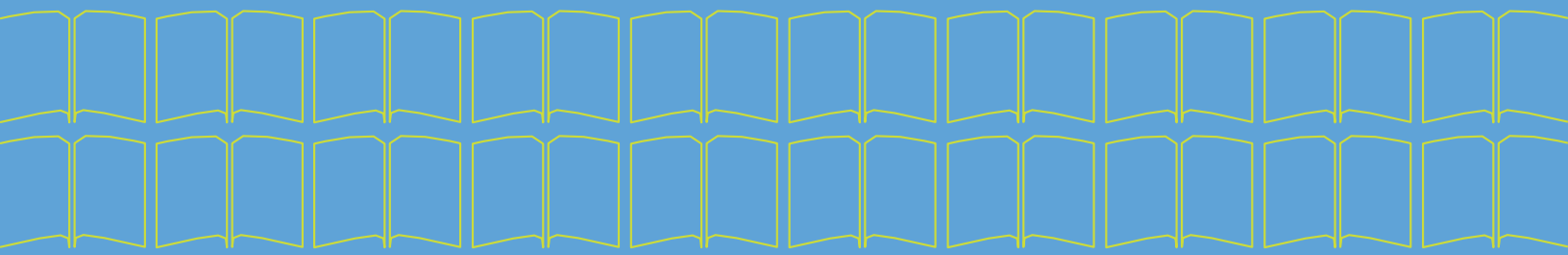


# New Westminster Public Library Facilities Master Plan What We Heard Report 2026



# Library Facilities Master Plan

What We Heard Report

February 2026



NEW WESTMINSTER  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
716 6TH AVENUE  
NEW WESTMINSTER, BC  
CANADA V3M 2B3

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## 1. Introduction

The New Westminster Public Library is preparing a Facilities Master Plan to guide the future of our community's library spaces over the next 25 years. This plan will look at how libraries in New West are used today, how community needs are changing, and how the library can continue to provide welcoming, flexible, and accessible spaces for everyone for years to come.

In October 2025, a survey was launched on Be Heard New West with the goal of helping the Library and City understand community priorities and shape recommendations for the Facilities Master Plan. The final plan will guide how we invest in library facilities to best serve New Westminster residents today and in the years to come.

Following the most recent staff engagement session in October 2025, a public survey was launched on the Be Heard website as well as physical copies available for patrons at the library.

Please visit the [Be Heard New West Project](#) page for more information.

The purpose of this summary report is to share with City Council, engagement participants, and the New Westminster community the results of the engagement: Library master plan 2025 Review.

## 2. Engagement Process

Community engagement began on October 29 and ran through November 23, 2025, with community members able to participate in an online survey on the Be Heard New West website. Additionally, paper copies of the same surveys were available in person at both library branches for individuals to fill out in person. A total of 690 responses were received.

### Opportunities to engage:

- **Be Heard New West project webpage**
  - Launched Oct 29, 2025
  - 3214 unique visitors (individuals) as of November 29, 2025
- **Be Heard New West online survey**
  - Launched Oct 29, 2025, through November 23, 2025
  - 647 responses
- **New West Library in-person surveys**
  - Launched Oct 29, 2025, through November 23, 2025
  - 43 responses

The opportunities to engage were communicated through the following methods

- Email notification to various City email databases:
  - Be Heard New West subscribers
  - Library Website
- Social Media posts on both NWPL and City accounts (Facebook, Instagram)

*Important Note: this summary of engagement input does not reflect a representative sample of the New Westminster community. The input captured here reflects the views of those who self-selected to participate, and may not be representative of the views of other community members and interest groups. Please see section four – About Be Heard Participants, starting on Page 14 – for some demographic information and representation analysis about people who participated in the online engagement activities.*

## 3. What We Heard

### Community survey

An online survey was available on Be Heard New West from October 29 to November 23, 2025, and paper copies of the same survey were available in person at the NWPL. A total of 690 people completed the survey. Questions in the survey focused on how participants use the library, what they would like to see if there were more library spaces available, and what they would like the Library to prioritize when planning for future facilities.

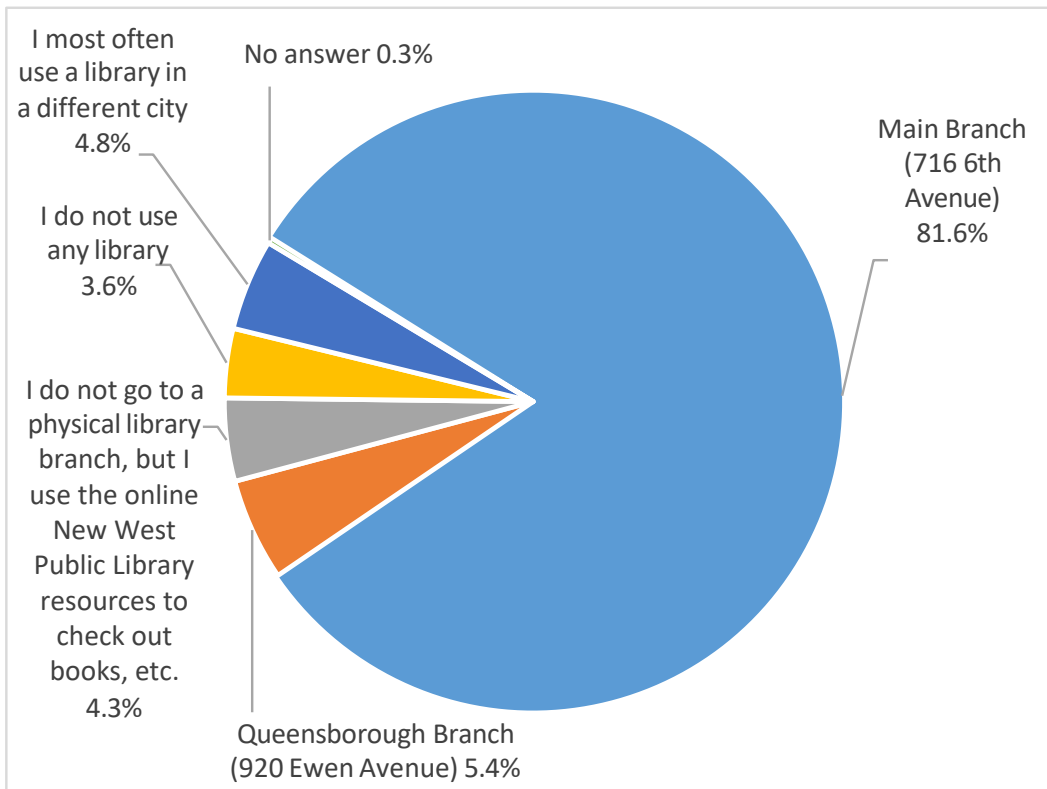
Details from each section of the survey are shared below along with a summary of the results from each question.

## Part 1: Understanding your library habits

Questions in Part 1 will help us understand if and how New West community members use the libraries currently.

### 1. Which New Westminster library branch do you use most regularly?

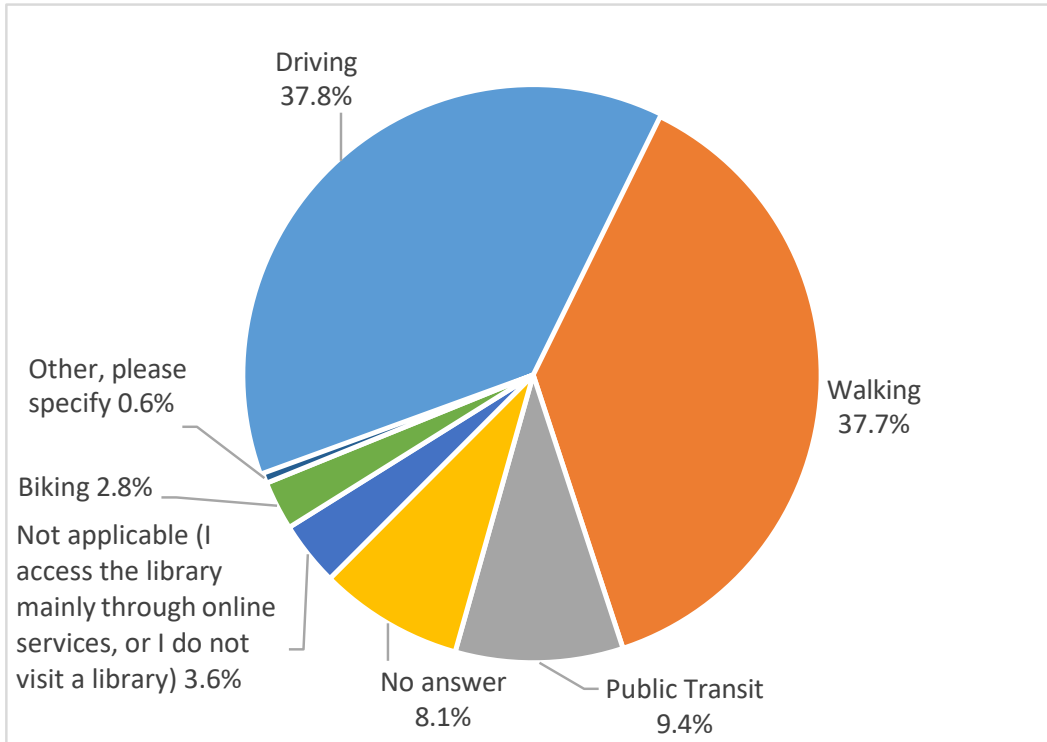
If you go to more than one branch, pick the one you visit most often.



Choice	Percentage	Count
<b>Total responses: 688 from 690 participants</b>		
Main Branch (716 6th Avenue)	81.6%	563
Queensborough Branch (920 Ewen Avenue)	5.4%	37
I most often use a library in a different city	4.8%	33
I do not go to a physical library branch, but I use the online New West Public Library resources to check out books, etc.	4.3%	30
I do not use any library	3.6%	25
No answer	0.3%	2

**2. How do you most often get to the library branch you selected in the previous question?**

Information on how you access the library will help identify preferred transit methods among library users and may help us to determine where potential new branches should be located so that they can be easily accessed through multiple means of transportation. Pick one:



Choice	Percentage	Count
<b>Total responses: 634 from 690 participants</b>		
Driving	37.8%	261
Walking	37.7%	260
Public transit	9.4%	65
Not applicable (I access the library mainly through online services, or I do not visit a library)	3.6%	25
Biking	2.8%	19
Other rolling device, including skates, scooters, wheelchairs, etc.	0.1%	1
Taxi or rideshare	0%	0
No answer	8.1%	56
Other, please specify	0.4%	3

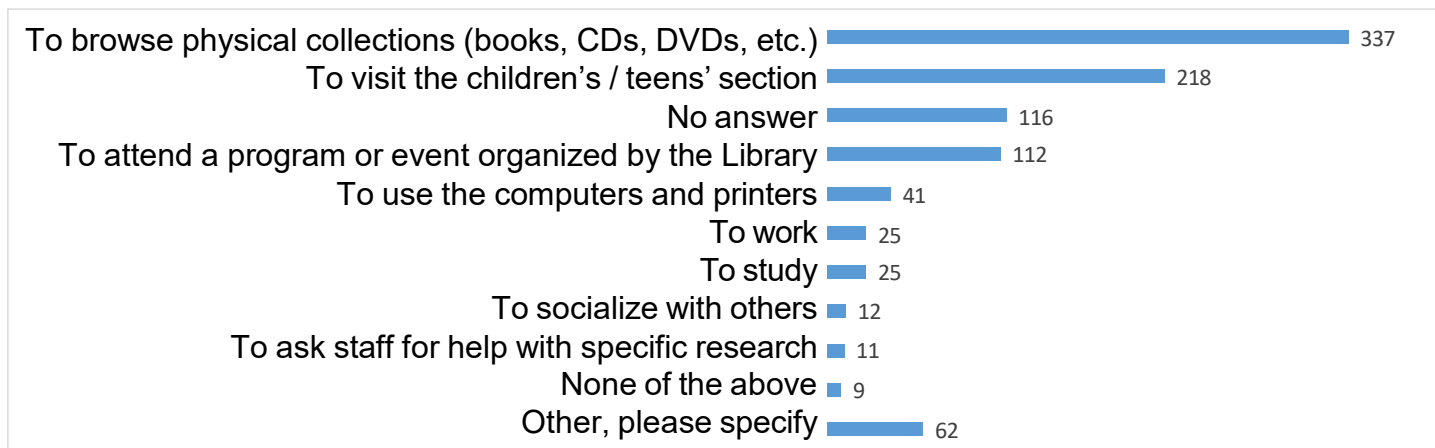
*Note: Participants who selected "I do not use any library" or "I most often use a library in a different city" in response to Q1, were not shown this question in the online survey.*

A total of 3 comments were provided by those who chose "Other, please specify". The comments referenced: walking, driving, and a mix of different modes of transportation.

**3. When you visit the library in New Westminster, what is typically the main purpose of your visit? (Select up to 2)**

The library keeps track of visitors and checkouts; however, the reasons why someone comes to the library cannot easily be measured. Understanding which services library users come for is important to us so that we can develop recommendations about which areas of library services and facilities to allocate resources, and potentially expand in the future. The Master Plan will look at current facilities and how they serve the public, and make recommendations on future uses within the library.

If you visit for more than one reason, please select the two that best describe the reason for your visit:



Choice	Percentage	Count
<b>Total responses: 516 from 690 participants</b>		
To browse physical collections (books, CDs, DVDs, etc.)	53.3%	337
To visit the children's/ teens' section	34.5%	218
No answer	18.4%	116
To attend a program or even organized by the library	17.7%	112
To use the computers and printers	6.5%	41
To work	4.0%	25
To study	4.0%	25
To socialize with others	1.9%	12
To ask staff for help with specific research	1.7%	11
None of the above	1.4%	9
Other, please specify	9.8%	62

*Note: Participants who selected "I do not use any library" or "I most often use a library in a different city" in response to Q1, were not shown this question in the online survey.*

A total of 64 comments were provided by those who chose “Other, please specify”. Below is a summary of the key themes across the comments. In some cases, several themes have been applied to one individual response, based on the content; this means that a single response can be counted multiple times.

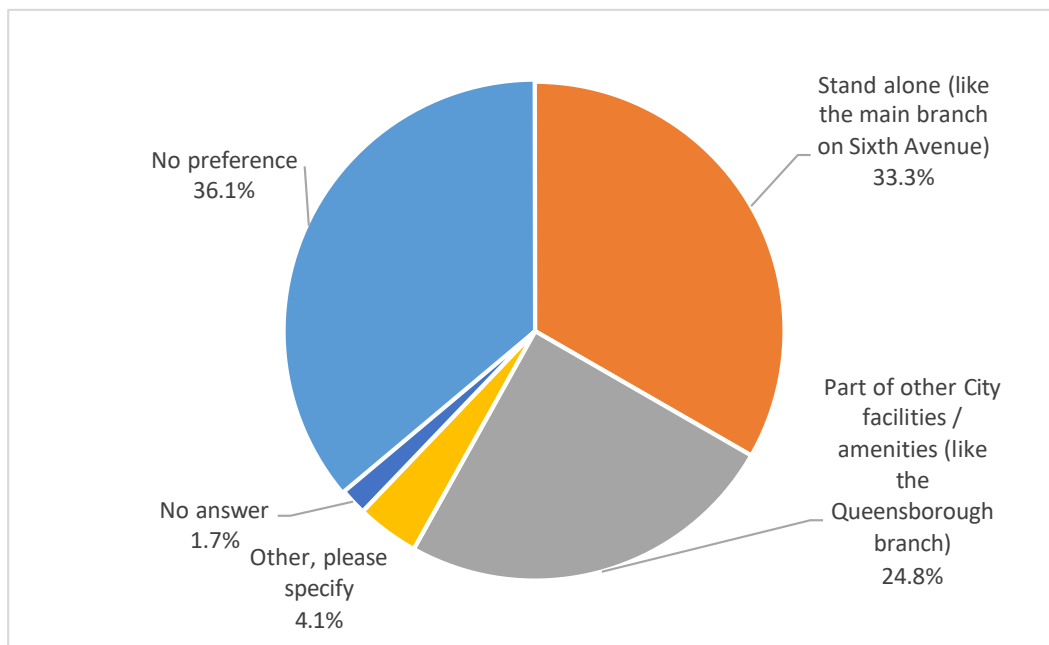
Theme	Count	Example comments
To pick up and/ or checkout physical collection	36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Pick up a book I put on hold”</li> <li>• “Pick up switch games”</li> <li>• “To check out a physical book”</li> <li>• “To borrow an electronic book”</li> <li>• “My daughter likes to borrow the portable DVD player to watch DVDs, complete the scavenger hunt, and every now and then borrow the games”</li> </ul>
To attend community meetings held at the Library	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Attend a meeting of a community group”</li> <li>• “Attend my MPRA meeting in the basement”</li> <li>• “I’m a member of the Walkers caucus and we use the Ash room once a month”</li> </ul>
To use Library spaces	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “to have a somewhat quiet space to journal or just be around others. also to use the washrooms.”</li> <li>• “To use the bathroom or warm up if I’m out walking and its really cold out”</li> <li>• “I sometimes go there to read while I wait for my child to finish an activity nearby”</li> <li>• “For my son to use the play area”</li> <li>• “Playing games &amp; clouring etc.”</li> </ul>
To attend community events held at the Library	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Community events (Brow of the Hill RA, Tenants Union, New West Artists)”</li> <li>• “Programs not organized by the library”</li> <li>• “Running a free meet up for La Leche League”</li> <li>• “To attend a meeting or event for a group that has rented one of the library’s spaces”</li> <li>• “Sometimes attend a bookclub session (so perhaps social with others)”</li> </ul>
To access Library services	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Use the printer and photocopier”</li> <li>• “I use the online newspaper resources to research stories for my writing”</li> </ul>
To attend Library programs	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Baby story time”</li> <li>• “Access the seed library and books”</li> <li>• “To use the Libby app”</li> </ul>
Other	3	

## Part 2: Priorities for the future of libraries in New Westminster

In this part of the survey, we ask you what types of features and spaces you would like to see at the Library, and what your priorities are for the future of the New West Library.

### 4. When you think about future library spaces in New Westminster, which type of facility do you prefer?

As part of the Master Plan, we are looking at how future library spaces could be designed. In New Westminster, our Main Branch is currently a stand-alone building with one purpose, while the Queensborough Branch is located within a larger multi-use facility. Understanding your preference helps us plan for the kinds of spaces that will best serve the community over the next 25 years.



Choice	Percentage	Count
<b>Total responses: 678 from 690 participants</b>		
No preference	36.1%	249
Stand alone (like the main branch on Sixth Avenue)	33.3%	230
Part of other City facilities/ amenities (like the Queensborough branch)	24.8%	171
No answer	1.7%	12
Other, please specify	4.1%	28

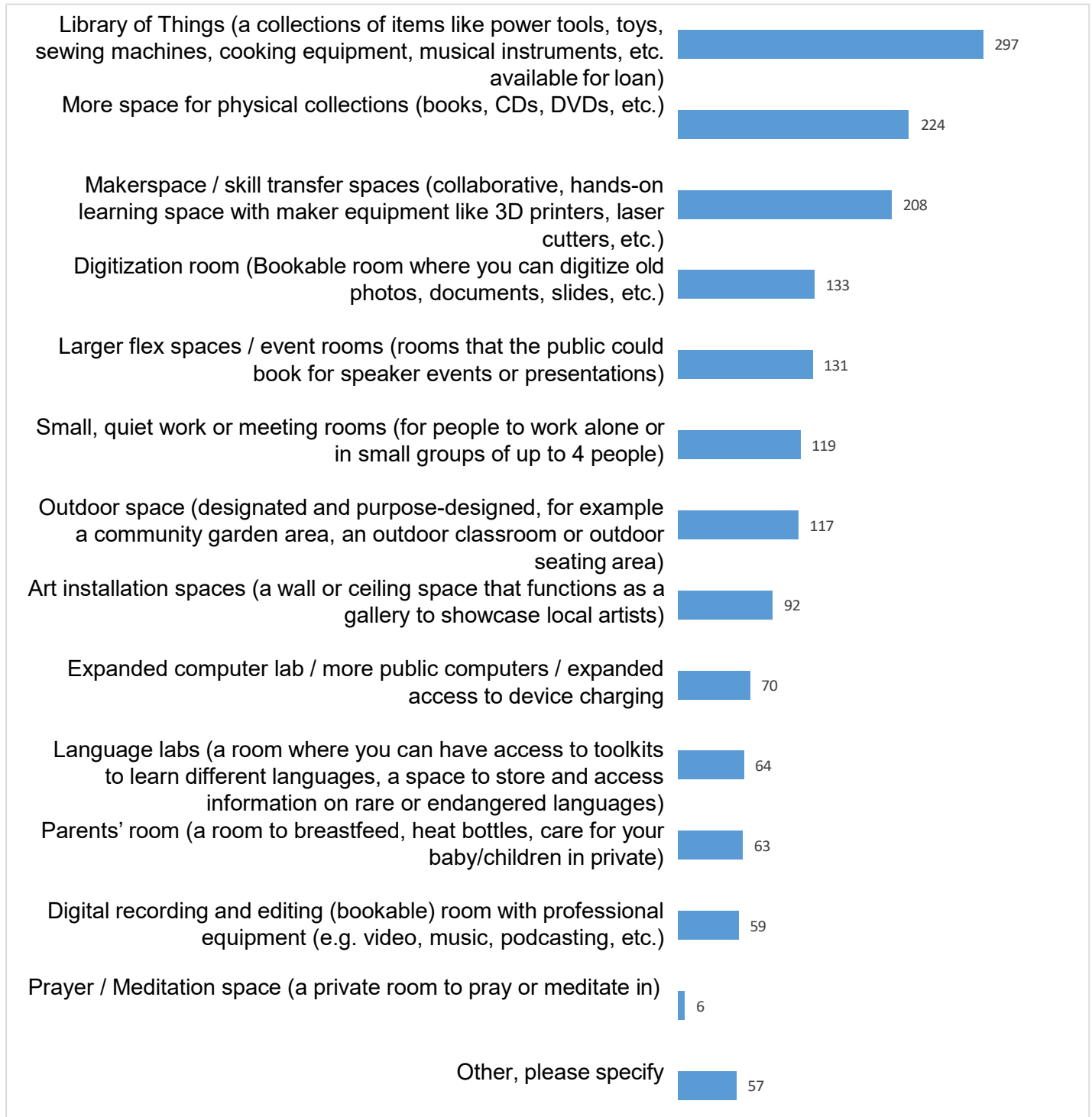
A total of 28 comments were provided by those who chose “Other, please specify”. Below is a summary of the key themes across the comments. In some cases, several themes have been applied to one individual response, based on the content; this means that a single response can be counted multiple times.

Theme	Count	Example Comments
Standalone with civic use	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Part of a community recreation center (gym, pool, etc)”</li> <li>• “I like both options. I visit the Queensborough branch when participating in activities at the community center. It’s a good option.”</li> <li>• “Stand alone and expanded main branch. Satellite branches may be co-housed with other City services”</li> <li>• “I like both options! I think having another standalone library building would be great, but I also think there should be a small library space in temesewtxw, the Anvil Centre, and/or City Hall. Like why not?”</li> </ul>
Located near or within residential areas and buildings	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Integrated into housing developments”</li> <li>• “Mixed residential space with library and other facilities.”</li> <li>• “part of private &amp; rental residents”</li> <li>• “Situated in a mixed use commercial area like a shopping mall or mix use building.”</li> <li>• “Standalone library with housing development above and community amenity space included such as event plazas or arts spaces”</li> </ul>
Both stand alone and integrated	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “either style works, its more about cost-effective ways to incorporate new or repurposed facilities.”</li> <li>• “have found both options good, but shared locations must have separate entrances”</li> <li>• “There was no option to choose BOTH stand alone and part of other facilities. I think it’s imp’t to have a main branch for identity but part of other facilities for practicality. If there was no actual main library branch, when someone says “the Library”, no main structure comes to mind. But it makes more sense to have numerous satellite locations to increase reach.”</li> </ul>
Better connected to transit with ample parking	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I don’t care whether it’s stand-alone or attached, just that it’s better connected to transit!”</li> <li>• “Extra amenities in the library would be welcome BUT so would better parking arrangements.”</li> </ul>
Other	6	

**5. If there was more space allocated to libraries in New Westminster, what would you like to see it used for? (select up to 3)**

As part of the Master Plan, we may be making recommendations to add library space in New Westminster. Your responses will help us understand how to potentially prioritize certain types of spaces over others. Please note that decisions around investing in library spaces must be carefully balanced with many other priorities and funding needs across the community. Any decisions on investments will need to be made by City Council.

Pick up to three options:



Choice	Percentage	Count
<b>Total responses: 606 from 690 participants</b>		
Library of Things (a collections of items like power tools, toys, sewing machines, cooking equipment, musical instruments, etc. available for loan)	43%	297
More space for physical collections (books, CDs, DVDs, etc.)	32.5%	224
Makerspace / skill transfer spaces (collaborative, hands-on learning space with maker equipment like 3D printers, laser cutters, etc.)	30.1%	208
Digitization room (Bookable room where you can digitize old photos, documents, slides, etc.)	19.3%	133
Larger flex spaces / event rooms (rooms that the public could book for speaker events or presentations)	19%	131
Small, quiet work or meeting rooms (for people to work alone or in small groups of up to 4 people)	17.2%	119
Outdoor space (designated and purpose-designed, for example a community garden area, an outdoor classroom or outdoor seating area)	17%	117
Art installation spaces (a wall or ceiling space that functions as a gallery to showcase local artists)	13.3%	92
Expanded computer lab / more public computers/ expanded access to device charging	10.1%	70
Language labs (a room where you can have access to toolkits to learn different languages, a space to store and access information on rare or endangered languages)	9.3%	64
Parents' room (a room to breastfeed, heat bottles, care for your baby/children in private)	9.1%	63
Digital recording and editing (bookable) room with professional equipment (e.g. video, music, podcasting, etc.)	8.6%	59
Prayer / Meditation space (a private room to pray or meditate in)	0.9%	6
Other, please specify	8.3%	57

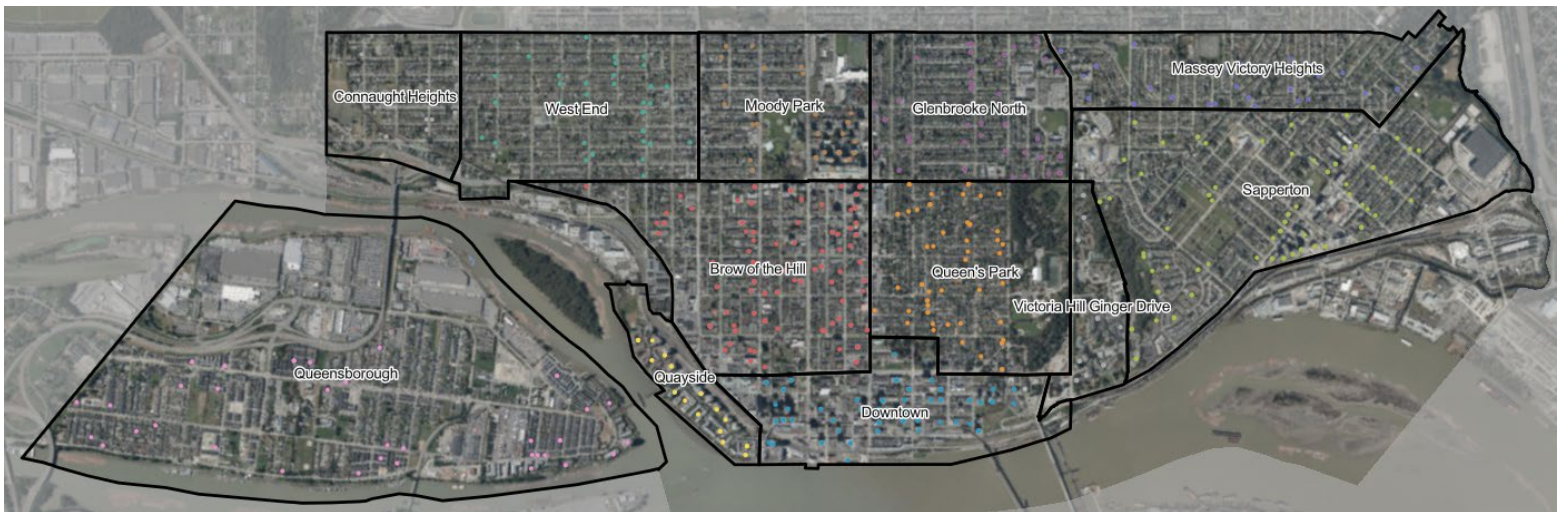
A total of 57 comments were provided by those who chose “Other, please specify”. Below is a summary of the key themes across the comments. In some cases, several themes have been applied to one individual response, based on the content; this means that a single response can be counted multiple times.

Theme	Count	Example Comments
Children’s area	24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Bigger children’s area. More children’s play area and options. Children-friendly features”</li> <li>• “Children’s library with space for play and interactive engagement</li> <li>• “Early learning space”</li> <li>• “Expanded children’s/teen’s space with additional games &amp; toys for use on-site.”</li> <li>• “Kid-friendly rooms with books, toys, area for active play”</li> <li>• “Larger and more spaces for families/children to hang out”</li> </ul>
Meeting rooms	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “community meeting space for writing, book club groups 8-12 people”</li> <li>• “Medium rooms for meetups and support groups for 8-10 people that the public can book”</li> </ul>
No desire for additional library spaces	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “we don’t need stand alone libraries anymore - they should be incorporated into community centres”</li> <li>• “none - the 6th ave library appears to be much bigger than needed / would, in my opinion, be able to accommodate much growth”</li> </ul>
More Library programs	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Repair Events where people bring things to be fixed by the community.”</li> <li>• “Space for library-led activities, like Baby Time or Toddler Time.”</li> <li>• “A bookable messy/easily cleaned crafting space would be awesome. Think a space for groups who paint, make jewelry. wood/stone carving, etc.”</li> </ul>
Study spaces	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Study space for students who lack the space and/or quiet to study/do homework at home.”</li> </ul>
Larger collections and more variety	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The library is woefully undersized - for books’</li> <li>• “Section for Spanish books”</li> <li>• “Passes to various attractions that low income families can sign out (similar to the Science World pass they had at the Vancouver Public library)”</li> </ul>
Safety and effective accessibility measures	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “More parking”</li> <li>• “More space for movement and for wheelchair accessibility”</li> <li>• “When I go to the uptown library on the very rare occasion, I find homeless population outside on the benches and I don’t like it or feel safe.”</li> </ul>
Cafe	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “locally owned cafe”</li> <li>• “community fridges and pantires”</li> </ul>
Others	5	

## 4. About Survey Participants

In total, 690 participants completed the survey online (647) through the Be Heard New West website and in-person (43) at New West’s library branches. When participants sign-up to Be Heard New West, they provide personal demographic information, such as postal code, year of birth, connections to New Westminster, and other optional details. The in-person surveys also included the same demographic questions for consistency; however, some participants who completed the paper survey did not answer all the demographic questions. The data in this section represents demographic data from both the online and paper surveys.

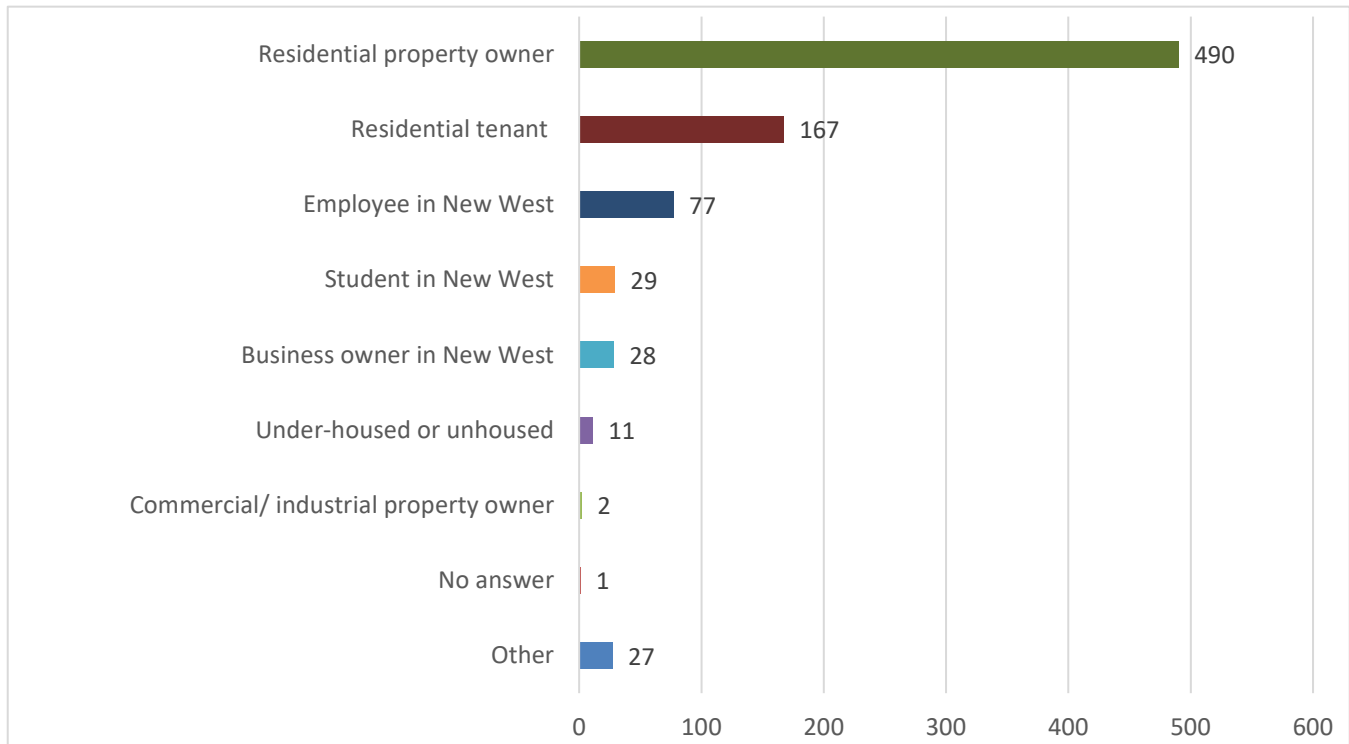
### Neighbourhood Representation



Neighbourhood	Percentage	Count
<b>Total responses: 686 from 690 participants</b>		
Brow of the Hill	19.3%	133
Connaught Heights	1.0%	7
Downtown	13.8%	95
Glenbrooke North	8.7%	60
Massey Victory Heights	4.9%	34
Moody Park	5.5%	38
Quayside	6.8%	47
Queen’s Park	8.0%	55
Queenborough	5.7%	39
Sapperton	13.5%	93
Victoria Hill Ginger Drive	4.3%	30
West End	5.5%	38

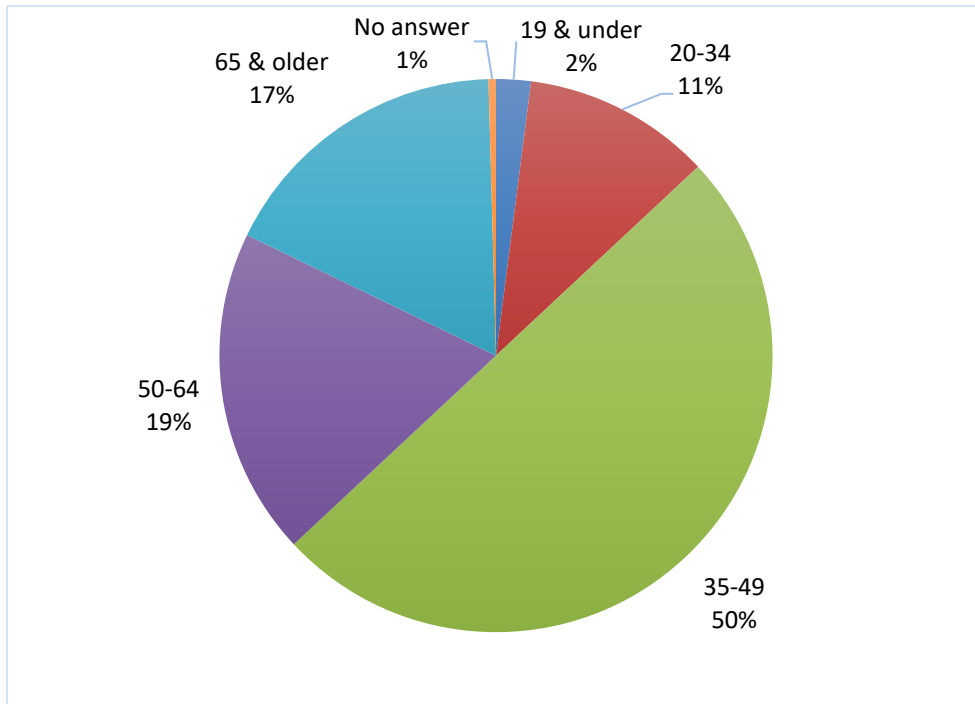
Outside of New Westminster	2.5%	17
No Answer	0.6%	4

**Connections to the City (select all that apply)**



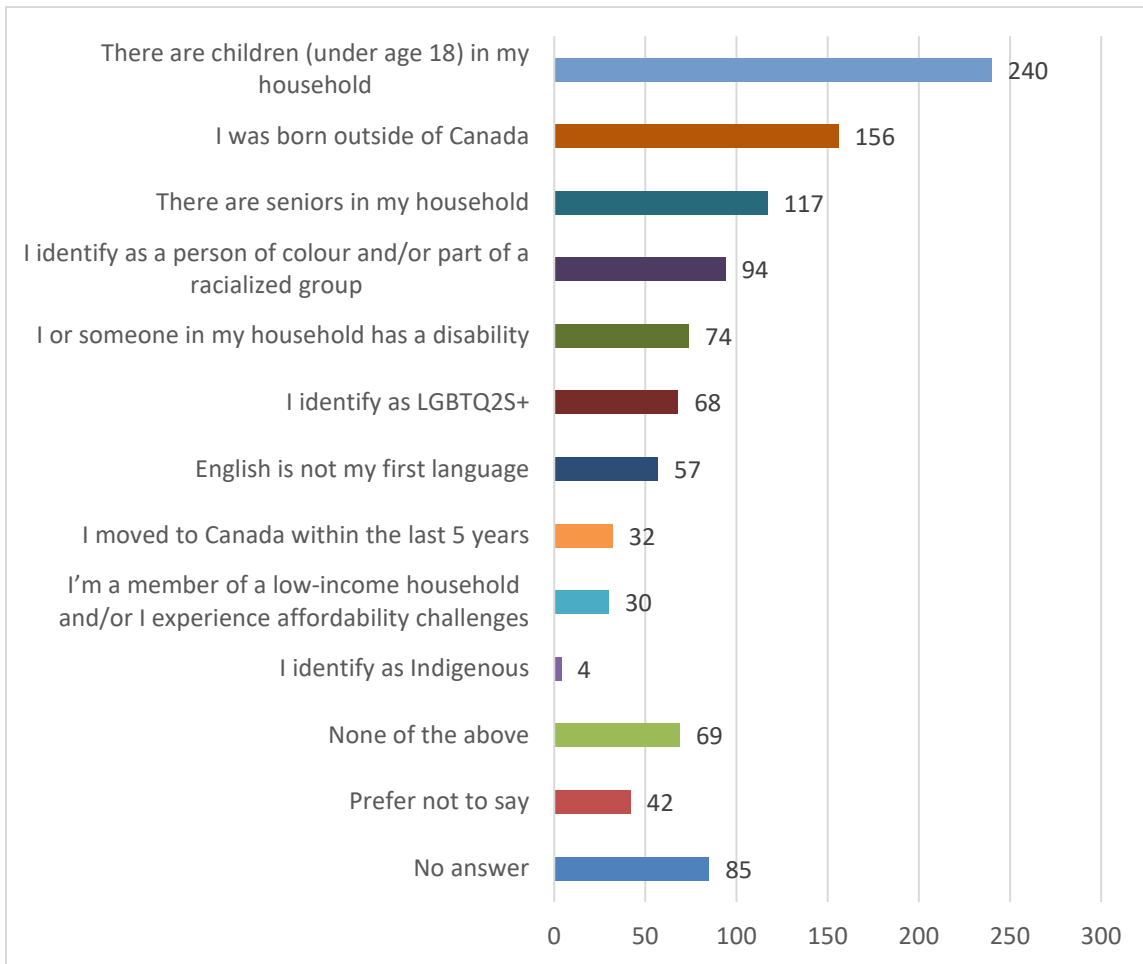
Choice	Percentage	Count
<b>Total responses: 689 from 690 participants</b>		
Residential property owner	71.0%	490
Residential tenant	24.2%	167
Employee in New West	11.2%	77
Student in New West	4.2%	29
Business owner in New West	4.1%	28
Under-housed or unhoused	1.6%	11
Commercial/ industrial property owner	0.3%	2
Other	3.9%	27
No Answer	0.1%	1

**Age Groups**



Choice	Percentage	Count
<b>Total responses: 687 from 690 participants</b>		
19 & under	2.0%	14
20-34	11.0%	76
35-49	50.0%	345
50-64	19.1%	132
65 & older	17.4%	120
No answer	0.4%	3

**Additional Demographic Information (Select any/ all that apply)**



Choice	Percentage	Count
<b>Total responses: 605 from 690 participants</b>		
There are children (under age 18) in my household	34.8%	240
I was born outside of Canada	22.6%	156
There are seniors in my household	17.0%	117
I identify as a person of colour and/or part of a racialized group	13.6%	94
I or someone in my household has a disability	10.7%	74
I identify as LGBTQ2S+	9.9%	68
English is not my first language	8.3%	57
I moved to Canada within the last 5 years	4.6%	32
I'm a member of a low-income household and/or I experience affordability challenges	4.3%	30
I identify as Indigenous	0.6%	4
None of the above	10.0%	69
Prefer not to say	6.1%	42
No answer	12.3%	85

## Demographic Analysis

The demographic information provided by participants was compared to the most recent demographic profile of New Westminster residents from the 2021 Census for analysis. Among the online and in-person participants, residential property owners were highly over-represented (71% of participants compared to 55% of residents recorded in the Census) in this engagement, while residential tenants (renters) were highly under-represented (24% of participants compared to 45% of residents recorded in the Census).

Age groups 0-19 (-14% difference) and 20-34 (-12.9% difference) were greatly under-represented amongst survey participants compared to the 2021 Census. The 35-49 age group was greatly over-represented (+27% difference). Age groups 50-64 and 65+ were comparable to the Census, with participant representation being within 1% of the Census data recorded for these age groups.

Some of the additional demographic information provided by participants can also be compared to the 2021 Census. In comparison to the Census, participants with children (under 18) in their household were highly over-represented in this engagement (+20% difference). Participants born outside of Canada and participants who identify as a person of colour or part of a racialized group were under-represented, with a -12% and -31% difference respectively. Representation of participants who have – or someone in their household has – a disability was comparable (difference of +/- 5%) to the Census data, as well as representation of newcomers (individuals who moved to Canada within the past 5 years).

## 5. Next Steps

Thank you for participating in the survey and sharing your feedback on how you use the libraries in New West and your future vision for them!

This survey is just part of one way to gauge how members of the community are using libraries currently. We value your feedback and will use it to direct how libraries will operate in the future. Your feedback goes towards the creation of our Library Master Plan. Please check back on the Be Heard project page for more updates.