



REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Date: 8/18/2025
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Locations: [Zoom.us/join](https://zoom.us/join) – ID# 882 0971 1131 and
Arrillaga Family Recreation Center
700 Alma St., Menlo Park, CA 94025

Members of the public can listen to the meeting and participate using the following methods.

How to participate in the meeting:

- Access the meeting, in-person, at Arrillaga Family Recreation Center
- Access the meeting real-time online at:
[Zoom.us/join](https://zoom.us/join) – Meeting ID 882 0971 1131
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(669) 900-6833
Meeting ID 882 0971 1131
Press *9 to raise hand to speak

Subject to Change: The format of this meeting may be altered or the meeting may be cancelled. You may check on the status of the meeting by visiting the city website menlopark.gov. The instructions for logging on to the webinar and/or the access code is subject to change. If you have difficulty accessing the webinar, please check the latest online edition of the posted agenda for updated information (menlopark.gov/agendas).

Regular Session

A. Call To Order

B. Roll Call

C. Public Comment

Under “Public Comment,” the public may address the Commission on any subject not listed on the agenda. Each speaker may address the Commission once under public comment for a limit of three minutes. You are not required to provide your name or City of residence, but it is helpful. The Commission cannot act on items not listed on the agenda and, therefore, the Commission cannot respond to non-agenda issues brought up under public comment other than to provide general information.

D. Study Session

- D1. Review and provide feedback on the ad-hoc subcommittee progress report
([Staff Report LC-2025-035](#))

E. Regular Business

- E1. Approve the minutes from the July 21, 2025 meeting ([Attachment](#))

- E2. Recommend Library Commission work plan for 2025-26 ([Staff Report LC-2025-036](#))
- E3. Prepare Commission report out to City Council on 2024-25 work plan ([Staff Report LC-2025-037](#))
- E4. List of annually recurring Library Commission activities ([Staff Report LC-2025-038](#))

F. Informational Items

- F1. Library Commission tentative agenda calendar ([Attachment](#))

G. Commissioner Reports

- G1. Individual Commissioner reports

H. Adjournment

At every Regular Meeting of the Commission, in addition to the Public Comment period where the public shall have the right to address the Commission on any matters of public interest not listed on the agenda, members of the public have the right to directly address the Commission on any item listed on the agenda at a time designated by the Chair, either before or during the Commission's consideration of the item.

At every Special Meeting of the Commission, members of the public have the right to directly address the Commission on any item listed on the agenda at a time designated by the Chair, either before or during consideration of the item.

If you challenge any of the items listed on this agenda in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Menlo Park at, or before, the public hearing.

Any writing that is distributed to a majority of the Commission by any person in connection with an agenda item is a public record (subject to any exemption under the Public Records Act) and is available by request by emailing the city clerk at jaherren@menlopark.gov. Persons with disabilities, who require auxiliary aids or services in attending or participating in Commission meetings, may call the City Clerk's Office at 650-330-6620.

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STAFF REPORT

Library Commission

Meeting Date:

8/18/2025

Staff Report Number:

LC-2025-035

Study Session:

Review and provide feedback on the ad-hoc subcommittee progress report

Recommendation

City staff recommends that the Library Commission (LC) review and provide feedback on a progress report prepared by the ad-hoc subcommittee (Attachment A).

Policy Issues

The LC may establish subcommittees of less than a quorum of the LC members in order to support and/or expedite the full LC's review and consideration of matters within the LC's purview. Standing subcommittees that have continuing subject matter jurisdiction or a meeting schedule established by the LC are subject to the Brown Act (see Government Code §54952(b)).

Ad hoc or temporary subcommittees are advisory by nature, temporary, formed to complete a specific task, and will disband automatically upon completion. Ad hoc subcommittees are informal, and their meetings are not subject to the Open Meetings Act.

Background

On Aug. 19, 2024, the LC established an ad-hoc subcommittee, defined its scope, and assigned LC members Crockett, Herrick, and Westcott to serve on the ad-hoc subcommittee (Attachment B).

On Oct. 21, 2024, the LC assigned the ad-hoc subcommittee's scope of work (Attachment C).

On April 21, 2025, the LC assigned Orton to replace Herrick on the ad-hoc subcommittee (Attachment D).

On June 16, 2025, the ad-hoc subcommittee gave a preliminary report out of their activities to the LC (Attachment E).

Analysis

Scope of work

At their Oct. 21, 2024 meeting, the LC assigned the subcommittee's scope of work as follows:

- Continue to work toward achieving Library Commission work plan goal #2: "Review library programs and services, identify potential service gaps for specific age groups or affinity groups, and advise to fill needs to create the 'library of the future.'"

The ad-hoc subcommittee is finalizing a summary report of their work over the past year. The LC may wish to review the materials presented by the ad-hoc subcommittee and provide feedback on a summary. The

LC may also wish to adjust their work plan for the 2025-26 year if there is further work that the ad-hoc subcommittee is assigned.

Impact on City Resources

As an advisory body to the City Council, the LC does not authorize budgets or other allocations for City resources. The authority to approve City budget and resource allocations rests solely with the City Council.

Environmental Review

This report is not a project within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §§ 15378 and 15061(b)(3) as it will not result in any direct or indirect physical change in the environment.

Public Notice

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with the agenda items being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Attachments

- A. Ad-hoc subcommittee progress report and supporting items
- B. Hyperlink – Library Commission agenda (item D-3) Aug. 19, 2024.
https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/2/agendas-and-minutes/library-commission/2024-meetings/agendas/20240819_library_commission_agenda_packet.pdf
- C. Hyperlink – Library Commission agenda (item D-2) Oct. 21, 2024.
https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/agendas-and-minutes/library-commission/2024-meetings/agendas/20241021_library_commission_agenda_packet.pdf
- D. Hyperlink – Library Commission agenda (item G-1) Apr. 21, 2025.
https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/agendas-and-minutes/library-commission/2025-meetings/agendas/20250421_lc_agenda_packet.pdf
- E. Hyperlink – Library Commission agenda (item H-1) June 16, 2025.
https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/2/agendas-and-minutes/library-commission/2025-meetings/agendas/20250616_lc_agenda_packet.pdf

Report prepared by:

Nick Szegda, Assistant Library and Community Services Director

Report reviewed by:

Sean S. Reinhart, Library and Community Services Director

DRAFT as of 8/13/2025

Library Commission Report to City Council on 2024-25 Work Plan and Recommendations for 2025-26

INTRODUCTION

The primary focus of the Library Commission over the last year has been on these two City Council approved Work Plan goals:

- Goal #2: “Review library programs and services, identify potential service gaps for specific age groups or affinity groups, and advise to fill needs to create the “library of the future.”
- Goal #4: “Analyze and evaluate whether and how potential near term capital improvements to the 800 Alma St. facility may be addressed.”

This report includes details of the work completed to date in furtherance of these goals, and specific next steps that the Library Commission recommends that the City Council undertake.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the background and specifics detailed in this report, the Library Commission recommends that the City Council schedule a Study Session so that the full Council can consider the following:

1. Evaluate whether the existing organizational structure placing the Library within the umbrella of “Library and Community Services” is the best organizational structure to effectively finance, operate and manage the Library;
2. Evaluate whether the budget and staffing of the Library is adequate to meet the current and projected needs of the community;
3. Consider possible improvements to programs and services offered by the Library;
4. Analyze deficits in the 800 Alma Street facility and the viability of near term (within 1-2 years) improvements; and
5. Assess feasibility, financing options and timing for a new Library facility on the Civic Center campus.

DRAFT as of 8/13/2025

BACKGROUND

Over the last year, a Subcommittee of the Library Commission¹ completed the following:

- Conducted focus groups with and collected surveys from two Library affinity groups (Friends of the Library and the Menlo Park Library Foundation) and collected surveys from teens who use the Library²;
- Reviewed and analyzed over 1100 survey responses received in response to the Spring 2025 survey of Menlo Park residents conducted by Library and Community Services staff³;
- Consulted with four City Council members, including with Jennifer Wise (current City Council liaison to the Library Commission);
- With the assistance of Rose Waldman, Library and Community Services Supervisor, completed a benchmark comparison of the Menlo Park Library system to other comparable libraries within the United States with similar demographics⁴;
- Consulted with Library Staff members including Nick Szegda, Rose Waldman, and others;
- Visited 7 local libraries and interviewed their staff⁵;
- Conducted a literature review on needed elements for a “Library of the Future”⁶; and

¹ Creation of a Subcommittee “Library of the Future” was approved at the August 19, 2024 Library Commission meeting. https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/agendas-and-minutes/library-commission/2024-meetings/minutes/20240819_lc_meeting_minutes_njs.pdf
Initial members were Brian Westcott, Kim Crockett and Michael Herrick. On May 1, 2025, Carol Orton was substituted as a Subcommittee member, and Michael Herrick instead assumed the role as chair of the Library Commission.

² See Summaries of Surveys in LC 8-18-2025 packet.

³ “Preliminary Results: Library, recreation and parks survey May 28, 2025.
https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/library-and-community-services/documents/prelim-results_library-recreation-parks-survey_2025.pdf.

⁴ See IMLS Comparison document in LC 8-18-2025 packet and <https://librarybenchmark.org>.

⁵ Visits included libraries in Hayward, Redwood City, Half Moon Bay, South San Francisco, Burlingame, Palo Alto, and Los Gatos.

⁶ Staff Report LC-2025-034 “Current and future trends in libraries—professional association and academic publication resources” https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/agendas-and-minutes/library-commission/2025-meetings/agendas/20250721_lc_agenda_packet.pdf, pages F-4.1-F-4.3.

- Reviewed the history of Menlo Park’s significant investment in studying the Menlo Park Library between 2014-2017.⁷ The study was called the “Library System Improvement Project” (LSIP), which concluded that the old Belle Haven Branch and the Main Library facilities “are outdated and insufficient to meet community needs now and into the future and should be replaced with new facilities.”⁸

During its 2024-25 term the full Library Commission was updated monthly as this work progressed, and the full Commission considered and ratified this report at its August 18, 2025 meeting.

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

All five of the recommendations detailed below are made with the assumption that libraries are civic institutions that perform critical functions extending far beyond books. They are indispensable community hubs that bring people together and close the opportunity gap by connecting people to essential services and resources.”⁹

Recommendation #1: Evaluate whether the existing organizational structure placing the Library within the umbrella of “Library and Community Services” is the best organizational structure to effectively finance, operate and manage the Library

The current organizational structure of having the Library subsumed within a larger Department¹⁰ replaced the long-time organizational structure¹¹ of having a Library Director and separate Department:

⁷ This project was funded in the City’s FY 2014-15 Capital Improvement Program with a budget of \$130,000 (\$90,000 of which was contributed by the MP Library Foundation) This amount was increased to \$164,210 for completion in FY 2016-17.

⁸ [Staff Report 19-001-CC](#) dated January 15, 2019.

⁹ “The Value of California’s Public Libraries” <https://www.library.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Value-of-Libraries.pdf>; “The Complicated Role of the Modern Public Library” <https://www.neh.gov/article/complicated-role-modern-public-library>;

¹⁰ Currently, the Library and Community Services Department (headed by Sean Reinhart) includes Libraries, Recreation, Gymnastics, Sports, Aquatics, Early Childhood Education, After School Childcare, Senior Programs, Belle Haven Community Campus, and Parks.
<https://menlopark.gov/Government/Departments/City-Managers-Office/Communications-and-public-engagement/Library-and-Community-Services-News>

¹¹ Susan Holmer was the Menlo Park Library Director for 16 years until she retired in October 2018. <https://www.almanacnews.com/news/2018/10/16/menlo-park-library-director-retires/> Sean Reinhart was appointed Interim Library Director in October 2018, then promoted to permanent Library Director in April

- a. was adopted during the pandemic for reasons that may no longer exist¹²;
- b. makes analysis of Library budget, financial and operational decisions more difficult and less transparent to the community; and
- c. differs from other local libraries visited, each of which has a Library Director focused solely on Library services.

Recommendation #2: Evaluate whether the budget and staffing of the Library is adequate to meet the current and projected needs of the community

Comparison of the budget for Menlo Park's two locations (the Main Library and the Belle Haven branch) offers sharp contrasts with other local libraries and comparable libraries in other areas.¹³

For example, Burlingame is a local city with similar demographics to Menlo Park. Both cities have 2 branches, but funding for Burlingame Libraries is \$6.8 million, compared to \$3.3 million for Menlo Park. Staff (Full-time equivalent, or FTE) in Burlingame is 23, compared to 11 for Menlo Park.¹⁴ Funding for the Menlo Park Library is less than all local peer libraries visited except Los Gatos, which has only one library facility (and which has 13.5 FTE compared to 11 for Menlo Park).

2019. <https://www.almanacnews.com/news/2019/05/01/city-manager-announces-three-top-leadership-appointments/>

¹² See Staff Report PRC 20-003: https://www.menlopark.org/DocumentCenter/View/25742/Staff-Report_PRC_20-003-PRCupdates#:~:text=The%20library%20and%20community%20services,reopen%20during%20calendar%20year%202020. "The community services and library departments had no choice but to implement reductions affecting entire program areas, hours of service, and, unfortunately, staff positions. On June 9 [2020], the city manager combined the community services and library departments and created a new department: library and community services. The department merger was implemented to maximize opportunities for operational efficiency and provide for the most robust services possible given the available resources. The city manager promoted Library Director Sean Reinhart the lead the new department and eliminated the community services director position. Assistant Directors Adriane Lee Bird and Nick Szegda continue in those roles."

¹³ Also notable is that no there was no appreciable increase in the budget or staffing after the Belle Haven Library branch was opened in the new Belle Haven Community Center. The new Belle Haven library branch has both a Children's Library on the ground floor with outdoor patio space, and a separate All-Ages Library on the second floor with a fully equipped Makerspace, dedicated Teen Lounge, Tutoring Room, classroom and conference room. The Belle Haven Branch hours were also increased to match the Main Library hours. Additional staffing and supervision is needed to effectively operate the Branch facilities compared to the old Belle Haven Branch, which was located inside a school library in the neighborhood and had limited hours.

¹⁴ See Library Comparison Table in LC 8-18-2025 packet.

Looking more broadly at comparable libraries around the country, the Menlo Park Library budget is 67% of the peer group median.¹⁵ It is also lower per capita at 94%. Yet, the Menlo Park Library operates in one of the highest cost of living cities in the USA.

Full-time employees at 12 versus 36.55 for the peer group is at 33%. Menlo Park is much lower when FTE per 25,000 population is reviewed and also when compared to all libraries in the database.

Recommendation #3: Consider possible improvements to programs and services offered by the Library

Survey results, focus groups and discussions with Library Staff resulted in a variety of program and services shortcomings that could be addressed, but only with additional funding to staff these services and programs. These possibilities should be analyzed for feasibility:

- a. How to support to Staff in assisting the needs of unhoused patrons, patrons with mental health issues, and patrons experiencing substance abuse issues;
- b. How to support patrons needing to learn English as a second language (ESL); and
- c. Consider additional staffing to:
 - o Relieve workload pressure on existing Staff;
 - o Add programs/events;
 - o Add Volunteer Coordinator; and
 - o Add Tutoring/Homework Center/ESL Coordinator.

Recommendation #4: Analyze deficits in the 800 Alma Street facility and the viability of near-term improvements (within 1-2 years)

The Main Library was built in 1957. It was remodeled and additions added in 1967 and 1991. In 2009 the Children's Room was remodeled, and in 2012 some modifications were made to the lobby and self-check-in area.¹⁶ The 33,000 square foot building has not had major renovations in over 35 years.

¹⁵ See IMLS Comparison document in LC 8-18-2025 packet.

¹⁶ Staff Report 17-066-CC to City Council 3/28/2017,
<https://www.menlopark.org/DocumentCenter/View/13235/G1---Library-Space-Needs-Study>

Recent survey results demonstrate that the Menlo Park Main Library is the most visited indoor location of all Menlo Park facilities.¹⁷ Free text responses to the survey overwhelmingly favored renovation, upgrades, and/or improved maintenance.¹⁸

Numerous survey and focus group comments and input from Staff revealed the need for:

- a. upgrade or replacement of HVAC;
- b. renovated and/or additional restrooms;
- c. replacement flooring or carpeting;
- d. replacement furniture that is movable, cleanable, durable, comfortable; and
- e. rearrangement/realignment of floorplan/spaces to allow for quiet areas, reservable meeting rooms and a large community meeting space.

Recommendation #5: Assess feasibility, financing options and timing for a new Library facility on the Civic Center campus

Although clearly the Main Library facility is “outdated and insufficient to meet community needs now and into the future and should be replaced with new facilities,”¹⁹ it is also apparent that under the current fiscal environment, designing and building a new Main Library is not realistic in the near-term. However, the Library Commission requests that the City Council use a Study Session to begin preliminary work to understand future funding for a new Library facility and under what conditions a new facility would be feasible.

¹⁷“Preliminary Results: Library, recreation and parks survey May 28, 2025.

https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/library-and-community-services/documents/prelim-results_library-recreation-parks-survey_2025.pdf. Preliminary results from the Library, Recreation and Parks survey conducted in April-May, 2025 by over 1,120 respondents showed that the Menlo Park Main Library is the most visited indoor location (85% of respondents visit multiple times a year or more, and only 6% “never” visit). The next most visited indoor location (Arrillaga Family Rec Center) has only 28% of respondents visiting multiple times per year or more often, with 49% “never visit.” Of all the indoor facilities in Menlo Park, the Main Library had the lowest satisfaction rate (76% “very/somewhat satisfied” and 11% “somewhat/very unsatisfied”).

¹⁸See Ashley Walker presentation “Department Updates – Survey results: Library Focus” presented at July 21, 2025 Library Commission meeting.

¹⁹ [Staff Report 19-001-CC](#) dated January 15, 2019.

Summary of Surveys of Friends of Menlo Park Library

8 Surveys Collected on April 22, 2025

1. Average # of years lived in Menlo Park: 26 years
2. 5 respondents self-identified as “Senior Adult” and 3 as “Adult”
3. All respondents primarily use the Main Library. Average # of visits per year = approx. 72 (approx. 6x per month average)
4. Programs Used:
 - a. Education: 3 of 8 respondents
 - b. Social Programs: 3 of 8 respondents
 - c. Information Resources: 4 of 8 respondents
 - d. Collection: 7 of 8 respondents
 - e. Community Gathering Space: 1 of 8 respondents
 - f. Other write-ins: Hot Spot borrowing; Friends of Library; Senior Assistance; Voting Assistance (to increase voter turnout); Bookstore/Booksales; Bookfair
5. Favorite Feature of the Library:
 - a. Book selection: mystery section, new book sections, online catalog, digital services like Kanopy
 - b. Librarians are friendly and helpful
 - c. Reservation system, hold services; interlibrary loan services
 - d. One story building, open and airy, easy access to parking; windows to the outdoors
 - e. Has lots of magazines, no need to subscribe anymore
 - f. Bookstore (3 respondents)
 - g. Bookfair
6. Biggest frustration with Library
 - a. Elevator, chairs
 - b. AMH
 - c. No adult programs on tech, entrepreneurship, business
 - d. Lack of printers
 - e. Lack of meeting rooms for group study session
 - f. Insufficient bathrooms; old bathrooms (2 comments)
 - g. Library open hours too few, not open holidays
 - h. Tired Collection; collection looks tired; not obvious/logical as to where Collections are located; Inability to get new titles in a timely manner (3 comments)
 - i. Tired looking, not most attractive space, would appreciate more appealing area for working, meetings and reading

- j. No Makerspace!
- 7. How MP Library compares to others (7 of 8 responded)
 - a. Programs: Very good (4 responses); Good (2 responses); Fair (1 response)
 - b. Access: Very Good (4 responses); Good (2 responses); Fair (1 response)
 - c. Facilities: Good (5 responses); Fair (2 responses)
 - d. Collection: Very Good (2 responses); Good (3 responses); Fair (2 responses)
 - e. Staff: Excellent (5 responses); Very Good (2 responses)
- 8. What are the characteristics you would like to see improved:
 - a. Education: 6 yes
 - b. Social Programs: 5 yes
 - c. Information Resources: 6 yes
 - d. Collection: 5 yes
 - e. Community Gathering Space: 6 yes
 - f. Other: Speaker Series and classes; Entrepreneurship Center, Tech Lab/Center; Facility & Hours; Staffing; Makerspace; Larger bookstore; Library of things more daily use objects for borrowing; general indoor appearance
- 9. What new features would attract you to a Library of the Future
 - a. Adult education programming (2 comments), cultural, academic, language learning, health, science etc
 - b. More attractive and flexible spaces
 - c. Refreshed Collection (2 comments) both physical and digital; Updated Collection
 - d. Updated facilities
 - e. Information Center for City services
 - f. Printing, Printers (2 comments)
 - g. Music
 - h. Cafe
 - i. Makerspace (2 comments); More Tech-makerspace
 - j. Education programming for kids (eg coding)
 - k. Speaker Series
 - l. Community resources
 - m. Expanded Education programs
 - n. VR headsets
 - o. Dedicated small business/entrepreneurship center
 - p. Borrow more things than books
 - q. Ability to meet more people from the community
 - r. Spanish language education
 - s. EV charging

- t. AI education
 - u. Aging/longevity education
 - v.
10. How supportive of creating the Menlo Park Library of the Future?: 4 “extremely supportive”, 2 “very supportive” 1 “supportive”

Summary of Surveys of Menlo Park Library Foundation members

5 Surveys Collected on March 11, 2025

1. Average # of years lived in Menlo Park: 35 years
2. All respondents self-identified as “Senior Adult”
3. All respondents primarily use the Main Library. Average # of visits per year = approx. 23-24 (approx. 2x per month average)
4. Programs Used:
 - a. Education: 1 of 5 respondents
 - b. Social Programs: 3 of 5 respondents
 - c. Information Resources: 2 of 5 respondents
 - d. Books: 5 of 5 respondents
 - e. Community Gathering Space: 3 of 5 respondents
5. Favorite Feature of the Library:
 - a. Book selection good, ability to check online and reserve holds; online availability of e-books, easy check-out
 - b. Range of programs
 - c. Coziness of children’s room
 - d. Friends’ bookstore
6. Biggest frustration with Library
 - a. No place to sit that feels welcoming
 - b. Dark, physical limitations, no reservable meeting space, unappealing design/décor
 - c. Library hours too limited, lack of book availability
 - d. Dated compared to other local libraries
7. How MP Library compares to others
 - a. Programs: Very good (3 responses); Good (2 responses)
 - b. Access: Excellent/Very Good (1 response); Very good (2 responses); Good (1 response); Fair (1 response)
 - c. Facilities: Good (1 response); Fair (2 responses); Poor (2 responses)
 - d. Collection: Very Good (3 responses); Good (2 responses)
 - e. Staff: Excellent (3 responses); Very Good (2 responses)
8. What are the characteristics you would like to see improved:
 - a. Education: 1 yes, 1 comment re: unsure what this means
 - b. Social Programs: 3 yes
 - c. Information Resources: 3 yes

- d. Collection: 4 yes
 - e. Community Gathering Space: 4 yes
 - f. Other: meeting rooms, auditorium, lending library of things/equipment
9. What new features would attract you to a Library of the Future
- a. Nicer, beautiful, more welcoming space
 - b. Interesting art
 - c. Outdoor patio
 - d. New books in a special part of the library with short bios
 - e. Café
 - f. More quality programming/events
 - g. Indoor/outdoor spaces
 - h. Meeting rooms for community
 - i. Speakers re: history/education
 - j. Better children's facilities
 - k. Auditorium
 - l. Large collection both physical books and e-books
10. How supportive of creating the Menlo Park Library of the Future: all 5 "extremely supportive"

Summary of Surveys of Menlo Park Teens (Teen Advisory Group and Youth Action Committee members)

13 Surveys Collected in July 2025

1. Average # of years lived in Menlo Park: 11 years
2. All 13 respondents self-identified as “Teen”
3. 11 respondents primarily use the Main Library, 1 respondent primarily uses the Belle Haven branch. Average # of visits per year = approx. 57 (approx. 5x per month average)
4. Programs Used:
 - a. Education: 4 of 13 respondents
 - b. Social Programs*: 9 of 13 respondents
 - c. Information Resources: 4 of 13 respondents
 - d. Collection: 4 of 13 respondents
 - e. Community Gathering Space: 5 of 13 respondents
 - f. Other write-ins: Teen Advisory Group; Volunteer; Studying Space; Checking out movies; Workspace; Museum Pass

*Social Programs definition unclear as per respondent feedback; responses may refer to programs to promote social interaction or social services programs
5. Favorite Feature of the Library:
 - a. The decorations on the walls. They are creative!
 - b. How quiet and peaceful the library is and the beautiful displays and art.
 - c. Teen programs and environmental support activities
 - d. The opportunities for teens, eg, Teen Advisory Group and Youth Advisory Committee
 - e. I love the teens programs and the graphic novel sections!
 - f. The silence and fun activities
 - g. Most everything, but I like the holds system and the teen zone
 - h. The teen zone, having so many spaces to do work
 - i. The studying space it provides
 - j. Quiet study areas, how accessible the teen section is with new and popular books
 - k. Borrowing laptops
 - l. The teen specific area and the seeds
 - m. Movie section
6. Biggest frustration with Library
 - a. That I don’t really hear about all the wonderful programs the library has to offer so I sometimes miss them

- b. Nothing (4 responses)
 - c. I wish they would have more help for teens. For example, recent SAT books and practice and ACT practice. I also wish they had college programs, for example, help looking for internships and job opportunities, as well as personal statements and essay editing. I feel like many people can't afford to have a college counselor and the library could provide tools for it.
 - d. Not much! But as a teen who will be an adult soon, I think it would be cool to have graphic novels for adults available. Or maybe they already are?
 - e. The Spanish collection is great but there's not much from South America (Argentina etc)
 - f. Sometimes it's hard to find the space to work on group projects
 - g. The WiFi can be inconsistent
 - h. Takes a long time for a book put on hold to arrive from another library and very short window of time to pick up a book once it reaches the library
 - i. More clear how to put in purchase request
7. How MP Library compares to others?
- a. Programs: Excellent (4 responses); Very good (6 responses); Good (2 responses)
 - b. Access: Excellent (7 responses); Very Good (3 responses); Good (1 responses)
 - c. Facilities: Excellent (6 responses); Very Good (4 responses); Good (2 responses); Fair (1 response)
 - d. Collection: Excellent (6 responses); Very Good (5 responses); Fair (1 response)
 - e. Staff: Excellent (11 responses); Very Good (1 response); Good (1 response)
8. What are the characteristics you would like to see improved:
- a. Education: 5 yes
 - b. Social Programs: 4 yes
 - c. Information Resources: 2 yes
 - d. Collection: 0 yes
 - e. Community Gathering Space: 5 yes
 - f. Other: More events for teens; more educational programs for teens
9. What new features would attract you to a Library of the Future
- a. More teen programs to build community, volunteer and internship programs, teen-led workshops and events (4 responses)
 - b. Making the building more sustainable and environmentally friendly
 - c. More programs that are Nature and Environmental based, plant care activities (2 responses)

- d. More elderly community programs (2 responses)
 - e. Crafting activities
 - f. Transportation opportunities (offer to borrow bikes)
 - g. SAT books and practice larger selection, college prep help, workshops (3 responses)
 - h. Job and internship finding help, resume help, workshops (2 responses)
 - i. The ability to review books and let others see it before reading it; shelf with books recommended by other teens (2 responses)
 - j. Fun facts about books
 - k. More reading challenges
 - l. It would be cool if there were author book signings
 - m. Reservable study pods; Spaces you can rent out (like rooms)(2 responses)
 - n. Guest speakers
 - o. More art activities in the library (such as origami stand, art materials)
 - p. School supplies to use (markers, rulers, tape, stapler)
 - q. Later hours
 - r. Larger book collection
 - s. Not throwing out older books
 - t. Movie reviews like the book reviews
10. How supportive of creating the Menlo Park Library of the Future?: 10 “extremely supportive”, 3 “very supportive”

Department updates – Survey results: Library focus

Ashley Walker, Management Analyst I

Library, parks, and recreation survey

- Conducted in spring – early summer
- 1,115 participants
- 1,670 comments
- Comments were read and categorized
- Categorization included adding a location (if possible) and placing comments into one of the following 11 sections:

Comment categories

Category	Description	Comment examples
Access	Logistic ability to access facilities such as hours, fees, enrollment spaces, feeling welcome, convenience of locations, and parking availability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More outreach and more classes. • Open more hours. • More days available. • More parking – Burgess lot can get full. • Add senior center downtown.
Accessibility	Comments that specifically mention special needs accommodations such as handicap parking, ramps, needs-inclusive programming, needs for seniors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More handicap parking. • More kid-friendly with nursing areas. • Better seating for those with ADHD. • More special-needs activities.
Comment	General remarks or feedback that may not fit into specific categories but may provide context or opinions about the survey, services, or community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No changes. • Leave the library as it is. • Nothing. We like the facilities. • I don't use parks, but I think it is important that we have them.
Compliment	Positive feedback for facilities, services, staff, or programs, highlighting aspects that are well-received by respondents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of them seem clean and safe. • I like it. It's very comfortable. • Happy with the library.

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Free-text survey questions:

1. If you **could change the physical buildings or spaces** in these locations, what would improve them or make you visit them more often?
2. If you **could change the customer service** at these locations, what would improve the customer service and/or make you visit them more often?
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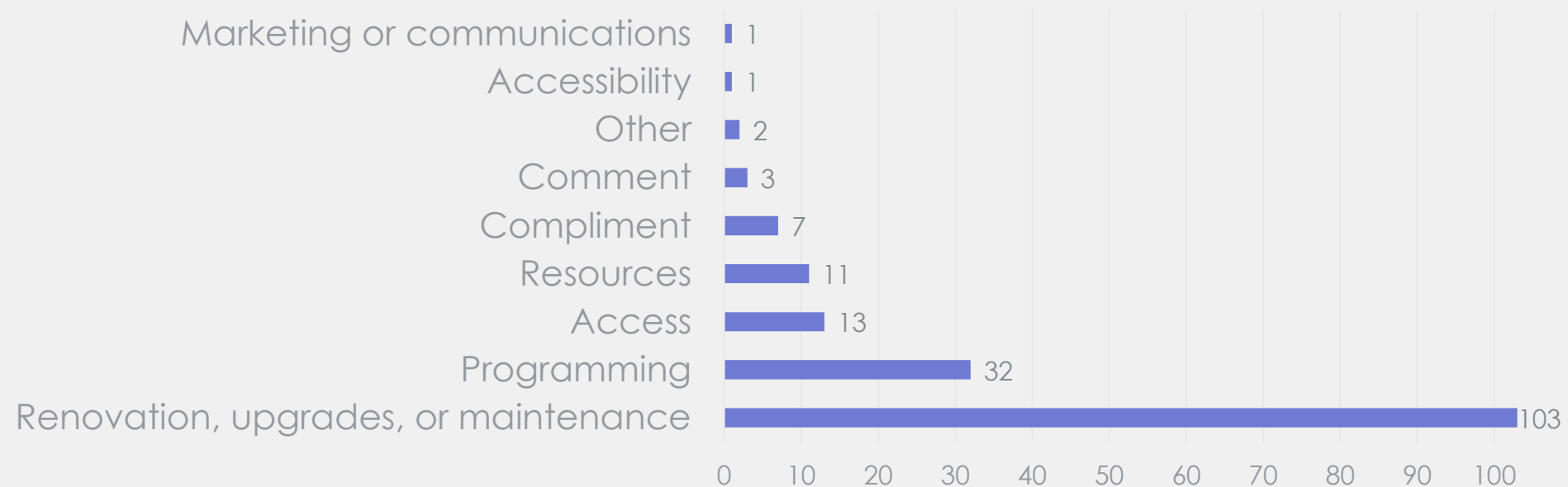
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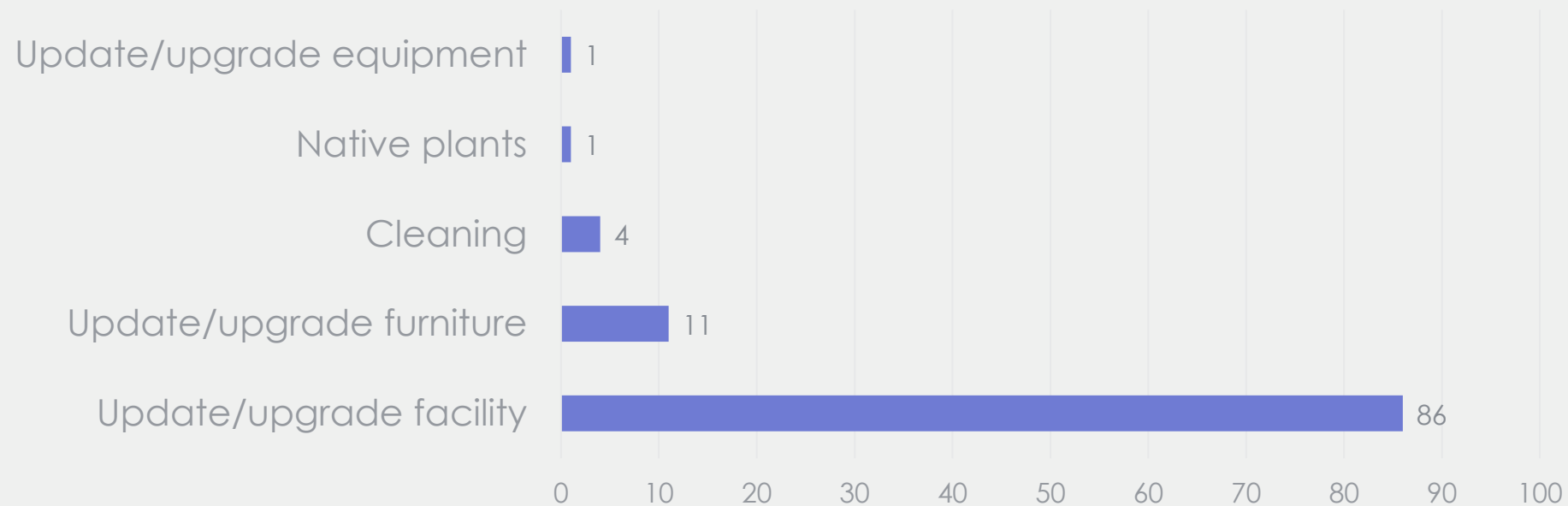
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Breakdown of library-specific responses to “If you could change the physical buildings or spaces in these locations, what would improve them or make you visit them more often?”



■ Count of category type

Renovation, upgrades, or maintenance subcategories



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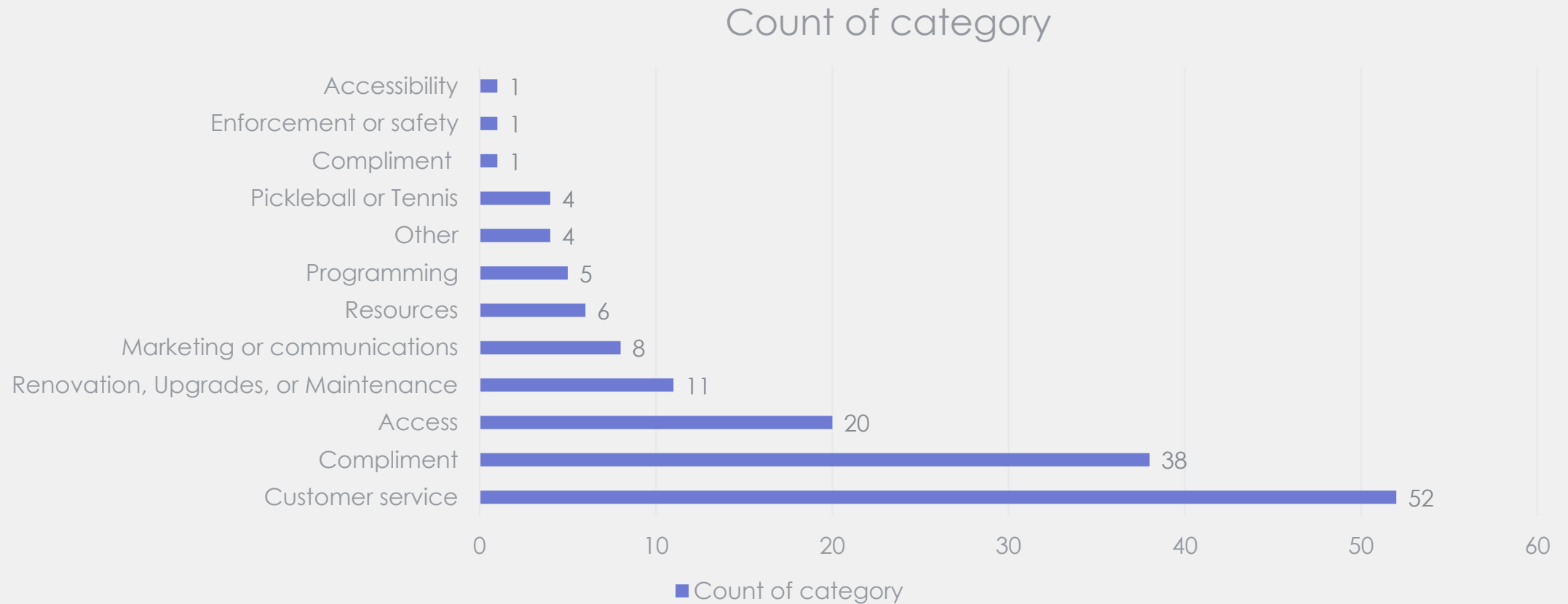
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What would improve customer service...?

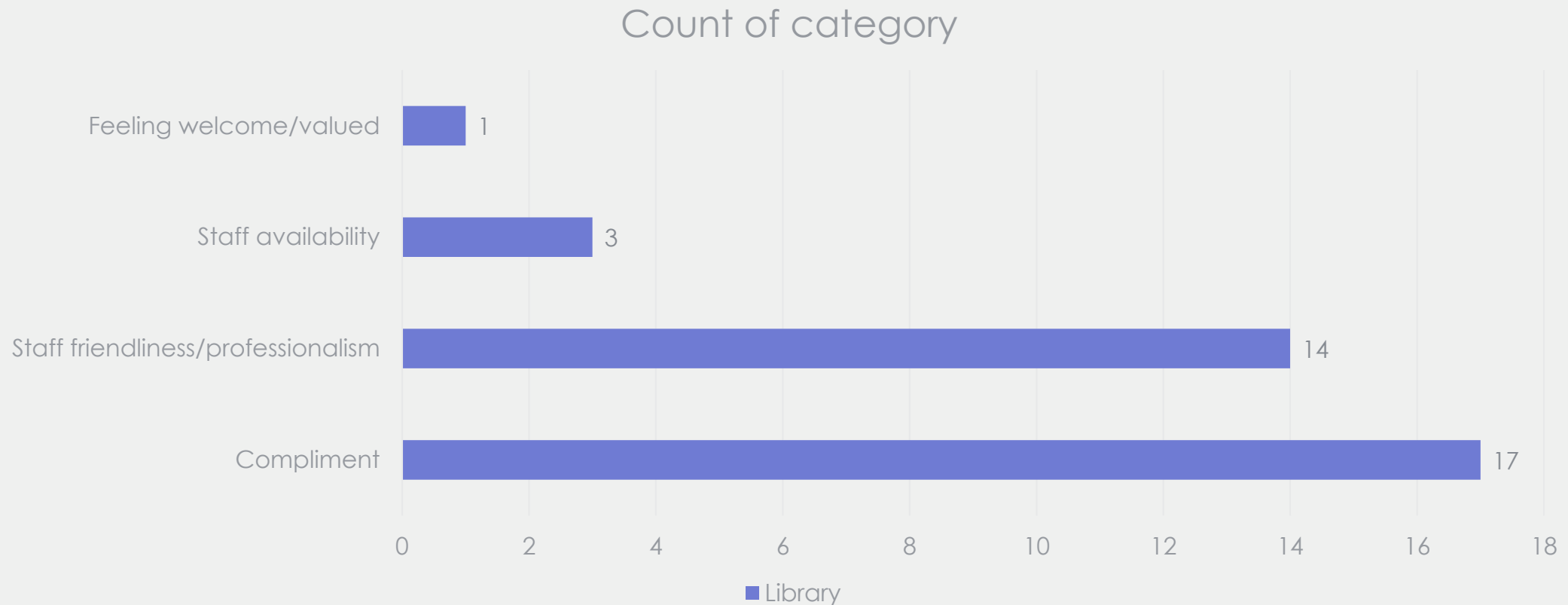
- 151 free-text answers
- 52 of the 151 were specific to customer service
- 18 of the 51 customer service comments were specific to library
- Library received 17 compliments in customer service

What would improve customer service...?



What would improve customer service...?

Count of sub-category for customer service improvement in library-specific comments.

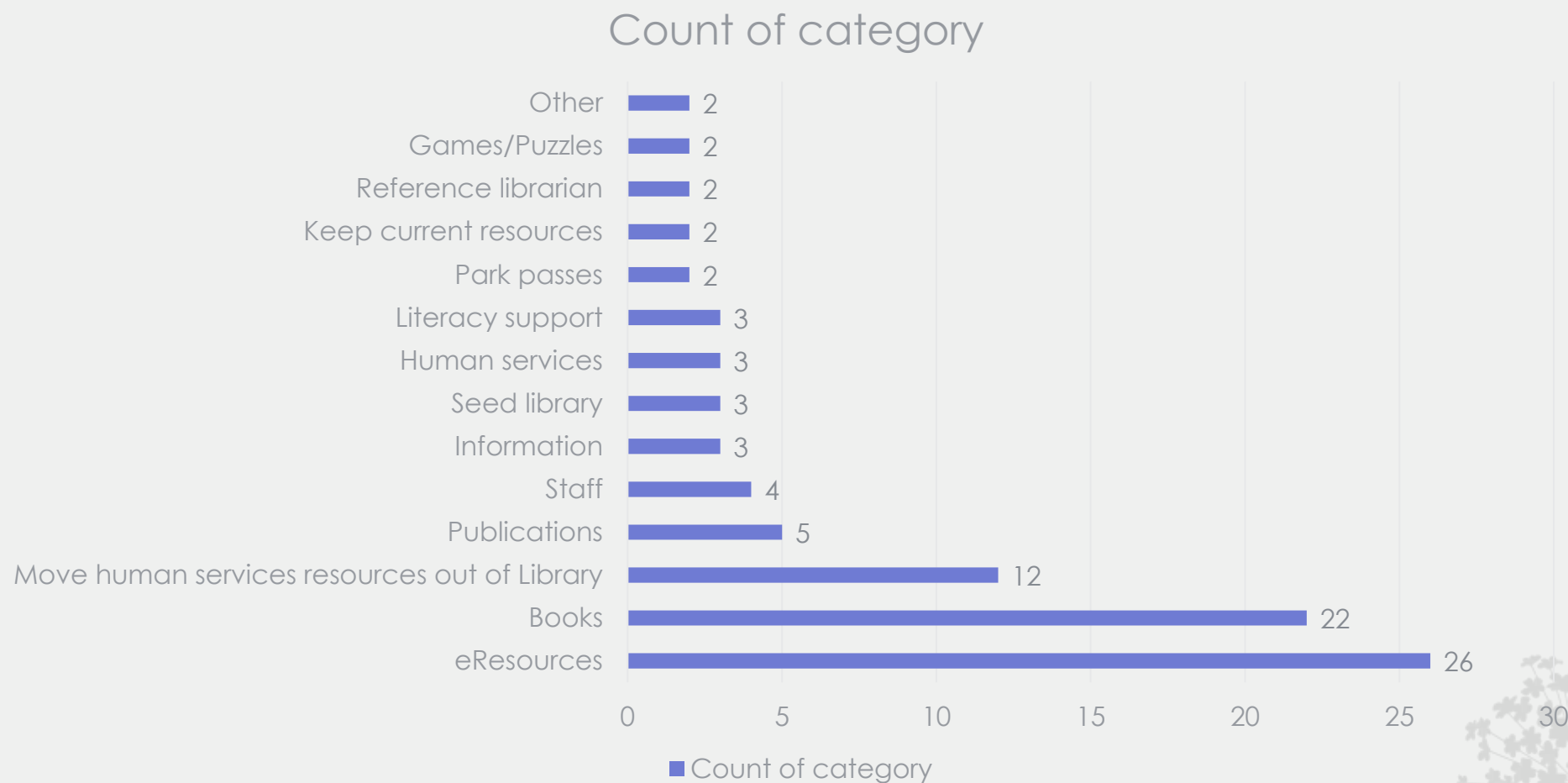


Tell us your ideas, needs, suggestions for library and information resources:

Category	Total
Resources	113
Programming	46
Renovation, upgrades, or maintenance	38
Compliment	13
Access	13
Marketing or communications	11
Other	9
Comment	6
Accessibility	2

- 257 total responses
- 251 were library related (see table left)
 - 113 were related to library resources
 - 46 were related to library programming
 - 38 were related to library upgrades, renovation, or maintenance.

Tell us your ideas, needs, suggestions for library and information resources



Tell us your ideas, needs, suggestions for library and information resources:

Resource requests that received 1 mention:

- Social connection/mental health
- Childrens books
- Teens and young adult programs
- Friends of Library bookstore
- Reference materials
- Legal/Financial
- DVD/Blu-ray/CDs
- Accessible books
- WiFi Hotspots
- Makerspace tools
- Child care
- Meals
- Citizenship support
- Child programs
- Software
- Non-resident library card
- Staff for senior assistance
- Adult programs
- Update/upgrade equipment
- CDs, DVDs, PLS
- Inter-library loans
- Printer

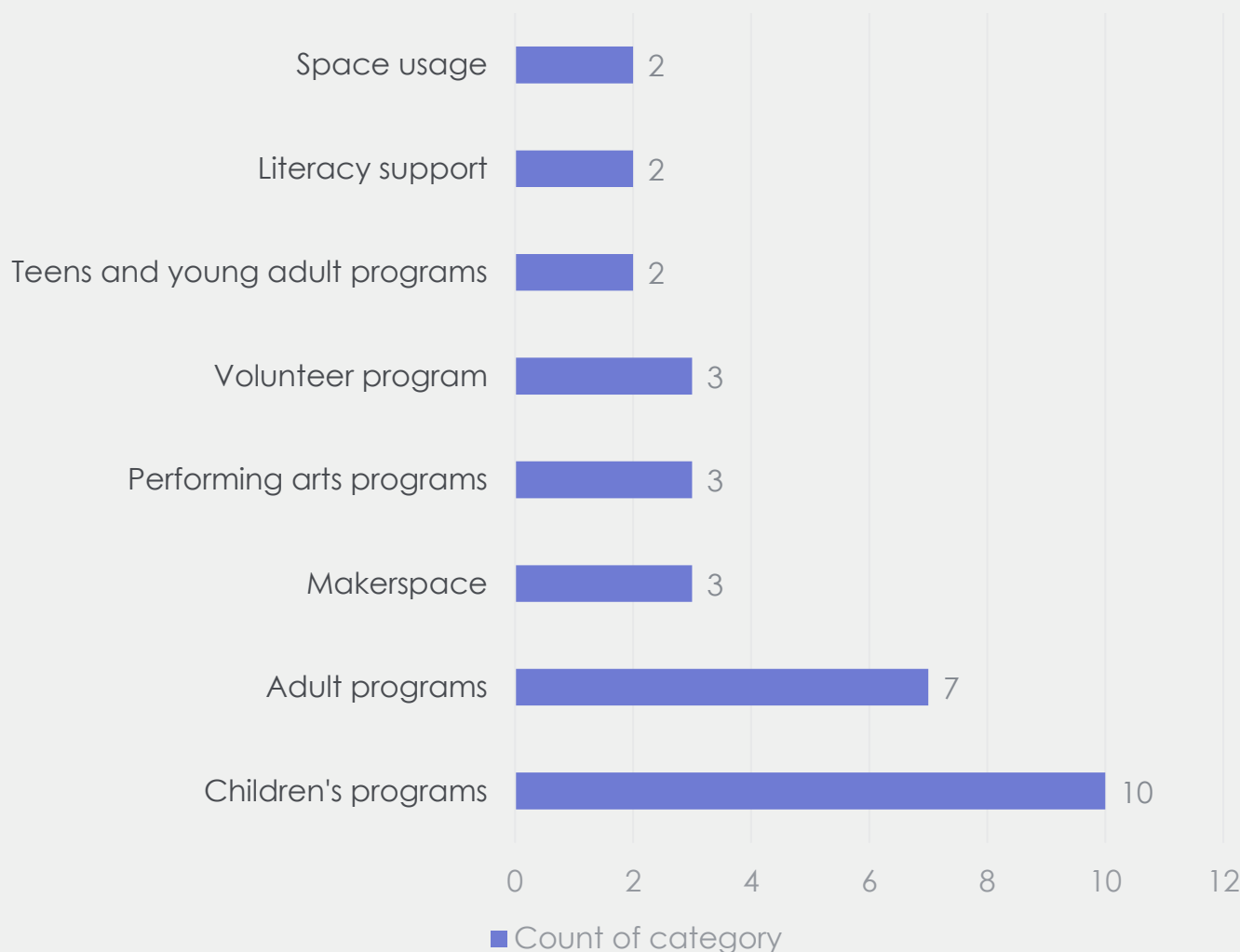


Tell us your ideas, needs, suggestions for library and information resources

eResources	Total
eBooks	13
Link+	2
Add OLLIE	1
Audiobooks	1
Extend loan period	1
Genealogy databases	1
Hoopla and CloudLibrary	1
Kanopy	1
Libby	1
More eBook copies	1
Increased access from PLS	1
eResource instructions	1
More eResources	1



Tell us your ideas, needs, suggestions for library and information resources



Programming requests that got 1 comment:

- Café
- Library merch
- Other
- Family events
- Compliment/No changes/Comment
- Community programs
- More in-person programs
- Book clubs
- Events/activities
- Collaborative programming
- Book request process
- Keep the programming
- Keep current programming
- Historical displays

What other ideas do you have for the library?

Comment/Suggestion	Count
Compliment	7
Likes the library	4
Likes summer reading app and program	1
Libby	1
Likes Garden Talks	1
Resources	7
eResources	3
Fewer political books	3
Human Services	1
Other	5
Homeless	3
Access to books in the teen area	1
Books	1

Comment/Suggestion	Count
Renovation, upgrades, or maintenance	3
Update facility	2
Upgrade facility	1
Marketing or communications	2
Keep using posters for marketing	1
Library event marketing	1
Access	2
Out-of-state library card	1
Non-residents library cards	1
Programming	1
Library pet	1

Brian J Westcott
Rose Waldman
Sarah Russell
June 30, 2025

Menlo Park Library of the Future Ad-Hoc Committee.

Institute of Museum and Library Services database study

Results of a comparison of the Menlo Park Library system to other comparable libraries with similar demographics. Prepared with the support of Menlo Park Library Staff: Rose Waldman and Sarah Russell

Comparison Libraries

Similar size cities, located near a university with similar demographics. Included are local libraries that were visited by members of the Library of the Future committee.

Library Name	City	State	number of locations
BELMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY	BELMONT	MA	2
BEVERLY HILLS PUBLIC LIBRARY	BEVERLY HILLS	CA	1.5
BURLINGAME PUBLIC LIBRARY	BURLINGAME	CA	2
COMMUNITY LIBRARY OF DEWITT & JAMESVILLE	JAMESVILLE	NY	1
Fitchburg Public Library	Fitchburg	WI	1
GUILDERLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY	GUILDERLAND	NY	1
HAYWARD PUBLIC LIBRARY	HAYWARD	CA	2
JAMES BLACKSTONE MEMORIAL LIBRARY	BRANFORD	CT	1
LOS GATOS LIBRARY	LOS GATOS	CA	1
Louisville Public Library	Louisville	CO	1
MENLO PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY	MENLO PARK	CA	2
Oak Park Public Library	Oak Park	IL	3
PALO ALTO CITY LIBRARY	PALO ALTO	CA	5
PRINCETON PUBLIC LIBRARY	PRINCETON	NJ	1
REDWOOD CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY	REDWOOD CITY	CA	3
SHAKER HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY	SHAKER HEIGHTS	OH	2
SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY	SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO	CA	2
TEANECK PUBLIC LIBRARY	TEANECK	NJ	1
UNIVERSITY CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY	UNIVERSITY CITY	MO	1
UPPER ARLINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY	UPPER ARLINGTON	OH	3
URBANDALE PUBLIC LIBRARY	URBANDALE	IA	1
Wilmette Public Library District	Wilmette	IL	1

DEMOGRAPHICS

Selection	Race	Census Percent
Your Library	White	69.7%
Your Library	Black or African American	5.8%
Your Library	American Indian and Alaska Native	1.8%
Your Library	Asian	21.0%
Your Library	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	2.3%
Your Library	Other Race	11.6%
Your Library	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	17.3%
Peer Group	White	69.5%
Peer Group	Black or African American	11.0%
Peer Group	American Indian and Alaska Native	1.5%
Peer Group	Asian	15.8%
Peer Group	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.8%
Peer Group	Other Race	9.9%
Peer Group	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	13.5%
All	White	72.9%
All	Black or African American	14.4%
All	American Indian and Alaska Native	2.0%
All	Asian	7.5%
All	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.4%
All	Other Race	12.7%
All	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	20.7%

COLLECTIONS

	Physical Collection	
2021	115,000 (MPL)	148,521 Peer group median (PGM)
	Total Collection Use (circulation)	
2022	707,520 (MPL)	526,804 (PGM)
	Electronic Resource Use	
2022	146,892 (MPL)	126,906 (PGM)

Menlo Park Library System (MPL) has a well-curated physical collection. While it has fewer total books than the peer group median (“PGM”) the total collection use has a much higher circulation. Total use is 34% higher. The electronic resources was also highly used and exceed the peer group median by 16%.

FACILITIES

	Library Buildings	
2022	2 (MP)	1.75 Peer Group Average
	Annual Hours Open	
2022	4896 (MP)	3518 (PGM)
	Staff per hours open per week	
2022	0.1 (MPL)	.4 (PGM)

Menlo Park's facilities were first built in 1957. It has 2 locations which exceeds the peer group average by 2 to 1.75. The annual hours open exceeds the peer group median by 39%. This is impressive since the staff per hours open ratio is much lower and is 25% of the peer group median. This shows a highly efficient use of staff both full-time and part-time.

FUNDING

	Total Operating Revenue	
2022	3,526,923 (MP)	5,242,017 (PGM)
	Operating Revenue per Capita	
2022	107.6 (MP)	114 (PGM)

Funding for the Menlo Park Library is critical to all aspects of operating a library. The Menlo Park library budget is 67% of the peer group median It is also lower per capita at 94%. The Menlo Park Library operated in one of the highest cost of living cities in the USA.

Lack of Library funding affects all aspects of a highly functioning library system.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

	Annual Library Visits	
2022	106,615 (MP)	153,459 (PGM)

	Card Holders % of Population	
2022	0.81 (MP)	0.80 (PGM)
	Total Library Programs	
2022	376 (MP)	586.5 (PGM)
	31.33 (MP ratio to FTE)	16.05 (PG ratio to FTE)
	Program Attendance	
2022	7,846 (MP)	12676 (PGM)
	341 (MP ratio by program)	346 (PG ratio by program)
	Reference Transactions per capita (People asking librarians for help)	
2022	0.83 (MP)	0.48 (PGM)

The Menlo Park Libraries have a lower number of annual visits than the peer group median – with 106,615 versus 153,459. The library card holders as a percentage of the population is equal. Where the MPL has a significant difference is the number of total library programs at 376 which is only 64% of the peer group median of 586. The number of library programs is very dependent on the number of full-time staff members. When the Menlo Park Library is compared using the ratio of programs to full-time staff – Menlo Park has 31.33 versus 16.05 or 2 times as many programs per staff. This again shows an efficient and productive library staff which is understaffed. The use of the library for reference shows the Menlo Park Libraries providing 73% more transactions per capita than the peer group median. This shows the community using the staff as support for their reference needs.

STAFF

	Total Paid employees (FTE)		
2022	12.0 (MP)	36.55 (PGM)	
	FTE per 25,000 Population		
2022	9.1 (MP)	21.00 (PGM)	10.6 (ALL libraires)

Staffing at Menlo Park Libraries is a major issue. Full-time employees at 12 versus 36.55 for the peer group is at 33. Menlo Park is much lower when you review FTE per 25,000 population and also when compared to all libraries in the database.

In discussions with the staff they stressed that there is a difference between what a full-time staff member contributes to the library than the equivalent of multiple part time employees that equal a full time equivalent.

TECHNOLOGY

	Public Computer Use per Capita	
2022	0.064 (MP)	0.298 (PGM)
	Public WiFi Sessions	
2022	244,625	172,806

Technology provided by the Menlo Park Library is growing in importance. The public use of computers per capita is only 21% of the peer group median. This could be explained by the Menlo Park Population owning their own computers and extensive use of personal laptops. This technology usage is supported by the higher number of public WiFi sessions of 244,625 versus 172,806 for the peer group or 42% higher. Technology is an area of library services which is increasing in importance.

Budget Comparison between Menlo Park and Burlingame CA

Category	Menlo Park	Burlingame	Notes
Population	33,780	31,386	
Households	12,543	12,418	
Average House Price	\$2.8 million	\$2.7 million	
General Fund Expenditures (24-25)	\$ 74 million	\$ 81 million	
Library (2024-25)	\$ 3.3 (.18 of Lib/Parks/Com Budget)	\$6.8 (.31 of Lib/Parks/Com Budget)	MP 5.5 if (.31 of Lib/Parks/Com Budget)
Police	\$25.5	\$21.8	
Library -Parks-Community	\$17.9	\$22.0	

Menlo Park Peer Library Comparison Table*

Library Name	Collections: -Physical collection -Circulation	Facilities: -Library buildings -Annual hours open	Funding: -Budget or Expense Allocation	Programs and Services: -Annual library visits -Total library programs -Program attendance	Staff: -FTE	Technology: -Public WiFi sessions
Menlo Park Public Library**	150,017 439,392	2 5,592	\$3,251,662	168,456 625 15,431	11	N/A
Burlingame Public Library	205,321 721,132	2 4,351	\$6,772,485	289,919 782 28,910	23	N/A
Half Moon Bay Public Library	N/A	1 3,083	N/A	N/A	12.7	N/A
Hayward Public Library	162,172	2 (1 open) 2,976	\$7,880,000	294,500 1,380 40,540	40.8	N/A
Rinconada Palo Alto Public Library	1,249,621	5 10,036	\$12,138,392	642,474 30,459	49	266,520
Redwood City Public Library	405,665 717,660	3 6,400	\$11,660,000	749,000 3,655 81,034	36.4	900,000
South San Francisco Public Library	N/A	3 6,379	\$8,860,000	300,000	47.5	
Los Gatos Public Library	125,000 543,000	1 2,808	\$3,398,000	255,000 494 9500	13.5	N/A

*For general reference. Statistics listed reflect most currently available information within 2022-25 time period. This peer comparison table is intended as supplementary information to Visit Notes on libraries visited by members of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee December 2024-April 2025. The above information is correlated to database categories tracked by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

**Menlo Park Library data derived from FY2025-6 Adopted Budget and City website



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT

Date: 7/21/2025
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Locations: Teleconference and
Arrillaga Family Recreation Center
700 Alma St., Menlo Park, CA 94025

A. Call To Order

Vice Chair Westcott called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Crockett, Orton, Shafer, Sisbot, Westcott, Yule
Absent: Herrick
Staff: Assistant Library and Community Services (LCS) Director Nick Szegda,
Management Analyst Ashley Walker

C. Public Comment

None.

D. Study Session

- D1. Prepare Commission report out to City Council on 2024-25 work plan (Staff Report LC-2025-029)
Assistant Director Szegda made the presentation.
The Commission discussed the draft presentation.

E. Regular Business

- E1. Approve the meeting minutes from the June 16, 2025 meeting (Attachment)

ACTION: Motion and second (Shafer/ Crockett), to approve the minutes from the June 16, 2025 meeting, passed 6-0-1 (Herrick absent).

- E2. Consider assigning Commission liaisons to affiliate groups (Staff Report LC-2025-030)

ACTION: Motion and second (Orton/ Shafer), to assign Commissioners to affiliate groups as follows:

- Orton – Library Foundation
 - Crockett – Friends of the Library
 - Herrick – Peninsula Library System,
- passed 6-0-1 (Herrick absent).

F. Informational Items

- F1. Draft of Library Commission work plan for 2025-26 (Staff Report LC-2025-031)

Assistant Director Szegda introduced the item.

- F2. Library, recreation, and parks community survey results – library focus (Staff Report LC-2025-032)

Management Analyst Walker made the presentation (Attachment).

- F3. Library and community services department statistics and recent activities
(Staff Report LC-2025-033)

- F4. Current and future trends in libraries – professional association and academic publication
resources (Staff Report LC-2025-034)

Assistant Director Szegda introduced the item.

- F5. Library Commission tentative agenda calendar (Attachment)

G. Commissioner Reports

- G1. Ad-hoc subcommittee report

Commissioner Orton reported out on ad-hoc subcommittee activities to date and possible short-term capital improvement projects for the main library.

- G2. Individual Commissioner reports

None.

H. Adjournment

Vice Chair Westcott adjourned the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

Nick Szegda, Assistant Library and Community Services Director

Department updates – Survey results: Library focus

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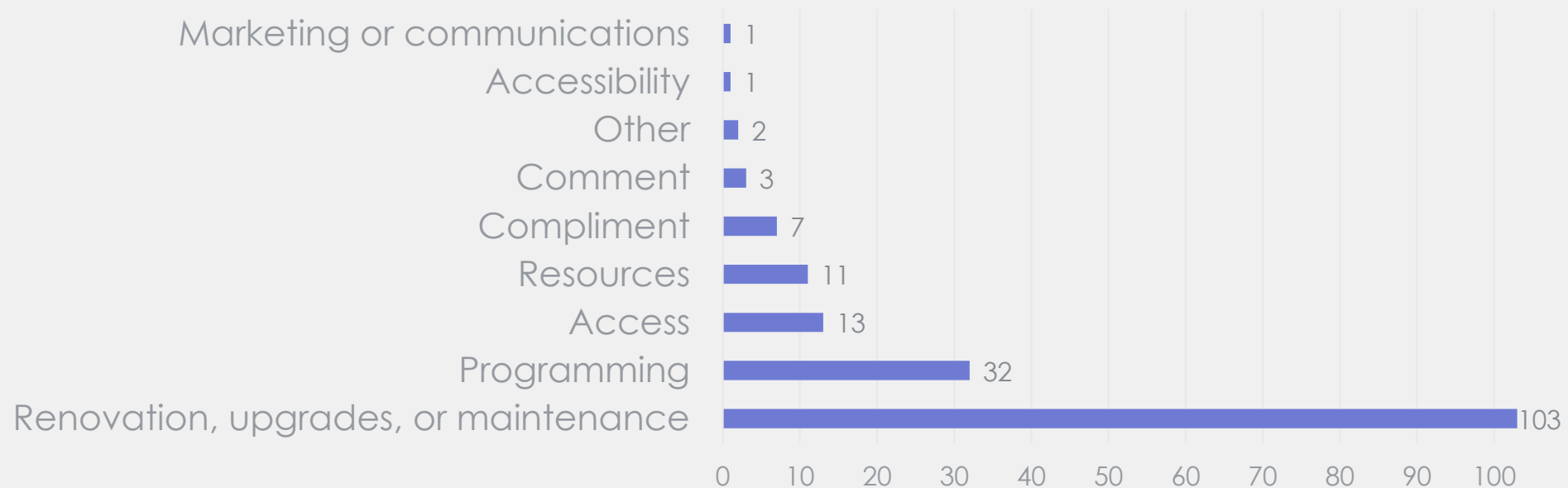
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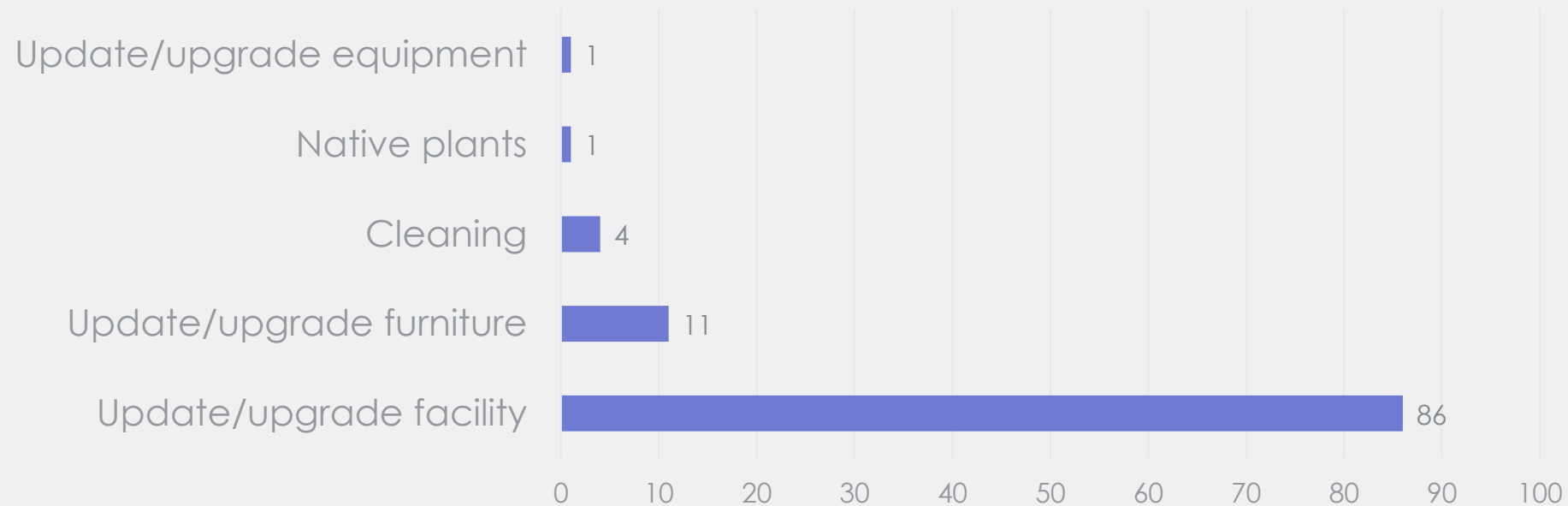
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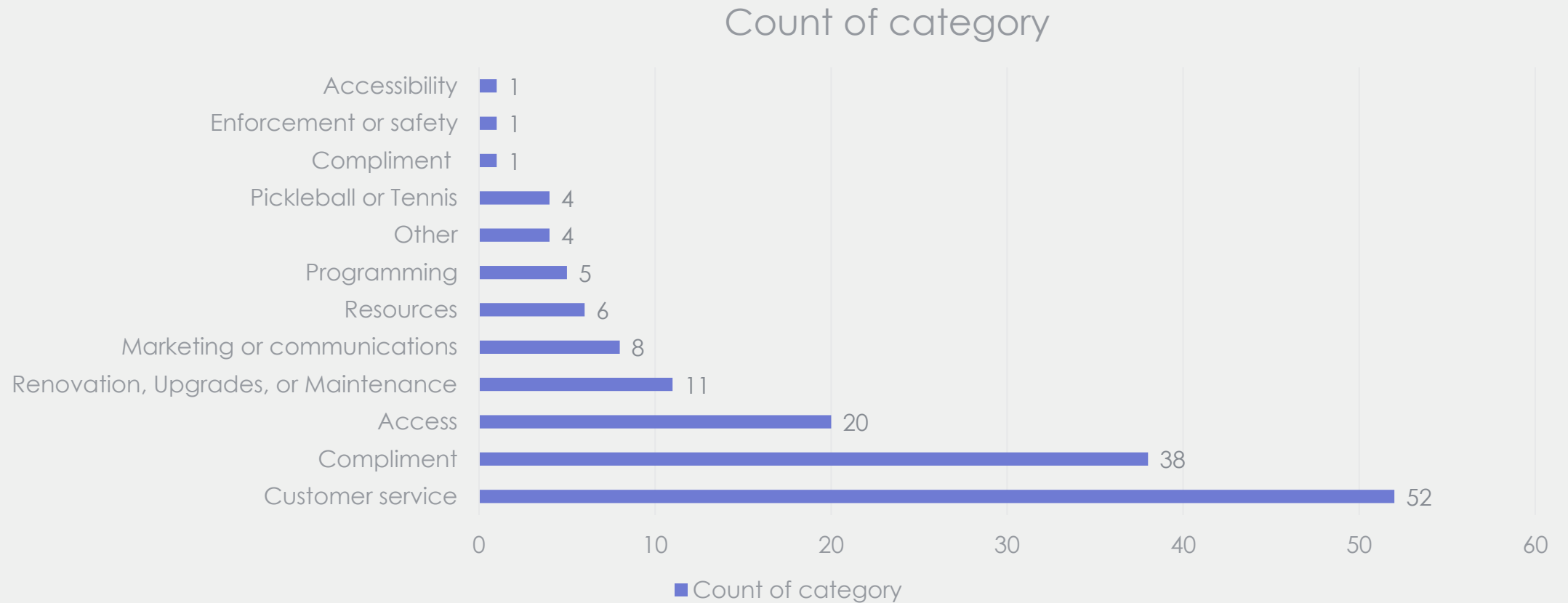
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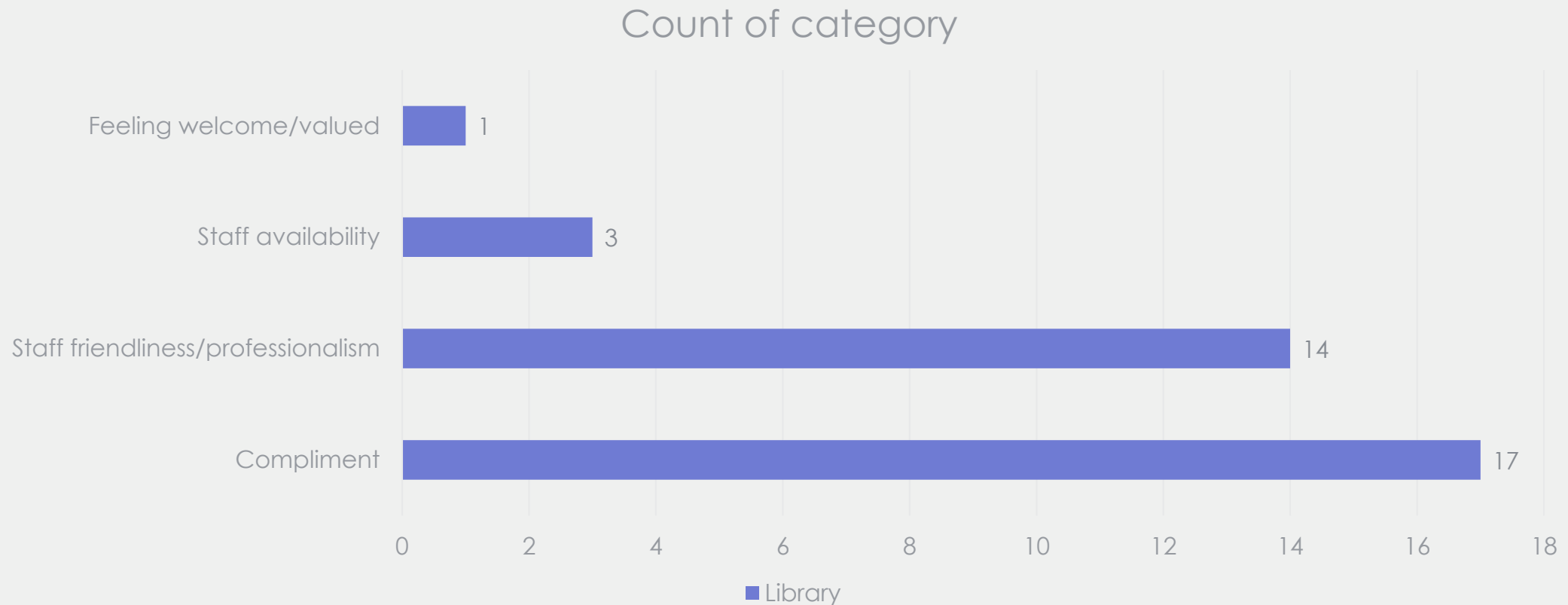
- 151 free-text answers
- 52 of the 151 were specific to customer service
- 18 of the 51 customer service comments were specific to library
- Library received 17 compliments in customer service

What would improve customer service...?



What would improve customer service...?

Count of sub-category for customer service improvement in library-specific comments.



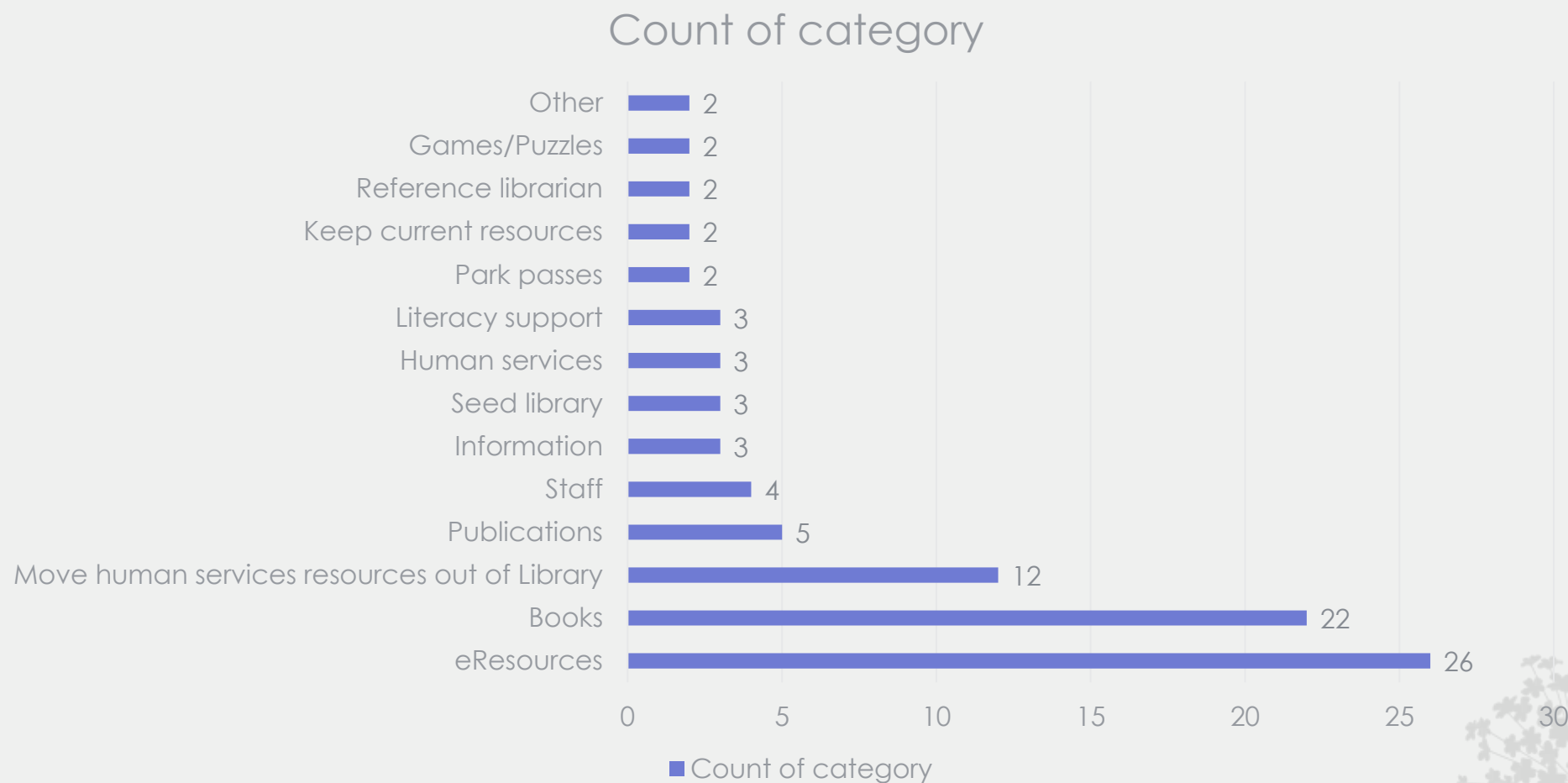


Tell us your ideas, needs, suggestions for library and information resources:

Category	Total
Resources	113
Programming	46
Renovation, upgrades, or maintenance	38
Compliment	13
Access	13
Marketing or communications	11
Other	9
Comment	6
Accessibility	2

- 257 total responses
- 251 were library related (see table left)
 - 113 were related to library resources
 - 46 were related to library programming
 - 38 were related to library upgrades, renovation, or maintenance.

Tell us your ideas, needs, suggestions for library and information resources



Tell us your ideas, needs, suggestions for library and information resources:

Resource requests that received 1 mention:

- Social connection/mental health
- Childrens books
- Teens and young adult programs
- Friends of Library bookstore
- Reference materials
- Legal/Financial
- DVD/Blu-ray/CDs
- Accessible books
- WiFi Hotspots
- Makerspace tools
- Child care
- Meals
- Citizenship support
- Child programs
- Software
- Non-resident library card
- Staff for senior assistance
- Adult programs
- Update/upgrade equipment
- CDs, DVDs, PLS
- Inter-library loans
- Printer

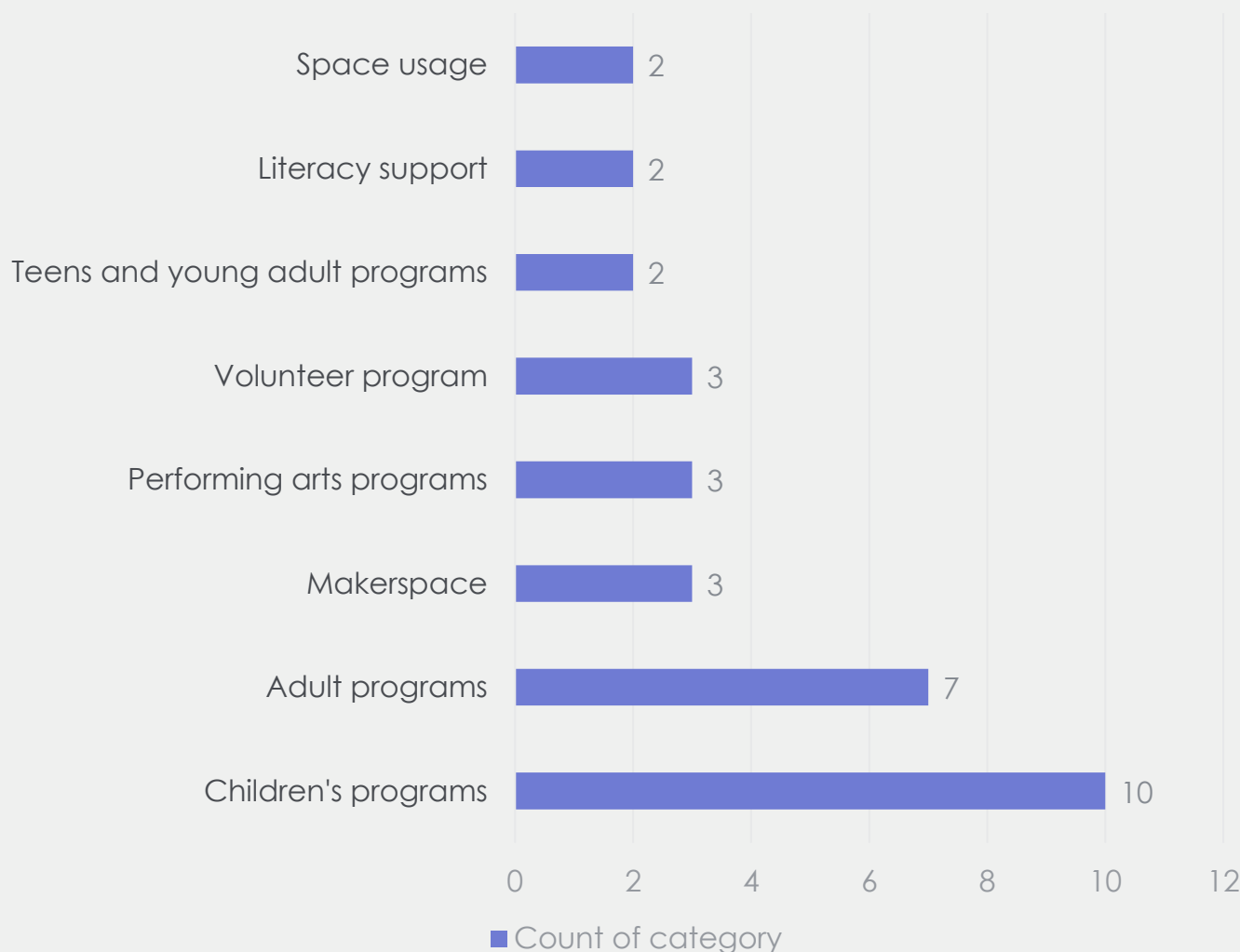


Tell us your ideas, needs, suggestions for library and information resources

eResources	Total
eBooks	13
Link+	2
Add OLLIE	1
Audiobooks	1
Extend loan period	1
Genealogy databases	1
Hoopla and CloudLibrary	1
Kanopy	1
Libby	1
More eBook copies	1
Increased access from PLS	1
eResource instructions	1
More eResources	1



Tell us your ideas, needs, suggestions for library and information resources



Programming requests that got 1 comment:

- Café
- Library merch
- Other
- Family events
- Compliment/No changes/Comment
- Community programs
- More in-person programs
- Book clubs
- Events/activities
- Collaborative programming
- Book request process
- Keep the programming
- Keep current programming
- Historical displays

What other ideas do you have for the library?

Comment/Suggestion	Count
Compliment	7
Likes the library	4
Likes summer reading app and program	1
Libby	1
Likes Garden Talks	1
Resources	7
eResources	3
Fewer political books	3
Human Services	1
Other	5
Homeless	3
Access to books in the teen area	1
Books	1

Comment/Suggestion	Count
Renovation, upgrades, or maintenance	3
Update facility	2
Upgrade facility	1
Marketing or communications	2
Keep using posters for marketing	1
Library event marketing	1
Access	2
Out-of-state library card	1
Non-residents library cards	1
Programming	1
Library pet	1



STAFF REPORT

Library Commission

Meeting Date:

8/18/2025

Staff Report Number:

LC-2025-036

Regular Business:

Recommend Library Commission work plan for 2025-26

Recommendation

City staff recommends that the Library Commission (LC) review and recommend its work plan for the upcoming year 2025-26 (Attachment A). The LC's 2025-26 work plan is tentatively scheduled for City Council review and approval Sept. 9.

Policy Issues

City Council Policy CC-24-004 (Attachment B) sets the procedures, roles, and responsibilities of Council-appointed advisory bodies, including the LC. The policy requires that each advisory body develop an annual work plan, which will be the foundation for the work performed by the advisory body in support of City Council's annual priorities. The plan, once finalized by a majority of the advisory body, will be formally presented to the City Council for direction and approval no later than Sept. 30 of each year and then reported out on by a representative of the advisory body at a regularly scheduled City Council meeting at least annually, but recommended twice a year.

Background

On Sept. 24, 2024, City Council reviewed the LC's proposed 2024-25 work plan. City Council removed one item from the work plan related to a child care analysis, then approved the work plan as revised (Attachment C).

On April 21, 2025, the LC reviewed a progress report on their 2024-25 work plan (Attachment D).

On June 16, 2025, the LC held a study session to prepare updates to their 2025-26 work plan (Attachment E).

On July 21, 2025, the LC received an informational update containing a draft of their 2025-26 work plan (Attachment F).

Analysis

At their June 16 meeting, the LC discussed revisions to their current work plan. Staff have drafted a work plan for 2025-26 based on this discussion and included it as Attachment A.

Impact on City Resources

As an advisory body to the City Council, the LC does not authorize resource allocations. City budget

authorizations are the sole purview of the City Council. There is no substantive impact to the City's general fund related to the topics in this report.

Environmental Review

This report is not a project within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §§ 15378 and 15061(b)(3) as it will not result in any direct or indirect physical change in the environment.

Public Notice

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with the agenda items being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Attachments

- A. Proposed Library Commission work plan 2025-26
- B. Hyperlink - City Council Policy #CC-24-004. <https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-managers-office/documents/city-clerk/cc-24-004-commission-committee.pdf>
- C. Hyperlink – City Council regular meeting minutes, Sept. 24, 2024. menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/agendas-and-minutes/city-council/2024-meetings/minutes/20240924-city-council-regular-minutes-approved.pdf
- D. Hyperlink – Library Commission agenda (item F-2), April 21, 2025. https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/agendas-and-minutes/library-commission/2025-meetings/agendas/20250421_lc_agenda_packet.pdf
- E. Hyperlink – Library Commission agenda (item E-2), June 16, 2025. https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/2/agendas-and-minutes/library-commission/2025-meetings/agendas/20250616_lc_agenda_packet.pdf
- F. Hyperlink - Library Commission agenda (item F-1), July 21, 2025. https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/agendas-and-minutes/library-commission/2025-meetings/agendas/20250721_lc_agenda_packet.pdf

Report prepared by:

Nick Szegda, Assistant Library and Community Services Director

Report reviewed by:

Sean S. Reinhart, Library and Community Services Director

****DRAFT******Library Commission work plan**

Library and Community Services Department

800 Alma Street, Menlo Park CA 94025

Approved September 9, 2025

**Work plan goals**

1. As an advisory body to the City Council and a forum for public information about library issues:
 - Encourage robust public comment and participation at Commission meetings
 - Periodically review the library's public-facing policies and recommend updates, as required
 - Periodically receive staff presentations and reports about major library service areas
 - Periodically receive Commissioner liaison reports about affiliates
 - Support the filling of openings on the Commission and the effective onboarding of new Commissioners
 - Maintain a 12-month schedule of planned Commission agenda items
2. Review library programs and services, identify potential service gaps for specific age groups or affinity groups, and advise to fill needs to create the "library of the future".
3. Analyze and evaluate whether and how potential near or intermediate term capital improvements to the 800 Alma St. facility may be addressed to better serve the library needs of the community.
4. Support and advise library program development and operations of the Belle Haven Community Center (BHCC) including:
 - Belle Haven Community History project
 - Makerspace programming and policies
 - Other policies that may be impacted by shared spaces at BHCC
5. Annually review library division budget in January, focusing on any potential impacts to library services

Work plan history

Action	Date	Notes



STAFF REPORT

Library Commission

Meeting Date:

8/18/2025

Staff Report Number:

LC-2025-037

Regular Business:

Prepare Commission report out to City Council on 2024-25 work plan

Recommendation

City staff recommends that the Library Commission (LC) review and prepare a report out to the City Council on the LC's work plan for the past year 2024-25 (Attachment A). LC Chair Herrick is tentatively scheduled to present the report out to City Council on Aug. 26.

Policy Issues

City Council Policy CC-24-004 (Attachment B) sets the procedures, roles, and responsibilities of Council-appointed advisory bodies, including the LC. The policy requires that each advisory body develop an annual work plan, which will be the foundation for the work performed by the advisory body in support of City Council's annual work plan. The plan, once finalized by a majority of the advisory body, will be formally presented to the City Council for direction and approval no later than Sept. 30 of each year and then reported out on by a representative of the advisory body at a regularly scheduled City Council meeting at least annually, but recommended twice a year.

Background

On Sept. 24, 2024, City Council reviewed the LC's proposed 2024-25 work plan. City Council removed one item from the work plan related to a child care analysis, then approved the work plan as revised (Attachment C).

On July 21, 2025, the LC held a study session to prepare the report out to the City Council on the LC's 2024-25 work plan (Attachment D).

Analysis

The LC's work plan for 2024-25 includes 10 goals (Attachment C). The goals include providing a forum for public information and discussion about City libraries, supporting and advising the preparations to open the Belle Haven Community Campus and advising on library policies and procedures. Other goals include analyzing and evaluating potential near-term capital improvements to the 800 Alma St. facility, effectively onboarding new Commission members, reviewing the departmental budget proposal to the City Council and advising on potential synergies with other City departments.

What follows is a high-level summary listing of topics the LC reviewed, advised, and/or recommended during the past year 2024-25:

- Updated LC work plan for 2024-25
- Selected new commission chair and vice-chair

- Formed an ad-hoc subcommittee that has worked to point the way toward the future of library services in Menlo Park by
 - Reviewing library programs and services
 - Working to benchmark Menlo Park against peer libraries nationally
 - Visiting eight local libraries to observe and learn from services in neighboring communities
 - Holding focus group sessions with users and library affinity groups
 - Benchmarked Menlo Park against peer libraries nationally
 - Conducted a review of literature on future library trends
 - Met with Councilmembers and library staff
 - Reviewed 2014-2017 Library Systems Improvement Project findings
- Reviewed and recommended updates to the Library and Community Services Department strategic plan 2024-26
- Reviewed and recommended the library and recreation programs community survey
- Held three joint meetings with the Parks and Recreation Commission
- Reviewed departmental policies
- Supported and advised staff on the library operations at the new Belle Haven Community Campus

In addition to the above topics, the LC provided a monthly forum for public transparency and input related to library services in Menlo Park, reviewed public suggestion box comments and responses, received departmental updates, advised on library program statistics and received staff presentations about library programs and services.

Impact on City Resources

As an advisory body to the City Council, the LC does not authorize resource allocations. City budget authorizations are the sole purview of the City Council. There is no substantive impact to the City's general fund related to the topics in this report.

Environmental Review

This report is not a project within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §§ 15378 and 15061(b)(3) as it will not result in any direct or indirect physical change in the environment.

Public Notice

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with the agenda items being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Attachments

- A. Draft presentation
- B. Hyperlink - City Council Policy #CC-24-004. <https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-managers-office/documents/city-clerk/cc-24-004-commission-committee.pdf>
- C. Hyperlink – City Council regular meeting minutes, Sept. 24, 2024. menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/agendas-and-minutes/city-council/2024-meetings/minutes/20240924-city-council-regular-minutes-approved.pdf
- D. Hyperlink – "Prepare Commission report out to City Council on 2024-25 work plan (item D-1). <https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/agendas-and-minutes/library-commission/2025->

[meetings/agendas/20250721_lc_agenda_packet.pdf](#)

Report prepared by:

Nick Szegda, Assistant Library and Community Services Director

Report reviewed by:

Sean S. Reinhart, Library and Community Services Director



****DRAFT****

LIBRARY COMMISSION UPDATE ON 2024-2025 WORK PLAN

MICHAEL HERRICK, CHAIR



Intergenerational story time at BHCC

LC WORK PLAN 2024-25 INCLUDES 10 GOALS

- Regular business – 5 goals – On target
 - Providing a forum for public information and discussion about City libraries
 - Onboarding new commission members
 - Receive staff presentations on library service areas and Commissioner liaison reports about affiliates
 - Advising on library procedures and policies
 - Maintain rolling schedule of agenda items



Noon Year's Eve attendees

LC WORK PLAN 2025-25 INCLUDES 10 GOALS

- 3 goals – Good progress.
- Commissioners working to be more effective in these areas
 - Supporting and advising the library program development and operations at the Belle Haven Community Campus
 - Reviewing LCS budget proposal
 - Advising on potential synergies with other departments

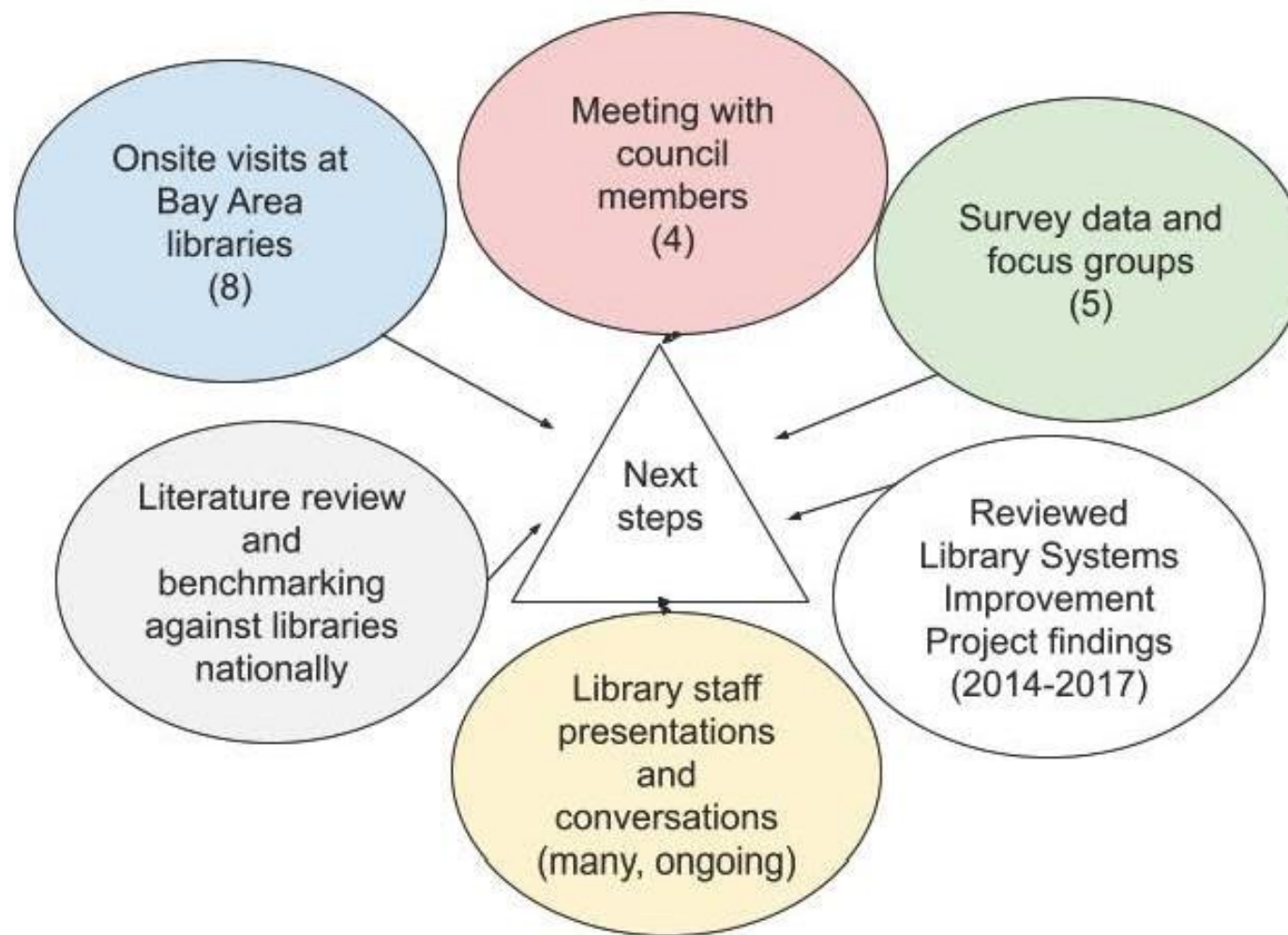
2 GOALS: Focus of an AD-HOC SUBCOMMITTEE



- Review library programs and services, identify potential service gaps for specific age groups or affinity groups, and advise to fill needs to create the “library of the future”
- Analyze and evaluate whether and how potential near term capital improvements to the 800 Alma St. facility may be addressed



SUBCOMMITTEE'S WORK OVER THE PAST YEAR





Maker space activities and Children's Library beetles

MOVING FORWARD

- The ad-hoc subcommittee's work will continue into the 2025-26 LC work plan
 - 1 [fill in during 8/18 meeting]
 - 2 [fill in during 8/18 meeting]
 - 3 [fill in during 8/18 meeting]
- Library Commission members look forward to continuing to support vibrant and relevant libraries for Menlo Park residents
- Thank you for your support!

THANK YOU



Musical performances at BHCC

ADDITIONAL COMMISSION ACTIVITIES

[MH note: Likely not keeping this slide in interest of time]

- Updated LC work plan
- Selected new Chair and Vice Chair
- Departmental policies reviewed
 - Updated collection development policy
 - Makerspace use policy
- Reviewed and recommended updates to the Library and Community Services department strategic plan 2024-26
- Held three joint meetings with the PRC



STAFF REPORT

City Council

Meeting Date:

8/18/2025

Staff Report Number:

LC-2025-038

Regular Business:

List of annually recurring Library Commission activities

Recommendation

City staff recommends that the Library Commission (LC) review and provide feedback on a list of annually recurring LC activities (Attachment A). Staff has updated the list to include activities that are required to be completed by the LC each year. Other activities that are not required but which the LC may place on its agendas over the course of any given year are tracked in a separate tentative agenda calendar that is reviewed and updated by the LC at every regular meeting.

Policy Issues

The LC advises the City Council on matters pertaining to the City's libraries. City Council policy CC-24-004 (Attachment B) defines the policies, procedures, roles, and responsibilities for the City's advisory bodies.

Background

On March 22, 2025, the City Council held its annual priority-setting workshop (Attachment C) and set their priorities for the coming 2025-26 fiscal year (Attachment D).

On April 21, 2025, the LC received a progress report on their 2024-25 work plan (Attachment E).

On June 16, 2025, the LC reviewed a calendar of annually recurring activities (Attachment F).

Analysis

The LC typically plans its work for the year using a number of tools and documents.

- City Council policy CC-23-004 (Attachment B) defines the policies, procedures, roles, and responsibilities for the City's advisory bodies.
- The City Council holds an annual priority setting meeting each year. The top five priorities for the upcoming fiscal year are listed on the priority setting web page.
- The City Council reviews and approves the LC work plan annually as a guiding direction for the LC's work in the coming year.
- The LC reviews a tentative agenda calendar at every regular meeting. The tentative agenda calendar contains a rolling 12 months of agenda topics past and planned. The tentative agenda calendar also includes some ongoing items (e.g., approval of minutes, ad-hoc subcommittee report outs).

Impact on City Resources

As an advisory body to the City Council, the LC does not authorize resource allocations. City budget

authorizations are the sole purview of the City Council. There is no substantive impact to the City's general fund related to the topics in this report.

Environmental Review

This report is not a project within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §§ 15378 and 15061(b)(3) as it will not result in any direct or indirect physical change in the environment. Click here to enter text.

Public Notice

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with the agenda items being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Attachments

- A. List of annually recurring LC activities
- B. Hyperlink - City Council Policy #CC-24-004. <https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-managers-office/documents/city-clerk/cc-24-004-commission-committee.pdf>
- C. Hyperlink - City Council agenda (item C-1), March 22, 2025.
<https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/2/agendas-and-minutes/city-council/2025-meetings/20250322/20250322-city-council-special-agenda-priorities.pdf>
- D. Hyperlink – City Council priority setting workshop page with top five goals listed.
<https://menlopark.gov/City-Council/City-Council-Priority-Setting-Workshop>
- E. Hyperlink – Library Commission agenda (item F-2), April 21, 2025.
https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/agendas-and-minutes/library-commission/2025-meetings/agendas/20250421_lc_agenda_packet.pdf
- F. Hyperlink – Library Commission agenda (item E-1), June 16, 2025.
https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/2/agendas-and-minutes/library-commission/2025-meetings/agendas/20250616_lc_agenda_packet.pdf

Report prepared by:
Nick Szegda, Assistant Library and Community Services Director

Report reviewed by:
Sean S. Reinhart, Library and Community Services Director

LIBRARY COMMISSION (LC)
List of annually recurring activities*
(*all dates are tentative and subject to change)

Month	Annually recurring activity
January	
February	
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission attendance report provided to City Council
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New LC members appointed by City Council Select new Chair & Vice Chair LC work plan prior year progress report
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Chair begins term
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study session: LC work plan for coming year
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study session: Update LC work plan for coming year
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair gives City Council LC prior year work plan progress report Recommend LC work plan for coming year
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Council approval of LC work plan for coming year
October	
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve schedule of LC meetings for following calendar year
December	

LIBRARY COMMISSION
TENTATIVE AGENDA SCHEDULE
August 18, 2025

MEETING DATE*	TENTATIVE AGENDA TOPICS**
March 17, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend policy: makerspace use guidelines Review draft community survey: library and recreation programs and facilities Department statistics and activities Ad-hoc subcommittee update
April 21, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation. Library outreach: Bringing the library to the community Select Library Commission Chair and Vice Chair Commission attendance report LC work plan progress update Department statistics and activities City of Menlo Park budget process and timeline Ad-hoc subcommittee report
May 28, 2025 (Joint meeting w/ PRC) (4 th Wednesday)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library and recreation programs survey results LCS department budget overview
June 16, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation: Community-submitted library card art/design List of annually recurring LC activities Prepare updates to the LC work plan 2025-26 Select LC Vice Chair Ad-hoc subcommittee update
July 21, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study session: Prepare a report-out to City Council on the LC work plan 2024-25 Consider assigning commissioner liaisons to library affinity groups Ad-hoc subcommittee summary of preliminary findings Draft of LC work plan for 2025-26 Future trends for libraries Library, recreation and parks survey - analysis and cross tabs
August 18, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study session: review and recommend ad-hoc subcommittee report out Recommend updates to the LC work plan 2025-26 List of annually recurring LC activities Recommend report out to City Council on the LC work plan 2024-25
September 15, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ad-hoc subcommittee update
October 20, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ad-hoc subcommittee update
November 17, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve the 2026 Library Commission meeting calendar
December 15, 2025 (Joint meeting w/ PRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year in review Open house / social
January 2026 TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
February 2026 TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Standing/ recurring agenda items (typically every meeting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve previous meeting's minutes Department activities and statistics Tentative agenda calendar Commissioner reports
Unscheduled future items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation: Library collection development

* Library Commission meetings are held at 6:30pm on the third Monday of the month unless otherwise specified.
** All dates and topics are tentative and subject to change