

# East Hampton Public Library 2024 Strategic Plan Research Report

The East Hampton Public Library has begun the process of developing a new strategic plan to set prioritized goals for the Library for the five-year period from August 1, 2024 through July 31, 2029. The Library has contracted with the Connecticut Library Consortium to develop the plan with the assistance of facilitator Maureen Sullivan. The first phase of the process involved collecting feedback from the community via five methods- a community survey, private workshops with Library staff and the Library Advisory Board, guided roundtable discussions open to the public, focus groups with select populations, and one-on-one interviews with select stakeholders.

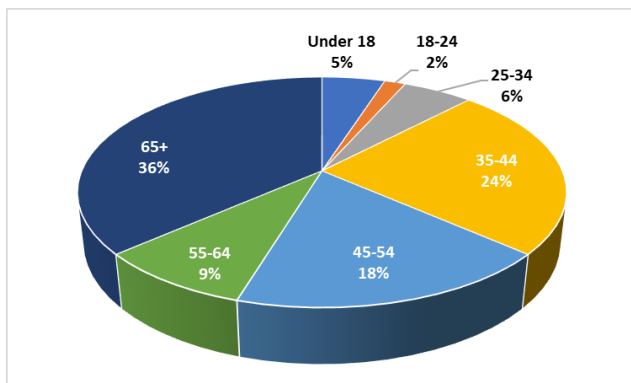
The community survey was offered for the entire month of March 2024 and was available digitally via our website and social media platforms and as a paper version at the Library, Town Hall, and local Senior Center.

Focus groups were held immediately following a Library storytime, with the Library's Teen Advisory Board, and at East Hampton High School, in an effort to target populations that were not well represented in the previous strategic planning process.

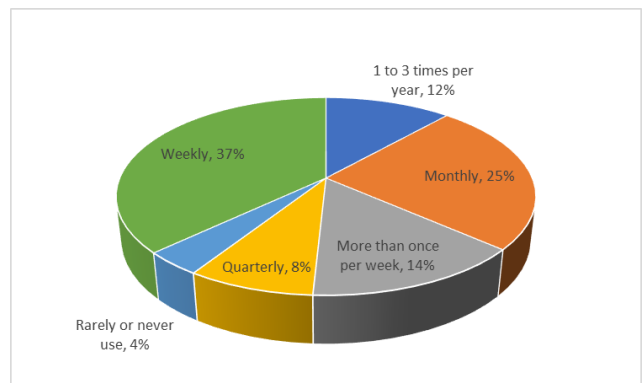
## Demographic Information from the Community Survey

183 responses were collected from the Community Survey. Respondents were overwhelmingly from East Hampton (90%) and currently have an East Hampton Public Library Card (95%). 36% of respondents were over the age of 65, 9% were ages 55-64, 18% were ages 45-54, 24% were ages 35-44, 6% were ages 25-34, 2% were ages 18-24, and 5% were under age 18. 76% of respondents use the Library at least once a month, with 15% using Library services more than once per week.

Respondents by Age Group:

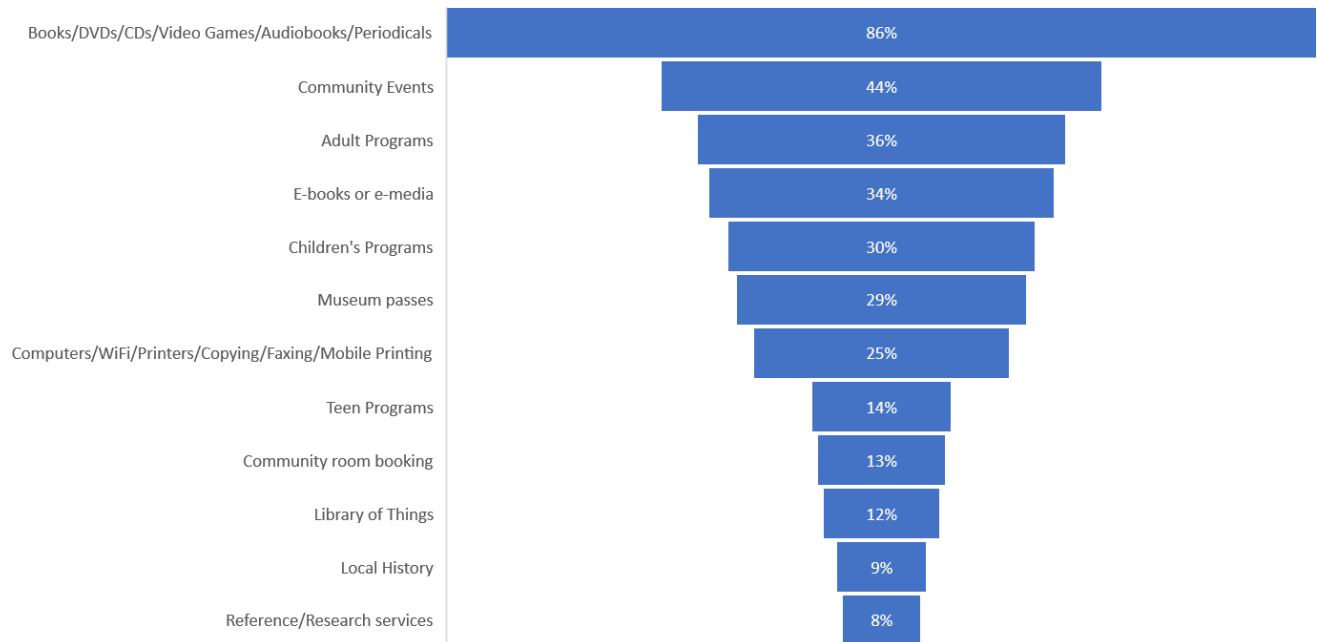


Frequency of Use:



The most-used service selected was to check out books, DVDs, CDs, Audiobooks, and/or periodicals (86%). Other popular services included attending large community events (43%), attending adult programs (36%), accessing eBooks and digital audiobooks (34%), and attending children’s programs (30%).

**Services Used:**



Several questions in the survey inquired about how users hear about Library services, and how they would most like to hear about them in the future. Responses to these questions were split between the Library’s social media pages, the Library’s website, and the Rivereast Newspaper.

91% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Library was a great venue for serving their needs as an individual and 92% agreed or strongly agreed that the Library was a great venue for serving the needs of the community.

**Response Observations**

After reviewing all of the survey and in-person responses, the following summary statements are gleaned from the input. This is not a comprehensive list, nor is it in any order; it is a compilation of the common themes presented in the responses. Notes from in-person feedback sessions and the complete survey responses are available upon request.

## **Strengths of the East Hampton Public Library**

Information on what the Library is doing well was collected via the community survey and during the in-person Community Conversations, focus groups, and workshops. After reviewing the responses, the following summary statements are gleaned from the input.

- Offers a wide variety of programs for different interests and age groups
- Offers access to free materials and a place to spend time without spending money
- Creates early learning opportunities for young children that promote a love of literacy
- Offers access to technology for those who don't have it readily available
- Staff is energetic, friendly, patient, and helpful and takes the time to build relationships with patrons
- Encourages socialization and community gathering
- Engages the community by partnering with other local organizations and participating in town events
- Creates a comfortable and safe environment with a small town feel
- Services are always evolving to meet community needs
- Offers a robust Summer Reading Program for all ages

## **Opportunities for Growth and Change**

- Offer more evening and weekend hours
- Offer more evening and weekend programs (all ages)
- More intergenerational and multicultural programming
- More large events to unite the community
- Offer more programming for homeschool families
- Better parking
- More eBooks (wider variety, shorter wait times for new titles)
- Bigger community room for larger events
- Multiple meeting spaces to accommodate simultaneous programming
- More private study areas
- Make better use of outdoor space (furniture, play area)
- New carpet
- Deal with humidity issue/HVAC
- Better marketing and promotion of services
- Create a cleaner environment
- Grow appreciation for Library in community

- Grow technology services
- Ensure building size and spaces can meet the needs of a growing population
- Provide opportunities for all staff to stay up to date on current trends in technology and library services

This report was prepared by the Library Director and the strategic planning team in an effort to summarize the data collected and provide transparency in the process.