

# *Strategic Plan & Master Facilities Plan* **Engagement Summary**



— September 2025 —

---

Prepared by



POINT**NORTH**



**GROUP 4**  
ARCHITECTURE

# Table of Contents

---

<b>Overview</b>	2
<b>Process</b>	3
<b>Timeline</b>	3
<b>Engagement Goals</b>	4
<b>Engagement Activities</b>	5
<b>Who We Heard From</b>	6
<b>Data Collection and Analysis</b>	12
<b>What We Heard - Engagement Themes</b>	13
<b>Emerging Focus Areas</b>	22
<b>Next Steps</b>	24



FVRLibraries  
FORT VANCOUVER REGIONAL LIBRARIES

# Overview

Fort Vancouver Regional Libraries (FVRLibraries) launched a community-driven process to shape the future of library services across its region.

By gathering input from a wide range of voices, this effort aims to build a shared vision that keeps FVRLibraries **responsive, inclusive and relevant.**

The resulting 5-year strategic plan and 10-year master facilities plan will serve as a collaborative roadmap to guide decisions about programs, services, people, partnerships, and facilities – ensuring they reflect the evolving needs of the communities FVRLibraries serves.



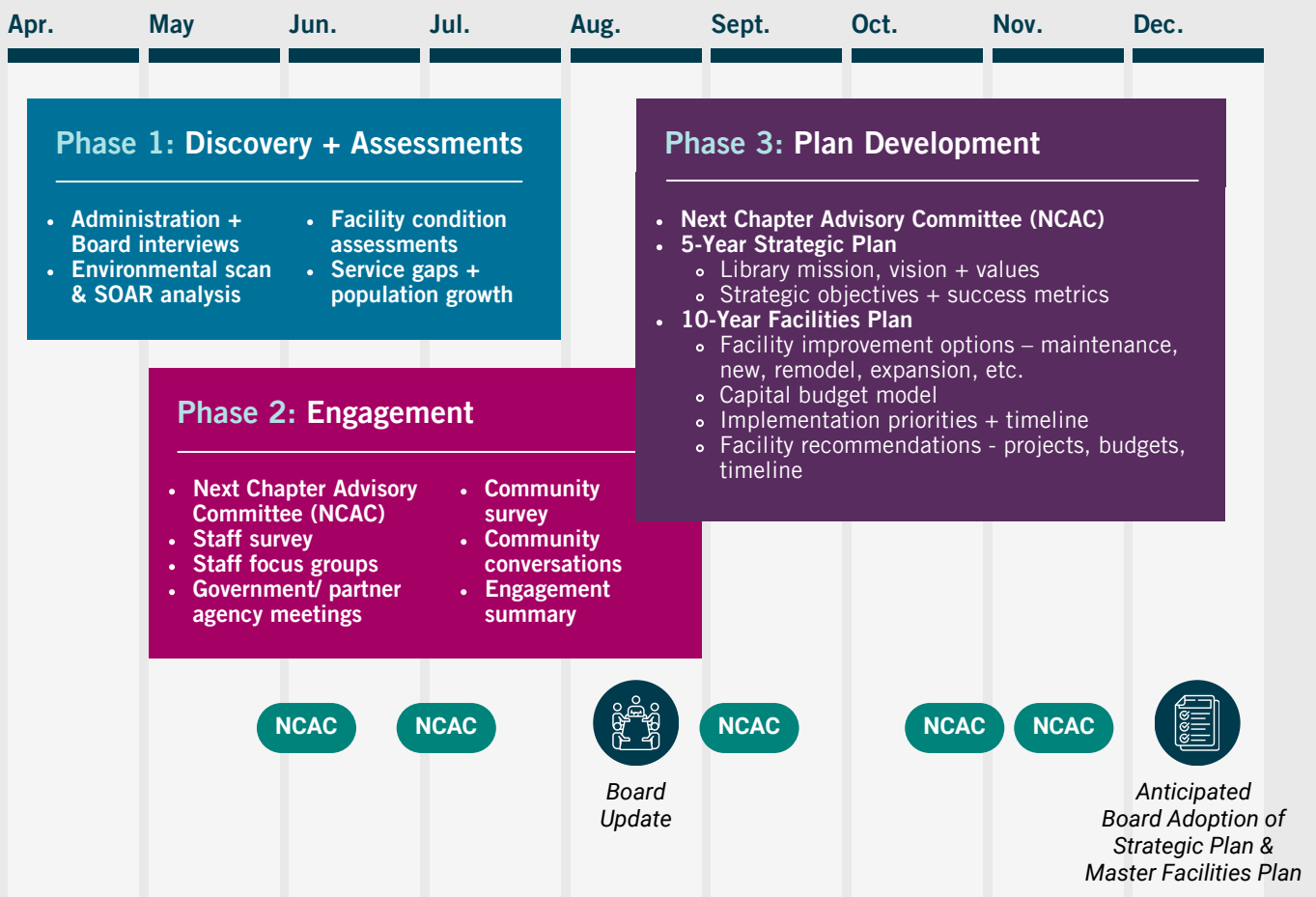
# Process

FVRLibraries kicked off its strategic and master facilities planning processes in Spring 2025. The process was guided by a Core Team composed of FVRLibraries Administrative Team members and external planning consultants who met bi-weekly throughout the early planning phases to guide the process. The Core Team developed an engagement plan and an outreach toolkit with goals and activities to guide the Community Engagement phase of the planning process.

Engagement activities included digital and print surveys in English, Spanish and Russian, focus groups, open house-style community conversations events and advisory group discussions. Feedback was collected both internally and from external community members across FVRLibraries' diverse service area.

This engagement summary reflects the key insights and emerging themes from that input, which will directly inform the development of FVRLibraries' **5-year strategic plan** and **10-year master facilities plan**.

# Timeline



**NCAC:** Next Chapter Advisory Committee



# Engagement Goals



**Listen deeply** to community members to understand their hopes, concerns, and ideas for the future of FVRLibraries.



**Build relationships and trust** through open and inclusive engagement opportunities.



**Gather actionable insights** to inform key service areas, from programming and outreach to technology and facilities.



**Educate** community members on the services, programs and offerings of FVRLibraries.



**Reach a broad cross-section** of residents across all geographic service areas, including regular patrons and non-users of FVRLibraries.



# Engagement Activities

## Next Chapter Advisory Committee (NCAC)

A committee of up to 28 individuals representing a broad cross-section of FVRLibraries communities who will inform and advise on process and strategic plan development.

## Surveys

Two separate surveys (one for staff & one for community) gathering input on community needs, perceptions and facilities use.

## Staff Focus Groups

Three virtual listening sessions with FVRL staff gathering input on staff expertise, community needs and perceptions.

## Community Conversations

Six in-person and one virtual open-house style events to host community conversations engaging FVRLibraries patrons and residents in their communities. Events opened with background information from the FVRLibraries Executive Director and then participants were encouraged to engage with staff one-on-one or via engagement activities to provide input.

## FVRLibraries Tabling & Summer Outreach

FVRL outreach staff attended many summer fairs, festivals, concerts and community events across the district, promoting the community survey and community conversations.



*FVRLibraries Communications and Marketing Division led the promotion of the community survey and community conversations, which included a landing page on FVRLibraries' website, social media posts, paid print and digital advertising and a mailer.*



# Who We Heard From: Engagement Reach

## *Number of Engagements*

# 2,423

**Total Number of Engagements\***

\*1 engagement = a touchpoint with an individual via survey participation or attendance at an event or focus group.



# 1,864

Community Survey



# 39

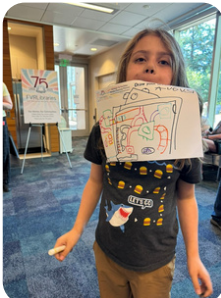


Next Chapter Advisory  
Committee Meetings #1 & #2

# 245



Community  
Conversations



# 199

Staff Survey

# 76



Staff Focus  
Groups

# Who We Heard From: Engagement Reach

## Total Reach

# 1,239,988

Total Reach\*

\*Reach = total number of views or exposure.

## 254,000

Estimated Print  
Advertising  
Impressions



## 19,465

FVRLibraries Tabling &  
Summer Outreach



## 696,500

Estimated Digital  
Advertising  
Impressions



## 44,219

Organic Social Media  
Views/Impressions

## 223,046

Direct Mailers Sent



## 2,758

Web Page Views





# Who We Heard From: Demographics

## Community Survey Respondent Demographics

The following demographics only represent community survey respondents who opted to share demographic information; demographic information was not collected during other engagement activities.

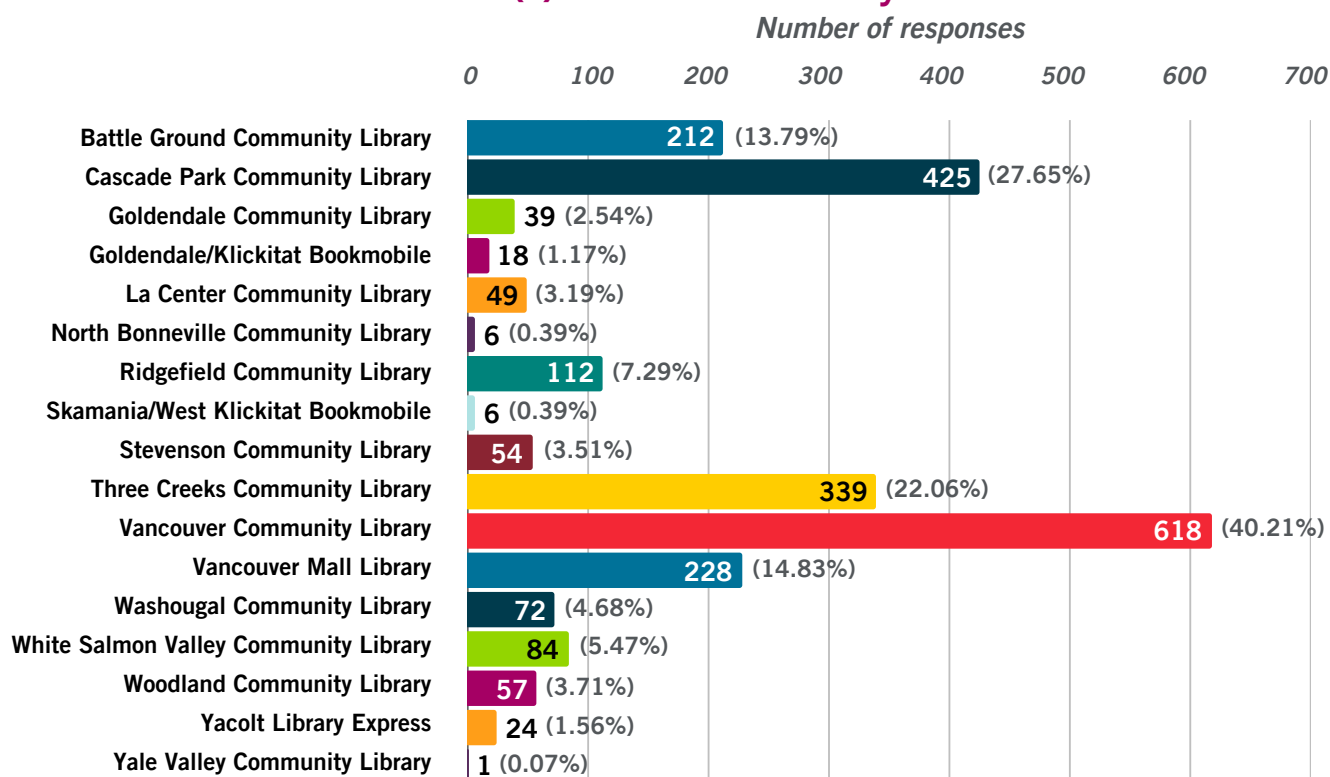
### Location

County / Area	Responses	% Responses	Area % of FVRL Pop.
<b>Clark / Cowlitz County Area</b>	<b>1,614</b>	<b>86.6%</b>	<b>92.0%</b> of FVRL District pop.
<b>Vancouver</b>	<b>1,128</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>38%</b> of Clark County Area pop.
<b>Rest of Area</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>62%</b> of Clark County Area pop.
<b>Skamania County</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>2.3%</b> of FVRL District pop.
<b>Klickitat County</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>7.6%</b>	<b>4.4%</b> of FVRL District pop.
<b>Other/None</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	

**Clark/Cowlitz County Area:** includes City of Woodland and Yale Valley; excludes City of Camas

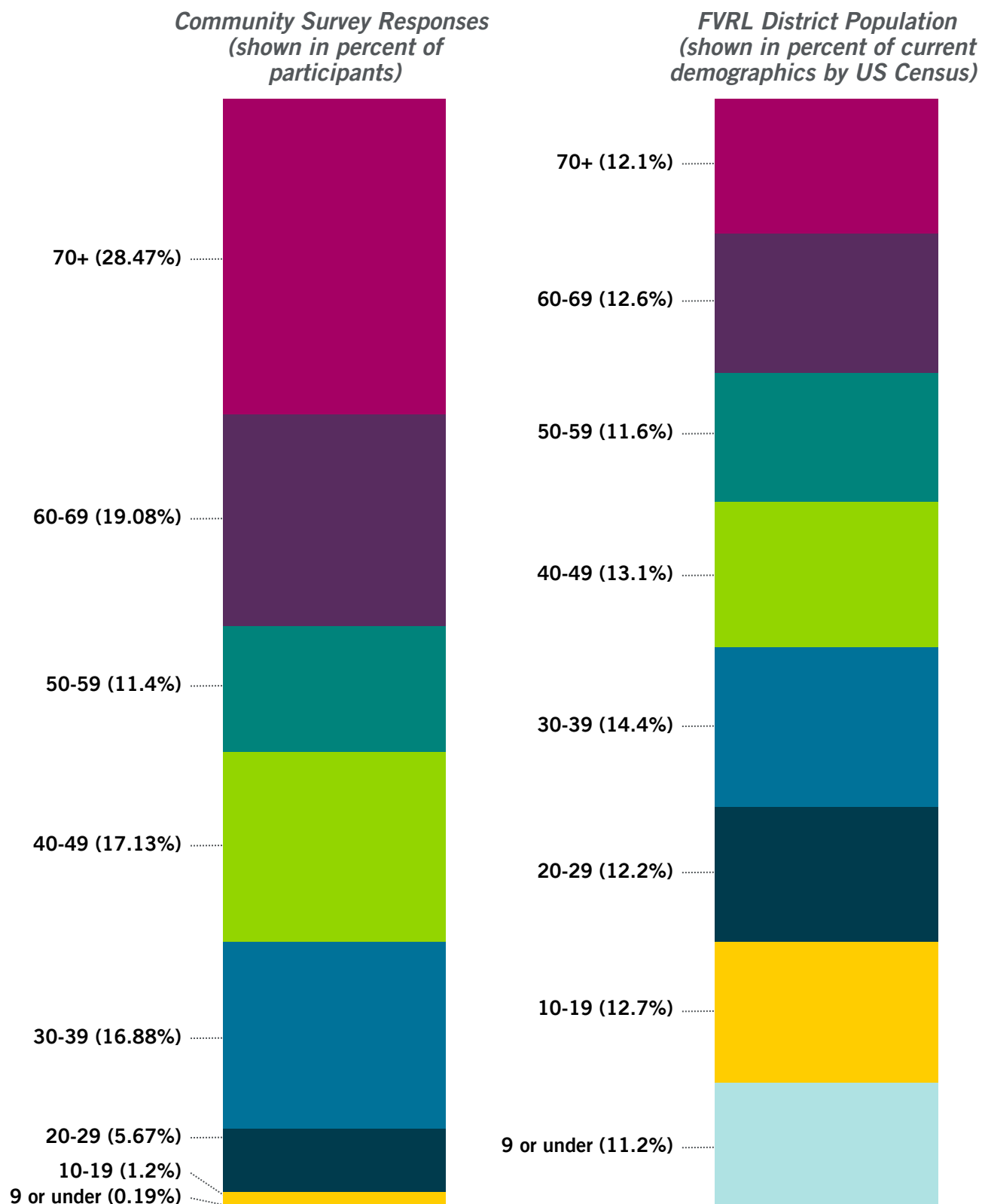
**Other/None:** No zip code data provided

### Which FVRLibraries' location(s) or bookmobile do you visit most often?



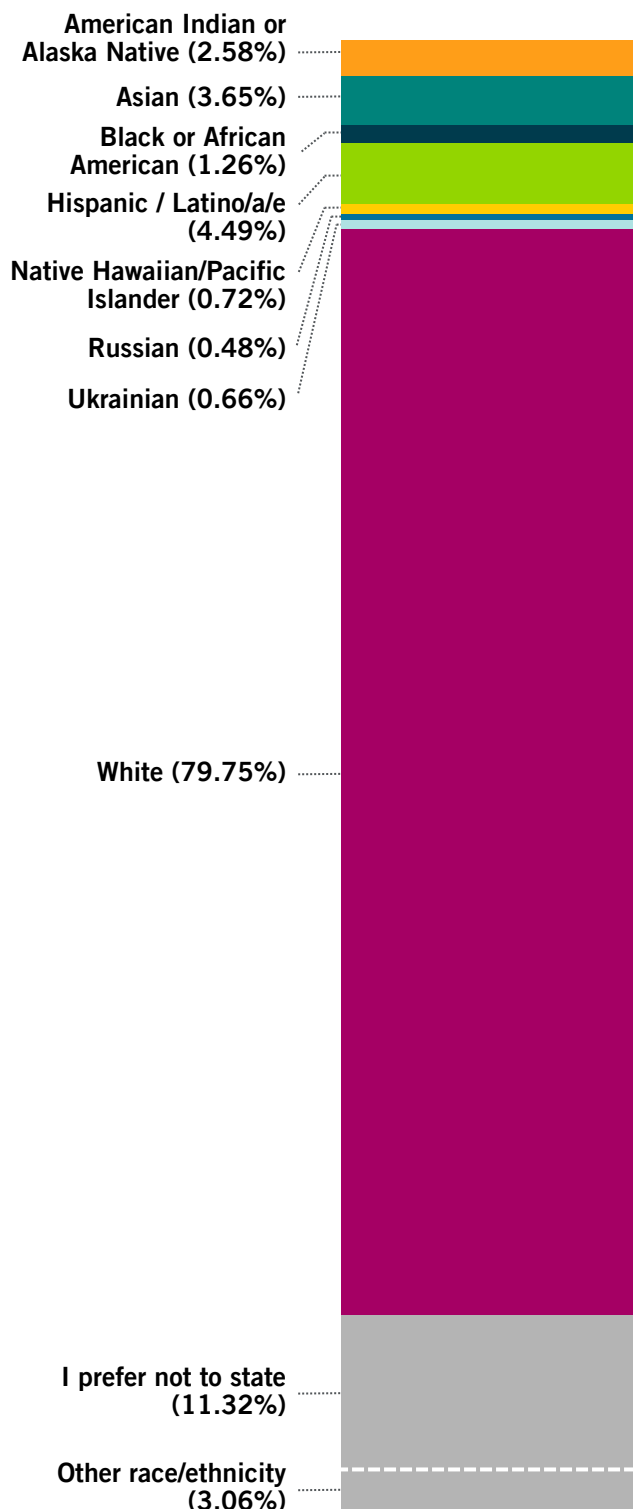
\*Percentages within this graph do not equal 100, due to respondents ability to select multiple locations.

## Age

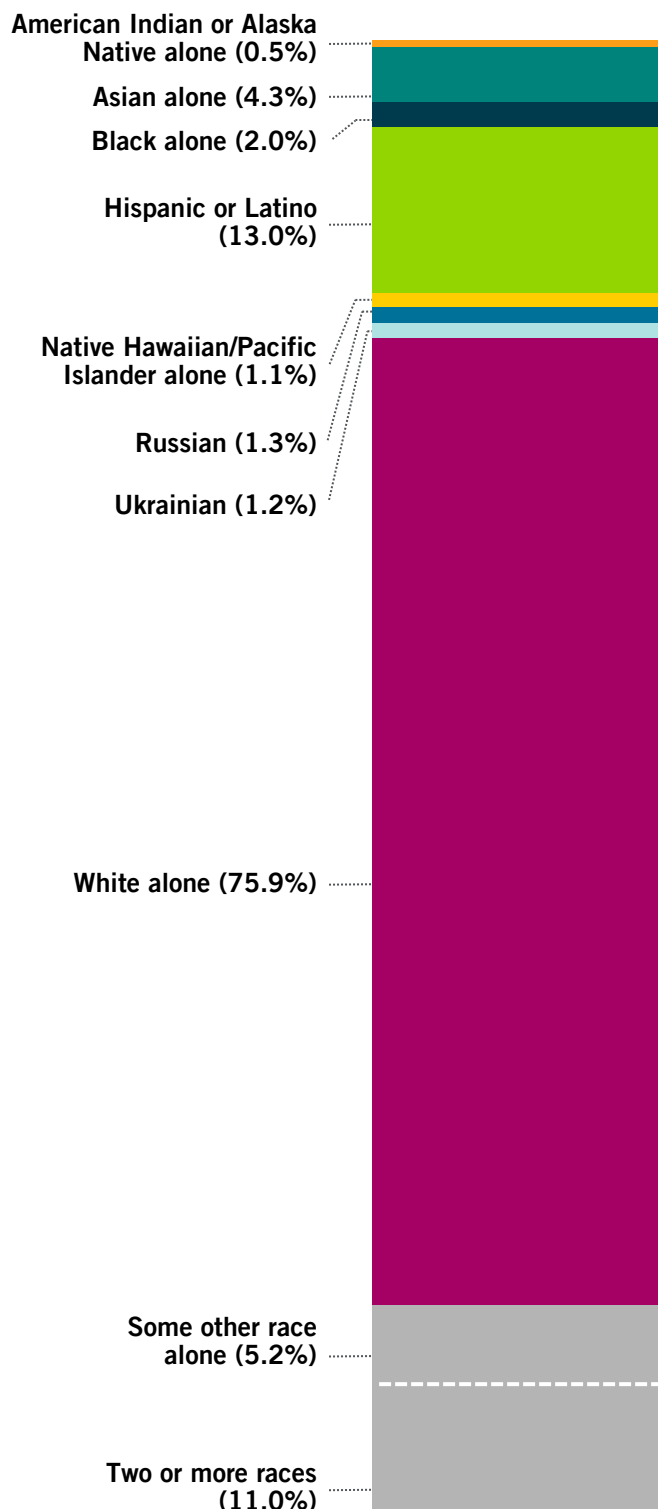


## Race / Ethnicity

*Community Survey Responses  
(shown in percent of  
participants)*

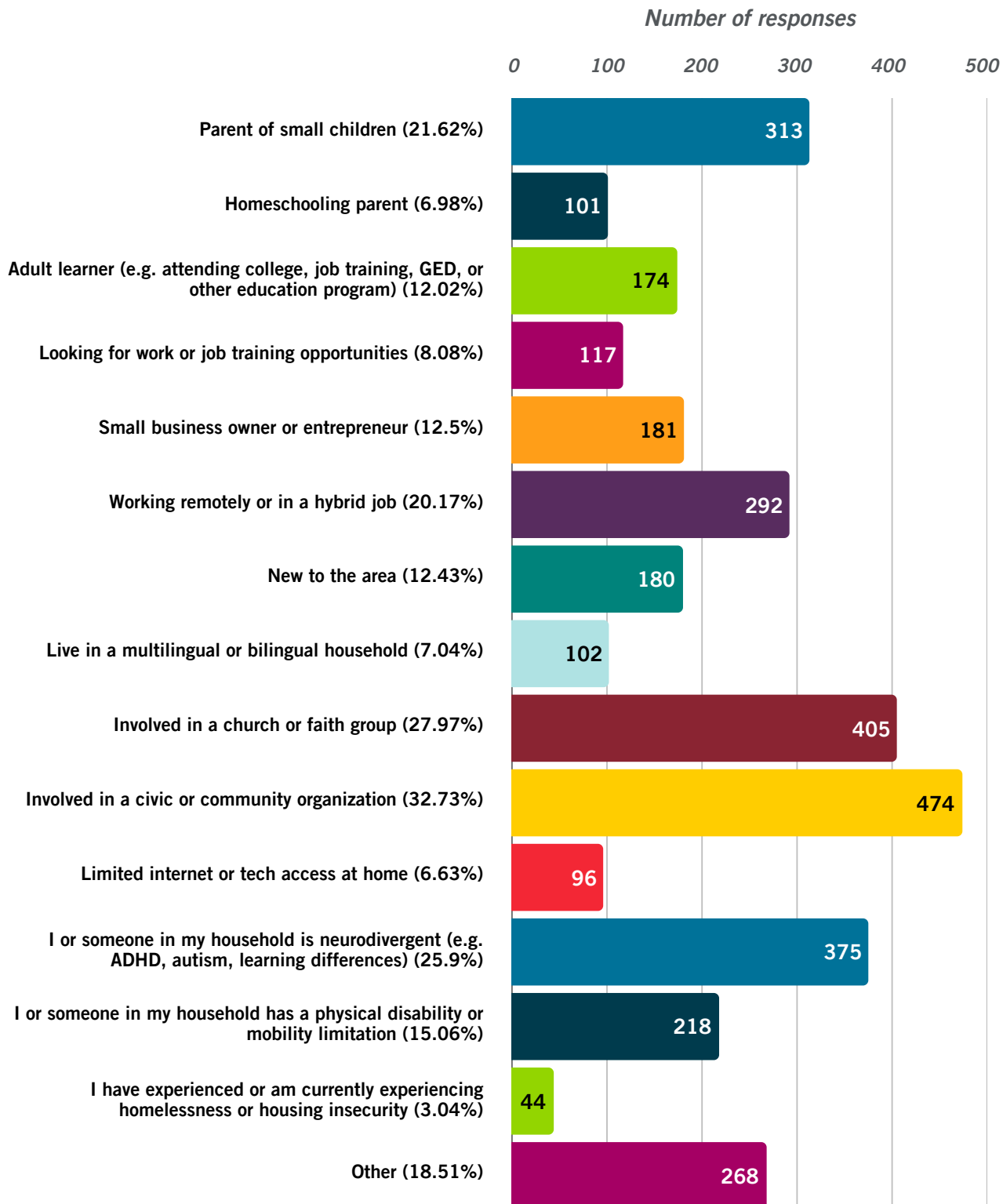


*FVRL District Population  
(shown in percent of current  
demographics by US Census)*



*\*The category labels on the right graph are consistent with the US Census reporting, while the labels on the left graph are reflective to the category options listed in the community survey.*

## Other Ways Respondents Identify



Other responses include: Retired, Grandparent, Senior, Teacher, Veteran, Student, Caregiver



It is important to note that engagement activities were not designed to achieve statistical significance.



# What We Heard - Emerging Engagement Themes

---

## 1: Vision and Values

Vision and values are fundamental to a strategic plan – values serve as guiding principles that shape an organization’s culture, create shared alignment around decision-making and establish a shared understanding of what matters most.

FVRLibraries is widely recognized as a trusted and inclusive institution, deeply valued for its commitment to access, learning and respect for all communities. Moving forward, there is an opportunity to more clearly define the organization’s direction, consistently apply its values across internal and external practices and deepen transparency and engagement.

### *Emerging Themes:*

#### Libraries as trusted civic anchors

- FVRLibraries is seen as a source of trust, neutrality and stability; a safe space for those needing support.
- Libraries are viewed as platforms for civic literacy, democracy and community wellbeing.
- Serving as a civic anchor includes being a place where intellectual freedom is respected, truth-seeking is encouraged and basic human needs are often met (warmth, internet, social interaction).

#### Empathy and respect

- Empathy, dignity, and respect were emphasized as the foundation of library culture.
- These values were described not only as aspirational goals, but everyday behaviors seen through library staff – examples like providing technology support, compassionate listening and personalized help.
- For library patrons, these qualities build trust and connection and for staff, they shape the service ethic that is central to their roles.

## Inclusion, belonging & access

- There was broad affirmation of current FVRLibraries values of inclusion, access and belonging – many see these as foundational.
- Many feel a sense of belonging at the library and see maintaining a sense of belonging for all as essential for the future – especially for rural communities, people of color, LGBTQ+ patrons, people with disabilities and new immigrants and refugees.
- Community members emphasized the need for cultural and linguistic inclusion, accessibility and a welcoming environment where community members feel a sense of belonging across all library locations.
- Desire for defining values with clarity, ensuring language and actions unite rather than divide.
- Staff hope for increased visibility of values in action - examples include hiring practices, decision making, staff development, etc.

## Intellectual freedom and community responsiveness

- The library's core role in upholding intellectual freedom and open access to information was emphasized.
- There is a desire for discernment and increased transparency around programming and materials.
- Staff expressed the importance of having clear, values-based frameworks to navigate community interactions while maintaining FVRLibraries' commitment to freedom of expression.

**“It should feel like the library is for you, no matter who you are.”**

– Community Conversation Participant

**“Libraries are more critical now than ever. I feel very fortunate to live in a community with a great library system.”**

– Community Survey Respondent





## 2: Programs and Services

FVRLibraries' programs, particularly for children and families, are a significant strength of the organization. Core services such as book lending, technology access and in-person support are also highly appreciated by the broader community. Expanding capacity to meet growing demand for adult, multilingual and community-responsive programming is a key opportunity, as well as distinguishing and clarifying program planning and innovation at the branch level.



### *Emerging Themes:*

#### **Strong support for existing offerings**

- Core services like books, wi-fi access, printing and interlibrary loans are deeply valued.
- Bookmobiles were frequently mentioned as a beloved and essential service, particularly in rural areas, providing consistent access to books, technology and connection for patrons who may not live near a physical branch.
- Children's and youth programming, including storytimes, clubs, educational resources and summer reading, is seen by the community as a strength.
- Patrons appreciate access to resources and services across age groups.
- Staff take pride in delivering consistent, high-quality foundational programs.

#### **Expansion of adult and senior programming**

- Desire for more adult learning and enrichment – social events in evenings or art clubs.
- Opportunities for older adults and caregivers to connect and learn; interest in intergenerational programming and social gatherings.
- Community members suggested life skills, wellness and creative-focused programs—examples include cooking classes, knitting, painting and physical fitness.

#### **Interest in emerging topics and lifelong learning**

- Strong interest expressed in educational programs on artificial intelligence, digital literacy, blockchain and DIY topics (gardening, bike repair and cooking).
- Desire for libraries to serve as hubs for career development, job search support and small business learning.
- Support for entrepreneurs and local small businesses to connect with resources and engage with the community.



## Localized and accessible offerings

- Patrons requested specific programming at certain library locations; this may look like similar core programming and diverse programming offerings from branch to branch.
- Desire for increased programming across all branches, suggestions include language learning, tutoring, teen art and support groups.

## Language and cultural representation

- Desire for multilingual and culturally relevant programming, particularly in communities with large Spanish, Russian and Ukrainian speaking populations.
- Patrons are seeking multilingual storytimes, workshops, events and signage that reflect their languages and culture.

**“I’d love to learn how to fix my own bike or start a small business – at the library!”**

– Community Conversation Participant

**“More adult programs – book and wine night, art meetups – would bring us together.”**

– Community Conversation Participant



### 3: Community Partnerships

FVRLibraries' community relationships are a powerful asset – existing partnerships extend the library's reach and reinforce its role as a connector. Strengthening internal structures, dedicating outreach efforts and growing culturally rooted partnerships will help sustain and deepen this impact across the district.



#### *Emerging Themes:*

##### Partnerships as an extension of library services

- Inside and outside of the library building, community partnerships extend FVRLibraries' reach and impact – AARP tax help, school outreach, partnerships with food banks and WorkSource were all mentioned as successful partnerships that connect library patrons with services in the community.
- Partnerships help extend library services beyond traditional use, offering access to life skills, employment resources and essential support in patrons' daily lives.
- Community-led programming or shared delivery with partner organizations was suggested as a way to address staffing limitations while maintaining a high level of service.

##### Challenges with capacity and implementation

- Partnership work requires dedicated time and sustained effort; internal bandwidth can be challenged with other priorities, as well as strategic guidance to pursue or sustain relationships with community partners.

##### Prioritized communities and partnerships

- Desire to deepen partnerships with culturally specific and community based organizations, particularly those serving tribal communities, immigrant and refugee populations, LGBTQ+ individuals and youth, and houseless community members.
- Interest in developing partnerships that support language access, intergenerational learning, civic engagement, public health and social services.

**“Partnerships with AARP and schools really help – it makes the library feel bigger than just books.”**

– Community Conversation Participant

## 4: Library Experience

The FVRLibraries' user or patron experience is defined by exceptional staff support and a strong sense of belonging, especially for patrons who are navigating technology or accessing resources for the first time. Staff play a vital role in making the library feel accessible and welcoming. Patrons consistently describe the library as a place where they feel seen, supported and respected.

To enhance access and reach, the district can consider improving digital navigation, expanding open hours and ensuring inclusive, culturally reflective environments across all branches.

### *Emerging Themes:*

#### Library staff are key to patron experience

- Staff are consistently described as welcoming, knowledgeable and willing to go above and beyond to ensure a positive patron experience of FVRLibraries.
- Reliable staffing and development are critical for the positive patron experience that community members expect from a public institution.

#### Diverse collections and inclusive spaces

- Patrons appreciate the diversity and quality of materials available at FVRLibraries – books, DVDs, curated displays and collections; a wide range of programs available for all ages.
- Desire for more collections and displays that reflect local identity and diversity.
- More visual cues or signage can provide a welcoming atmosphere for all – examples include multilingual signage or signage encouraging patrons to ask staff questions.

**“Staff are so creative, knowledgeable and talented. They bring the library and its resources to life.”**

– Community Survey Respondent



## Digital and physical access

- Digital and physical access to books, information and media consistently ranked as a high-value service by community members.
- Appreciation for digital materials and collections and ease of interlibrary loan.
- Some still face navigation difficulties with the website, catalog, mobile app and booking systems.
- Evening and Sunday access is limited in many FVRLibraries' locations, making libraries less accessible for working families and caregivers. Across locations, extended hours and additional days of service were requested.

## Community connection

- The library is seen as a welcoming space where people of all different ages and backgrounds can connect.
- Convening activities that promote learning, social connection and fun are essential.
- Space and rooms that are inviting and comfortable for groups to access enhance patron experience.

**“This library is my dream library!”**

– Community Conversation Participant

**“I appreciate how the librarians make the library a welcoming third space for people of all ages to learn, gather, create, and actively participate in community”**

– Community Survey Respondent





## 5: Facilities and Spaces

FVRLibraries' physical spaces are deeply valued by patrons and staff alike as welcoming, community-centered environments. Many of FVRLibraries buildings are facing growing challenges: limited space, aging infrastructure and barriers to access. Looking into the future, there is a clear opportunity to invest in modern, flexible spaces that can better serve the diverse needs of patrons today and adapt to the changing ways people learn, connect and use library services tomorrow.



### *Emerging Themes:*

#### Functional and flexible space

- Across all locations and engagement types, there was a constant call for more space – especially meeting rooms, quiet zones, and children's and teen spaces.
- Limited availability or size of spaces for tutoring, private conversation, gatherings and meetings, and programs.
- Staff expressed concern about work space crowding.
- Growing interest in modular or reconfigurable designs, such as moveable furniture and multi-purpose rooms that can serve different audiences throughout the day.
- In fast-growing communities, space constraints are especially urgent and seen as a barrier to program expansion and patron experience of the library.

#### Accessibility and inclusion

- Participants encouraged inclusive and welcoming design elements, such as culturally reflective artwork, quiet or sensory rooms and spaces designed to accommodate a wide range of ages, abilities and identities.
- There is an opportunity to enhance sensory-friendly features, multilingual signage, and layout design that considers neurodivergent patrons or those with mobility challenges.
- Several branches also noted the lack of gender-neutral restrooms or family-friendly design features, such as private nursing spaces.

## Technology and infrastructure

- Appreciation expressed for available technology (computers, printers, wi-fi) but also emphasis on the need for more modern technology infrastructure, such as device charging stations, updated public computers and user-friendly digital tools.
- Technology layout and functionality can be a barrier – some spaces are not designed for collaborative tech support or private instruction, limiting staff effectiveness.
- Communities voiced interest in expanded access to “library of things” items – tools, games, etc., which require storage and lending infrastructure not always available in current spaces.

## Facility maintenance and safety

- Some library locations experience inconsistent HVAC, uneven lighting, and other basic building system challenges.
- Staff requested clearer systems to report maintenance needs.
- Staff expressed a need for updated emergency protocols and improved infrastructure to support crisis response, including for active threat scenarios or natural disasters.
- Outdoor lighting, signage, and surveillance were also highlighted as areas for improvement, especially in rural or high-traffic locations.

**“We need more room – for programs, teens, quiet study – everything feels squeezed.”**

– Community Conversation Participant

**“Our building is showing its age. We need spaces that match what the library offers today.”**

– Community Conversation Participant



Emerging themes that surfaced through community engagement provide valuable insights into the current strengths of FVRLibraries and the evolving needs of the community. Building on this feedback, focus areas were identified to reflect what matters most to patrons, staff and partners across the district over the next five years. These focus areas are not final, but represent initial areas that will guide the next phase of strategic and facilities planning.

- Build or expand library facilities in high growth areas.
- Create distinct zones and larger areas for quiet study, group work, children, teens and community events within existing facilities and spaces.
- Integrate outdoor spaces, maker spaces, and specialty areas.
- Make buildings welcoming and inclusive for all patrons by reducing barriers and reflecting their communities.
- Enhance safety, climate control and comfort of buildings.

- Expand culturally relevant and multilingual collections (Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian), programs and staff representation.
- Tailor services and outreach to rural communities, seniors and underserved groups.
- Position the library as a trusted hub for connection, dialogue and intergenerational engagement.
- Regularly engage in co-designing programs and services with communities.

- Sustain and grow core programs for early literacy, youth and teens.
- Expand adult learning, life skills, job readiness and digital literacy offerings.
- Increase social, arts, culture and creative programming and leverage partnerships to accomplish this both in library spaces and out in the community.
- Ensure program consistency district-wide while allowing for branch-specific customization.





## Enhance technology, innovation and digital literacy

---

- Maintain reliable, up-to-date hardware and software at all branches.
- Expand access to emerging tools – 3D printing, maker equipment, creative tech.
- Deliver technology help and digital literacy programs for all ages, with a focus on seniors and rural residents.
- Incorporate AI and other evolving technologies into both patron services and staff training.

## Build strategic partnerships and collaboration

---

- Partner with schools, colleges and homeschool networks to boost literacy, learning and graduation outcomes.
- Collaborate with nonprofits, advocacy groups, and social services to provide health and housing information and referral for patrons and community members.
- Engage local businesses, arts organizations, and civic groups to enrich programming and outreach.
- Invest staff time and resources in relationship-building and partnership development.

## Improve access to library programs and services

---

- Expand hours (including evenings and weekends).
- Expand remote service models for rural and mobility-challenged patrons.
- Reduce barriers to participation in programs, meeting room use and resource borrowing.
- Maintain balance between digital and physical formats to meet needs.

## Ensure operational excellence

---

- Ensure staffing levels to support outreach, programming and quality patron experience.
- Provide professional development in technology and other emerging needs.
- Create systems for cross-branch collaboration, communication and knowledge-sharing.
- Maintain excellent customer service.

## Elevate public awareness and advocacy

---

- Proactively market services, programs and library resources to non-users and underserved audiences.
- Use multiple channels – social media, video, local media, events – to reach diverse demographics.
- Strengthen online presence and improve website capabilities.
- Showcase the library's role beyond books – community hub, resource center, place for innovation and opportunity.
- Build advocacy capacity to sustain funding and public support.

## Next Steps

This engagement summary will be shared with the Next Chapter Advisory Committee (NCAC) to gather initial input and feedback on emerging themes and emerging priorities. As a representative body, the NCAC will help refine these ideas and make more concise recommendations that will be shared with the FVRLibraries Administrative Team to consider as elements of the plans are drafted, reflecting the diverse needs of FVRLibraries' communities. The final facilities plan and strategic plan, including strategic priorities, goals and metrics of success, will be developed collaboratively with the FVRLibraries Administrative Team and the consultant team. Input and feedback from the NCAC will be used to inform the ongoing development of those plans. Once complete, both plans will be presented to the FVRLibraries Board of Trustees for formal adoption.

