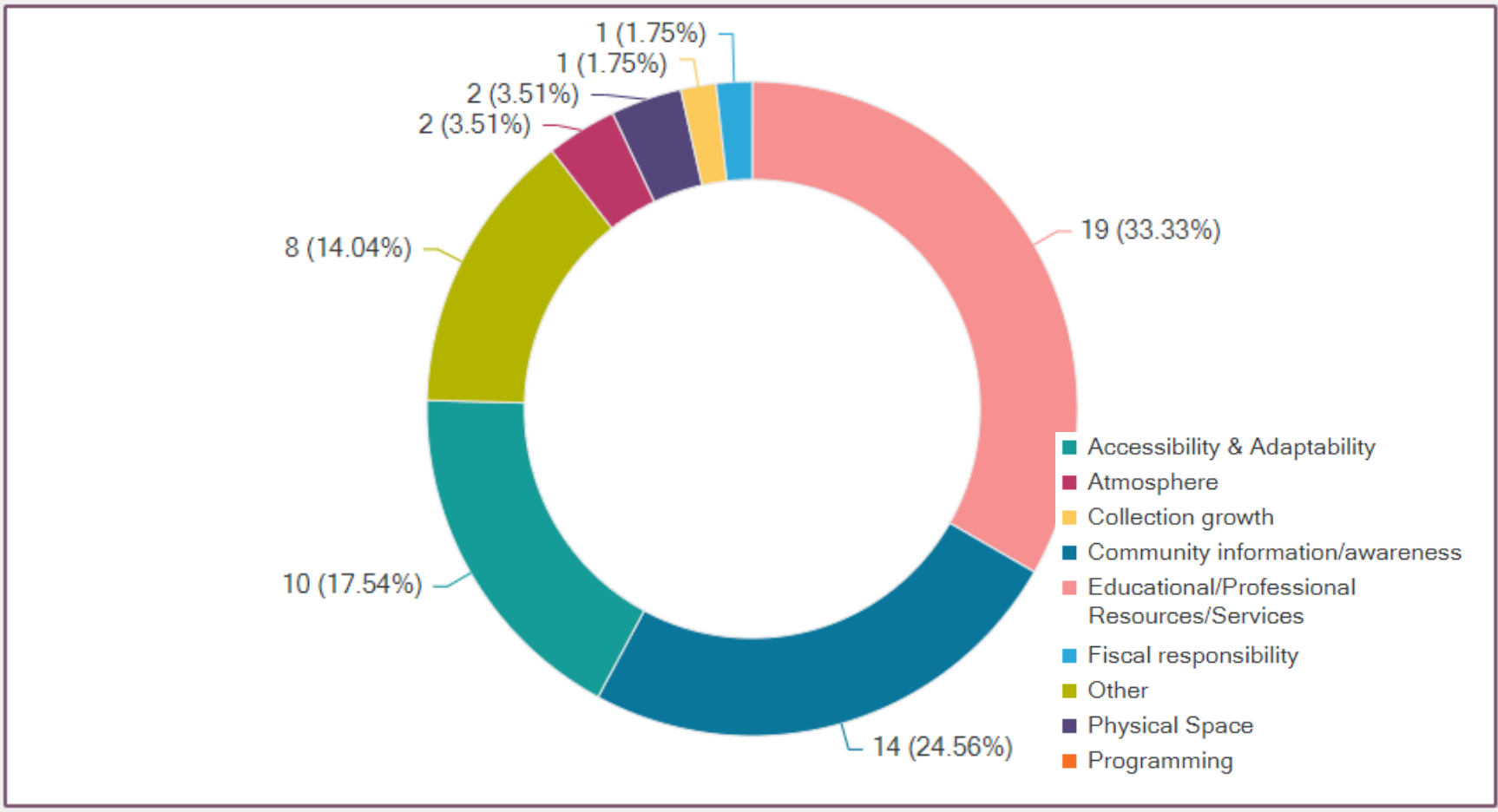




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How should we prepare for the future?



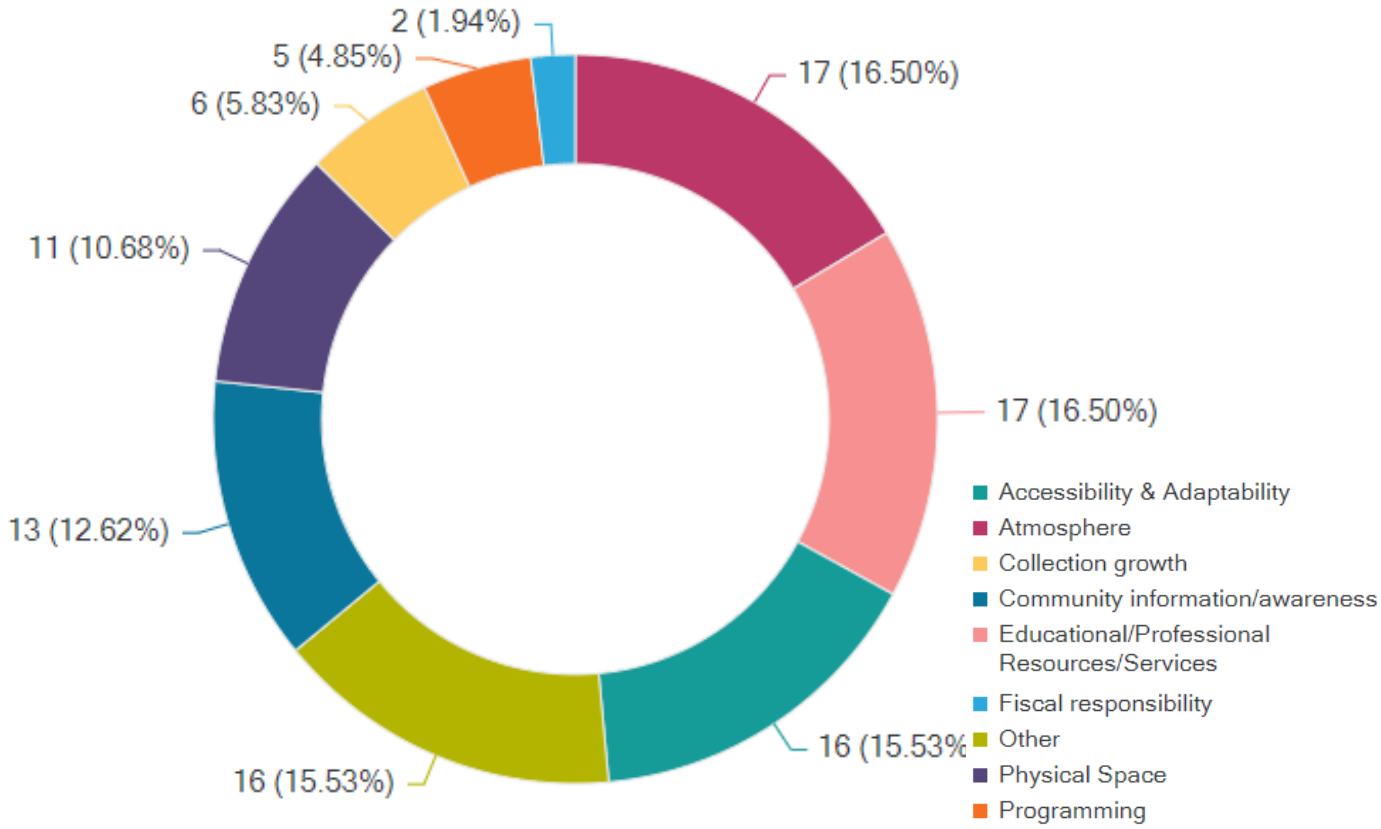


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What changes or trends are you seeing?

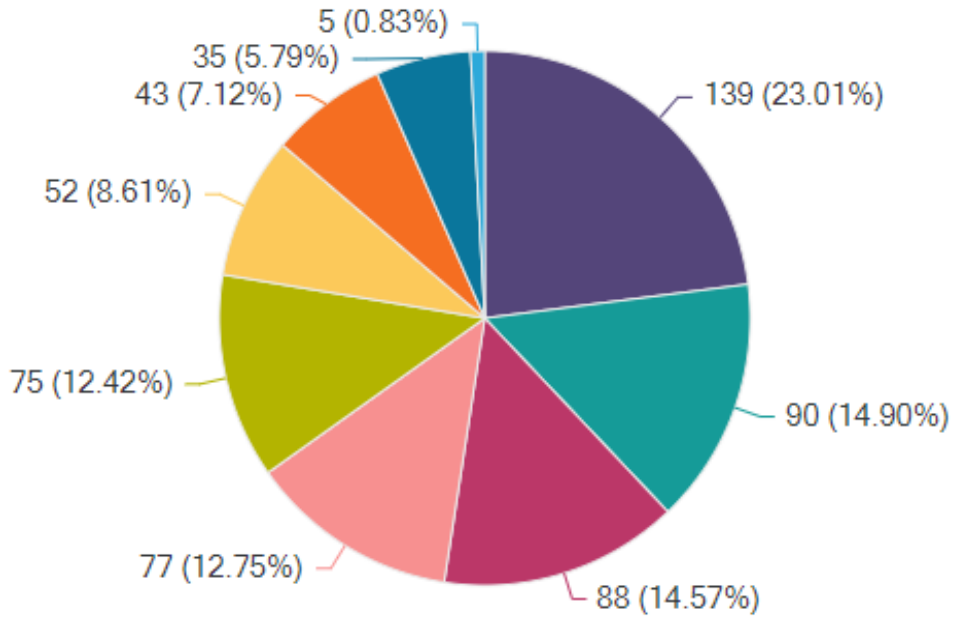




Strategic Plan Focus Groups

October 2024

Focus Group Questions	Accessibility & Adaptability	Atmosphere	Collection growth	Community information/awareness	Educational & Professional Resources/Services	Fiscal responsibility	Other	Physical Space	Programming
How should we prepare for the future?	10	2	1	14	19	1	8	2	0
The Library of the Future Should Have...	29	9	26	3	16	0	11	57	7
What changes or trends are you seeing?	16	17	6	13	17	2	16	11	5
What do you like least or what would you change about HHL?	21	14	8	4	8	1	29	61	10
What do you like most about HHL?	14	46	11	1	17	1	11	8	21
Total	**90**	**88**	**52**	**35**	**77**	**5**	**75**	**139**	**43**



League City Listens

Survey Results





Strategic Plan Survey Results
Top 5 Priorities

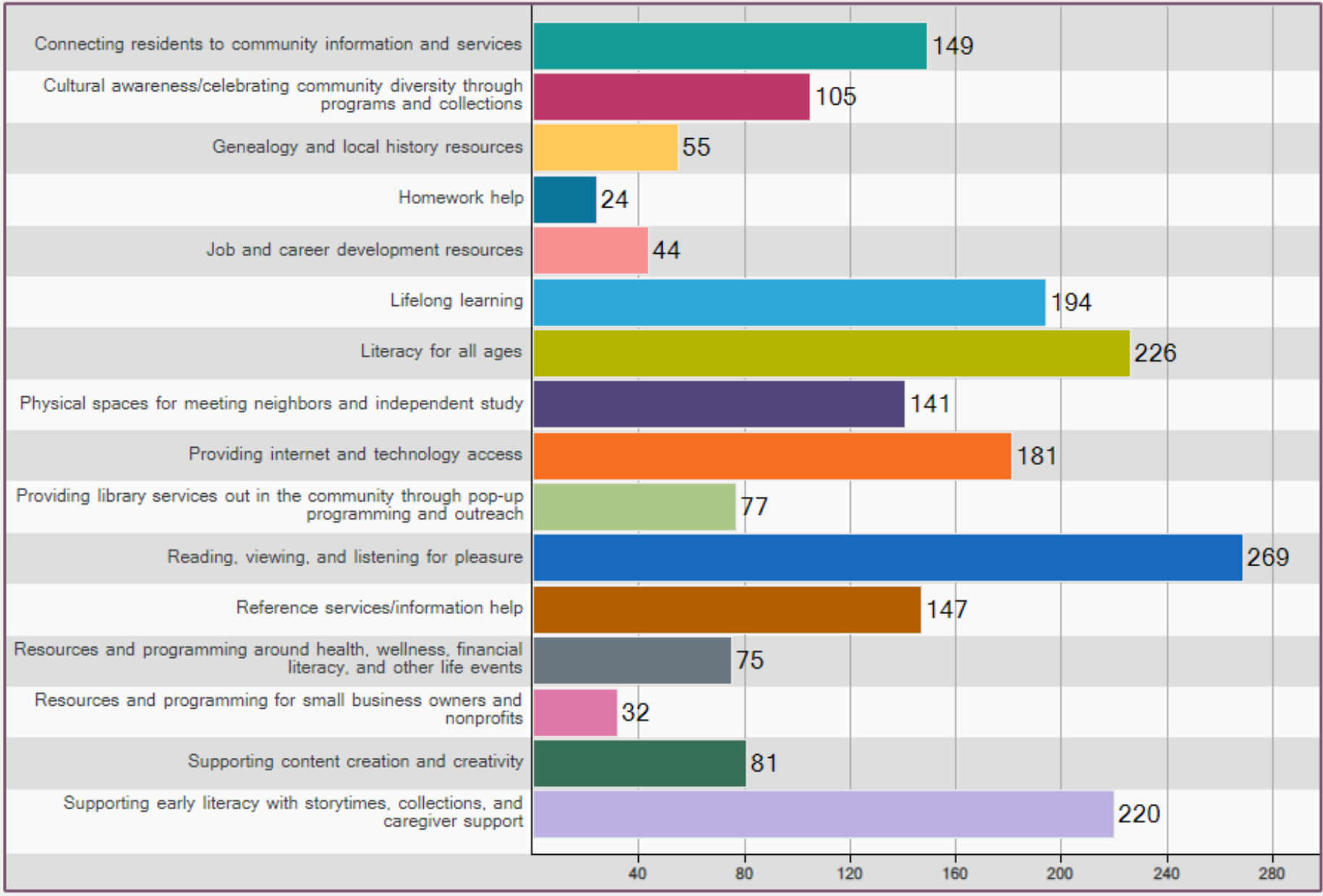
October 2024

Total Responses

2,020

Participants

404



Strategic Plan Survey Results
Top 5 Priorities

October 2024

Top Priorities	Rank #1
Reading, viewing, and listening for pleasure	107
Supporting early literacy with storytimes, collections, and caregiver support	79
Providing internet and technology access	50
Literacy for all ages	49
Lifelong learning	26

Top Priorities	Rank #2
Literacy for all ages	55
Supporting early literacy with storytimes, collections, and caregiver support	49
Lifelong learning	47
Reading, viewing, and listening for pleasure	37
Providing internet and technology access	36

Top Priorities	Rank #3
Literacy for all ages	58
Reading, viewing, and listening for pleasure	42
Supporting early literacy with storytimes, collections, and caregiver support	39
Lifelong learning	37
Reference services/information help	37

Top Priorities	Rank #4
Lifelong learning	49
Reading, viewing, and listening for pleasure	42
Providing internet and technology access	40
Literacy for all ages	37
Reference services/information help	35

Top Priorities	Rank #5
Physical Spaces for meeting...	44
Reading, viewing, and listening for pleasure	41
Lifelong learning	35
Reference services / information help	35
Connecting residents to community information and services	34

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Are you a League City Resident?

Yes	No
342	62

How often do you visit the Helen Hall Library?

How often do you visit the Helen Hall Library?	Count	*E-Services User
Weekly	153	
Monthly	145	
Annually	33	
*1-6 times a year	24	7
*Never	24	13
*Irregular	13	2
*24+ times a year	11	
*19-23 times a year	1	

* Gathered from comments of participants who answered "other"

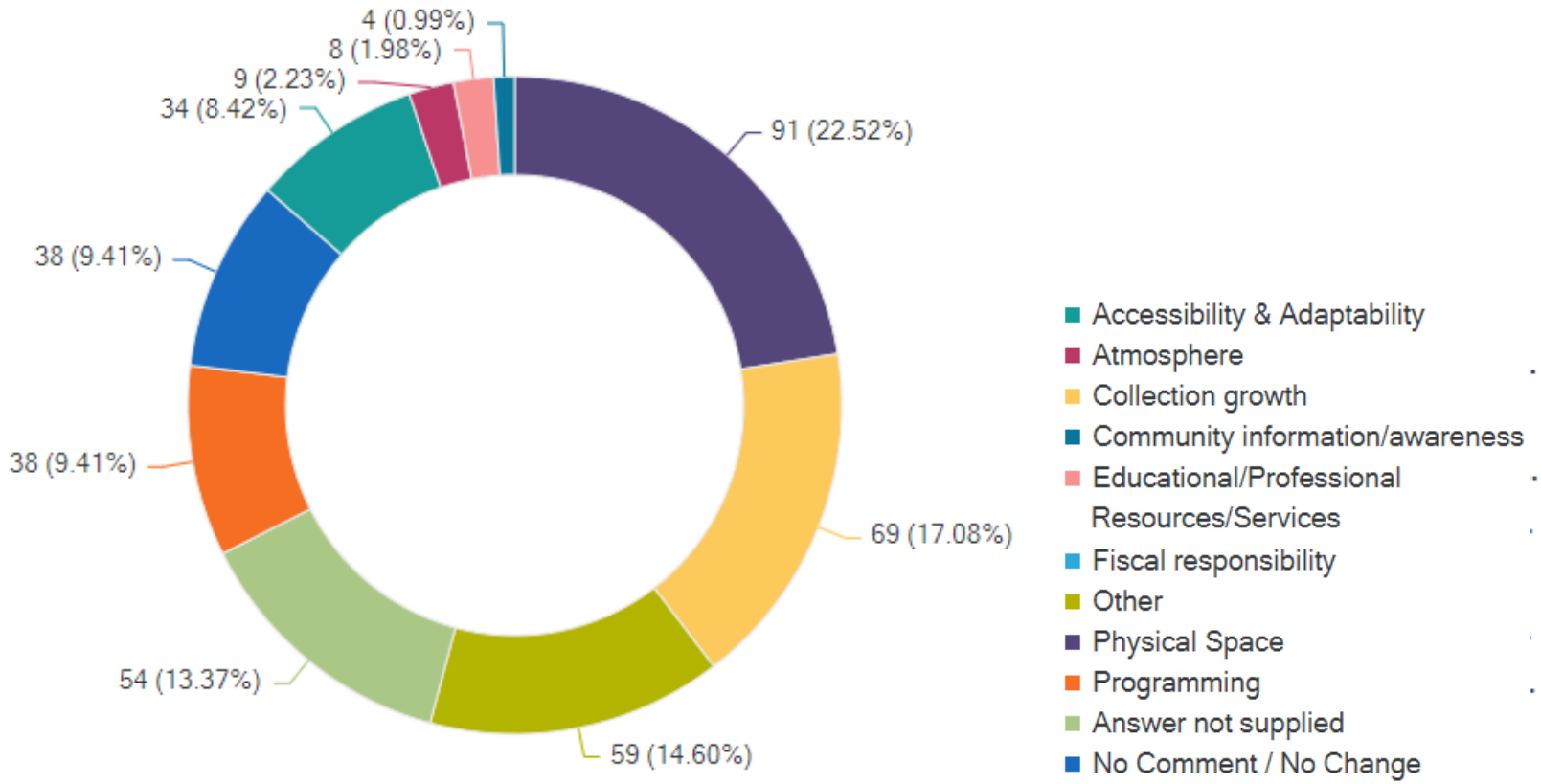
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What do you like least or what would you change about HHL?

TOP 25 WORDS

*These seem to be in the context of: More (books), Larger (spaces), Longer (open hours)



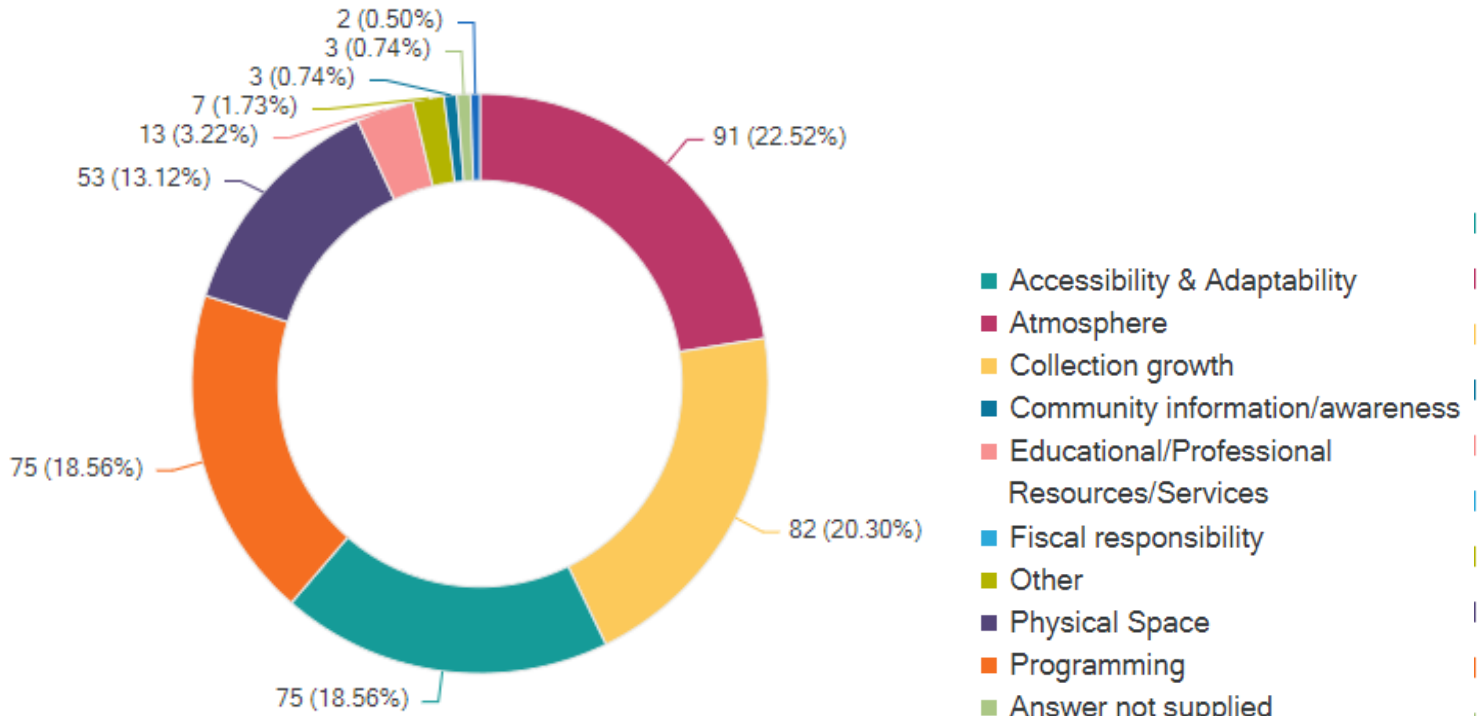


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What do you like most about HHL?

TOP 25 WORDS



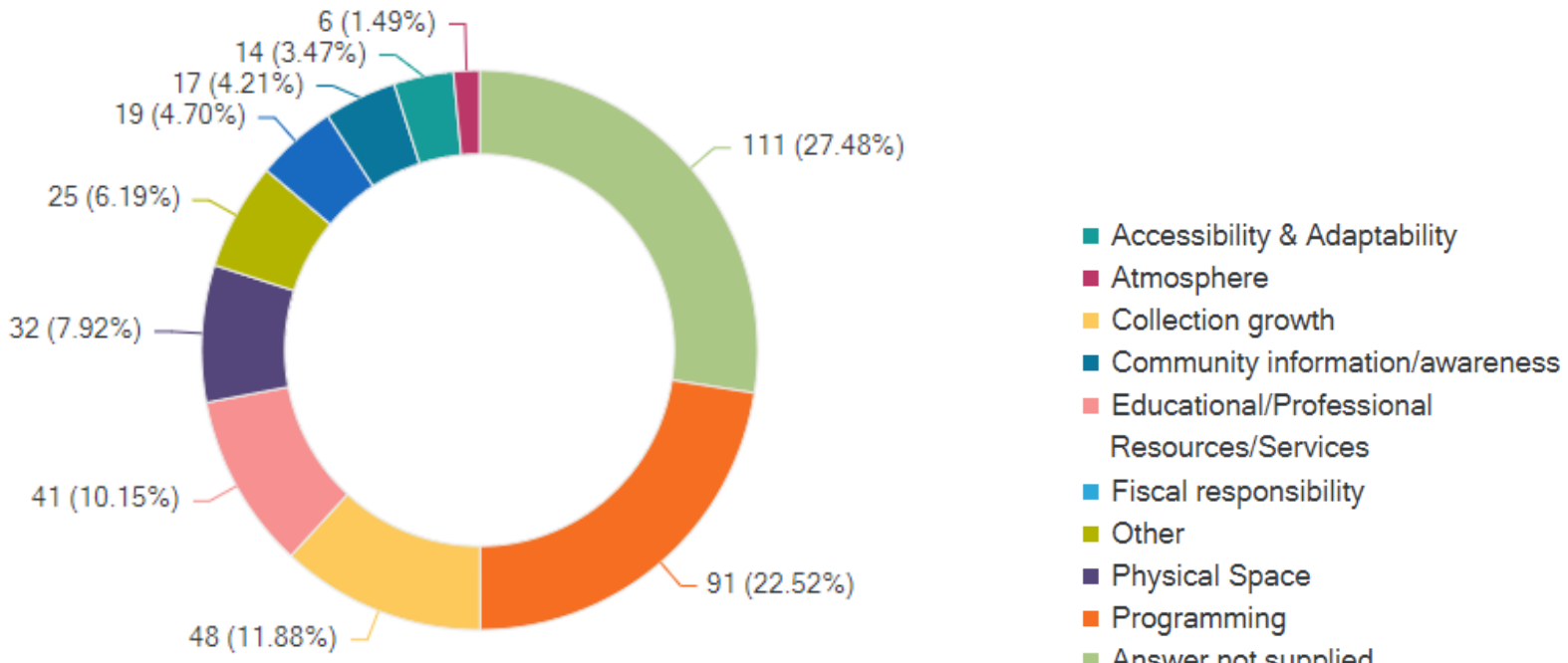


October 2024

TOP 25 WORDS



ARE THERE ANY OTHER SERVICES YOU BELIEVE THE LIBRARY SHOULD PRIORITIZE?



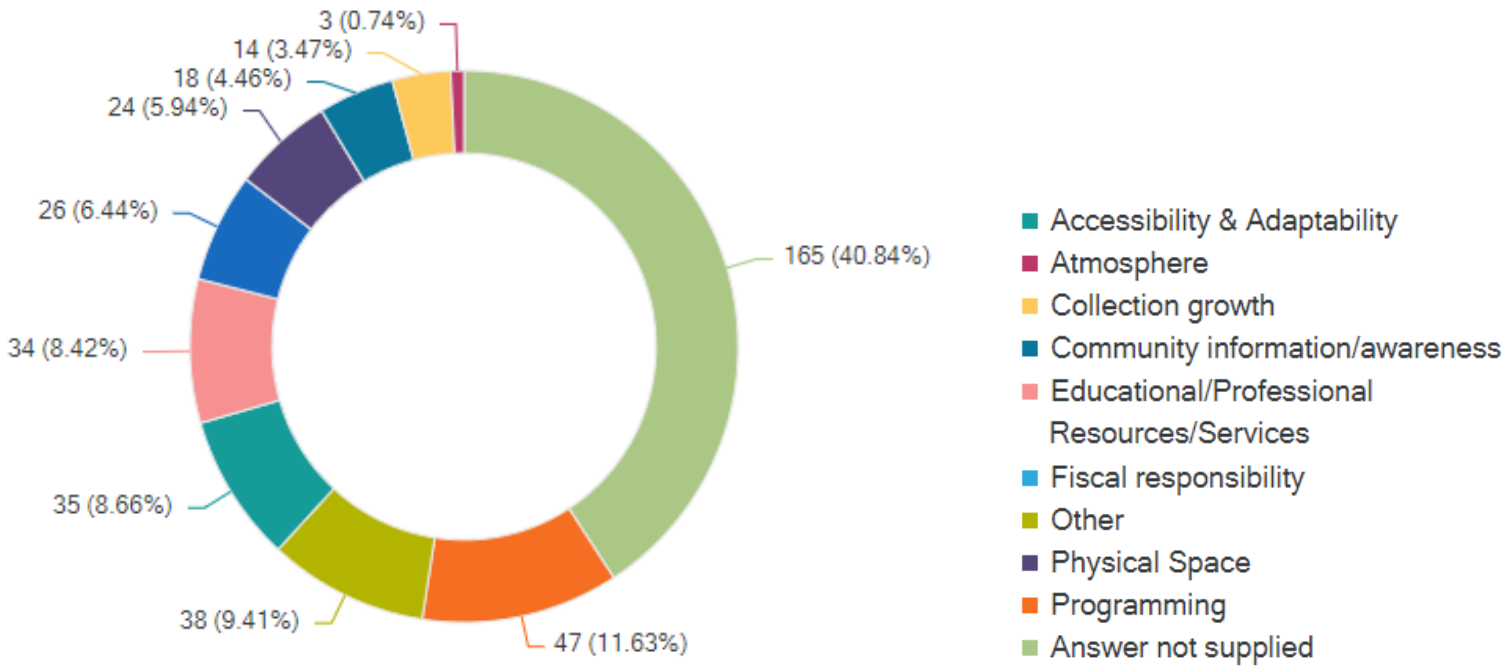
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TOP 25 WORDS



WHAT COMMUNITY NEEDS OR ASPIRATIONS SHOULD HELEN HALL LIBRARY BE ADDRESSING OR SUPPORTING?



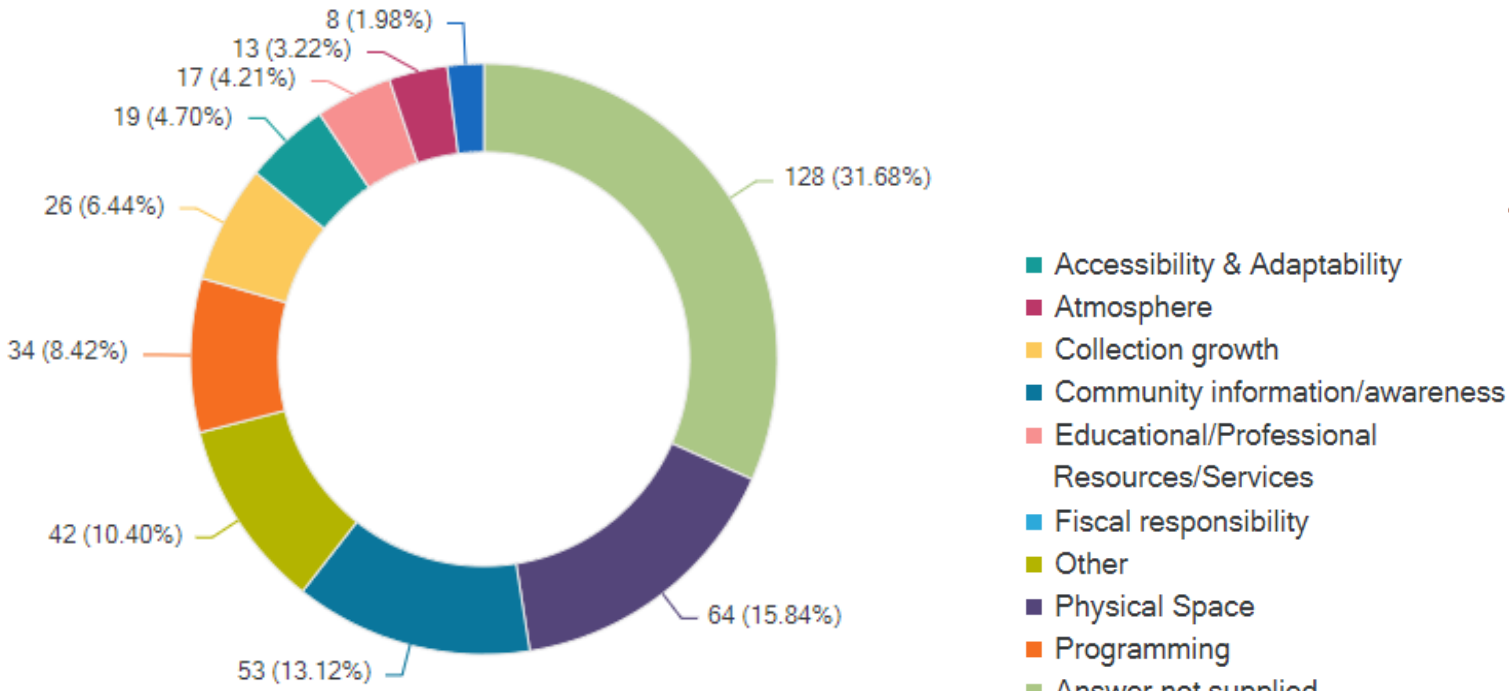
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WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF LEAGUE CITY'S LIBRARY?

TOP 25 WORDS





Strategic Plan Survey

October 2024

LCL-Question	Accessibility & Adaptability	Atmosphere	Collection growth	Community information / awareness	Educational & Professional Resources/Services	Fiscal responsibility	Other	Physical Space	Programming	Answer not supplied	No Comment / No Change
Are there any other services you believe the library should prioritize?	14	6	48	17	41	0	25	32	91	111	19
What community needs or aspirations should the library be addressing or supporting?	35	3	14	18	34	0	38	24	47	165	26
What do you like least or what would you change about HHL?	34	9	69	4	8	0	59	91	38	54	38
What do you like most about HHL?	75	91	82	3	13	0	7	53	75	3	2
What is your vision for the future of League City's library?	19	13	26	53	17	0	42	64	34	128	8
Total	**177**	**122**	**239**	**95**	**113**	**0**	**171**	**264**	**285**	**461**	**93**

