

Survey of Attitudes and Usage of the Durango Public Library To Inform Consideration Of Conversion To An Independent Library District

November 20, 2022

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Introduction

Section 1

Purpose of the Survey

The City of Durango operates the Durango Public Library with support from La Plata County. To ensure that the Library is meeting the needs and expectations of the community, City leadership has commissioned this survey to inform its understanding of the attitudes and usage of the Durango Public Library. In recognition of that, certain current and potential library services have been included in this review at the direction of City leadership.

About the Survey

This survey was conducted in September and October 2022 by telephone, electronic and in-person questionnaires. The survey focused on both registered voters of the affected portion of La Plata County as well as users of the Durango Public Library. The survey team obtained 465 responses including 227 in-person and 238 through telephone and electronic means. The margin of error for responses in this survey is +/- 5%.

About the Survey Team

Public Advisory Group is headquartered in Ketchum, Idaho, and provides local government agencies access to high-quality professional services. Our team of former public agency officials understands the operating environment for local government entities. Within that framework, we craft unique solutions to challenging issues for communities. Our team has extensive experience analyzing the creation of special purpose taxing districts and supporting such entities after inception.

Executive Summary

Section 2

Whether it is literature, digital content, story-telling, technical assistance from the Patent and Trademark Resource Center or simply a place to gather, the diverse offerings of the Durango Public Library make it a valuable asset to a wide spectrum of community members. In order to assess the attitudes and usage of the Library, the City has commissioned this study inform its future operating decisions. Based on the responses collected, the following observations are made regarding Library services.

Observations

- The Durango Public Library may increase its benefit to the community by engaging in additional outreach and marketing to highlight the diversity of services offered to the public. While the check-out of physical books, the most traditional library service, is most familiar to all visitors, the other services have significantly lower familiarity scores implying that many users are not too familiar with the services offered. However, all users have similar favorability scores which points to the benefit of increasing utilization.
- The Durango Public Library should explore opportunities to expand its public hours of operation. Nearly two-thirds of survey respondents desired public hours on either weekday evenings or Sunday afternoons. A targeted and well-publicized pilot program to observe actual usage practices will help determine the popularity of such options.

Analysis

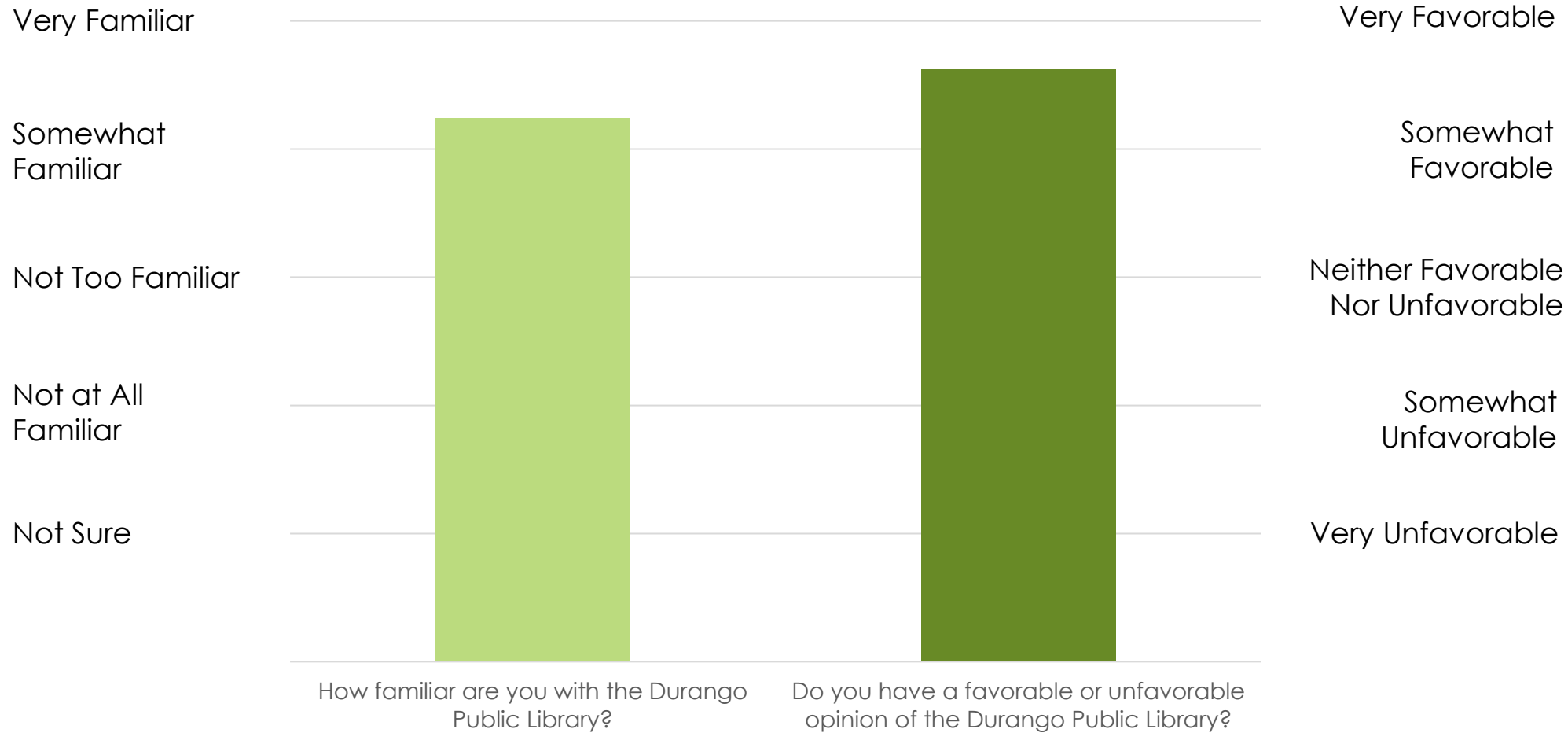
Surveys of public opinion are subject to certain biases. Most relevant to attitude and use surveys is the conformity bias, which is the tendency of certain respondents to provide answers that they perceive to be popular or that otherwise increase their conformity with perceived social norms. While this survey has been constructed to minimize the impact of biases, the conformity bias is difficult to overcome. The bias is likely to be present in questions regarding education, income and other topics which affect outward social perceptions, including intelligence (for which library usage may be a proxy). So, while the responses provided have been achieved through a rigorous process, the data on attitude and use may skew more positive by approximately 2% based on this bias.

Survey Results

Section 3

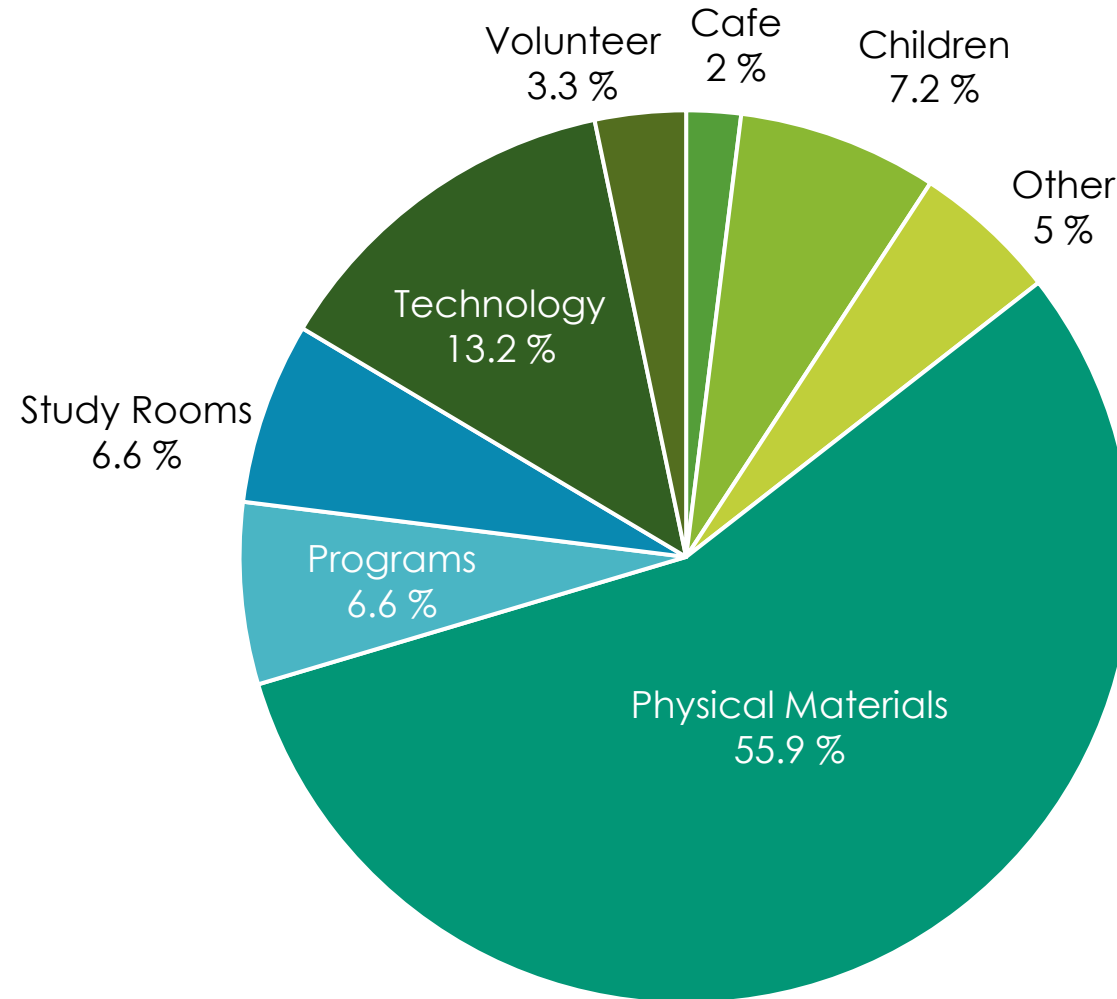
The results of the survey of public opinion regarding the Durango community's attitude and usage of the Durango Public Library are presented on the following pages.

Overall Familiarity and Opinion Of the Durango Public Library

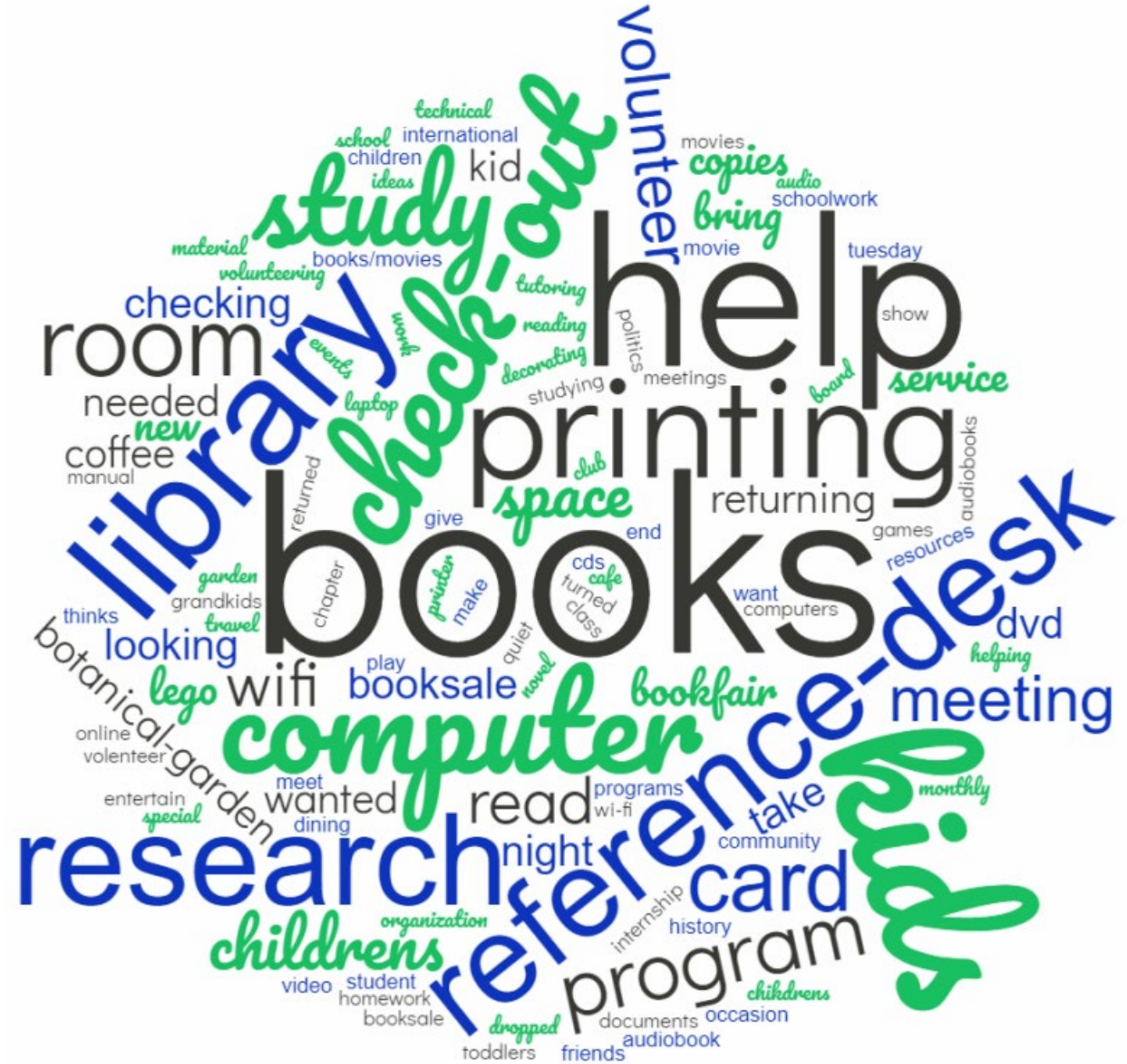


| | Familiarity Score | Favorability Score |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| All Responses (shown) | 4.2 | 4.6 |
| Frequent Users | 4.6 | 4.8 |

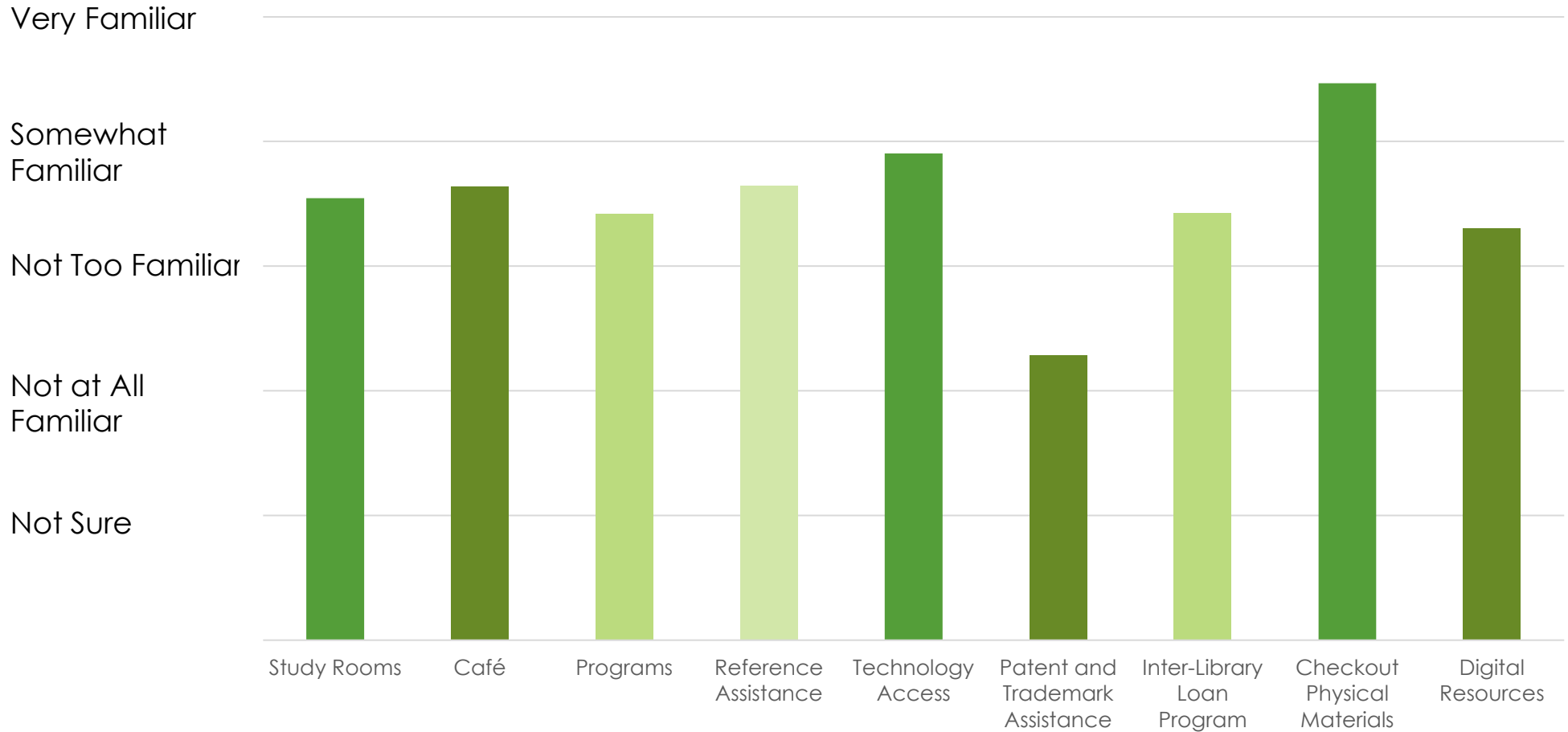
Why Does the Community Visit the Durango Public Library?



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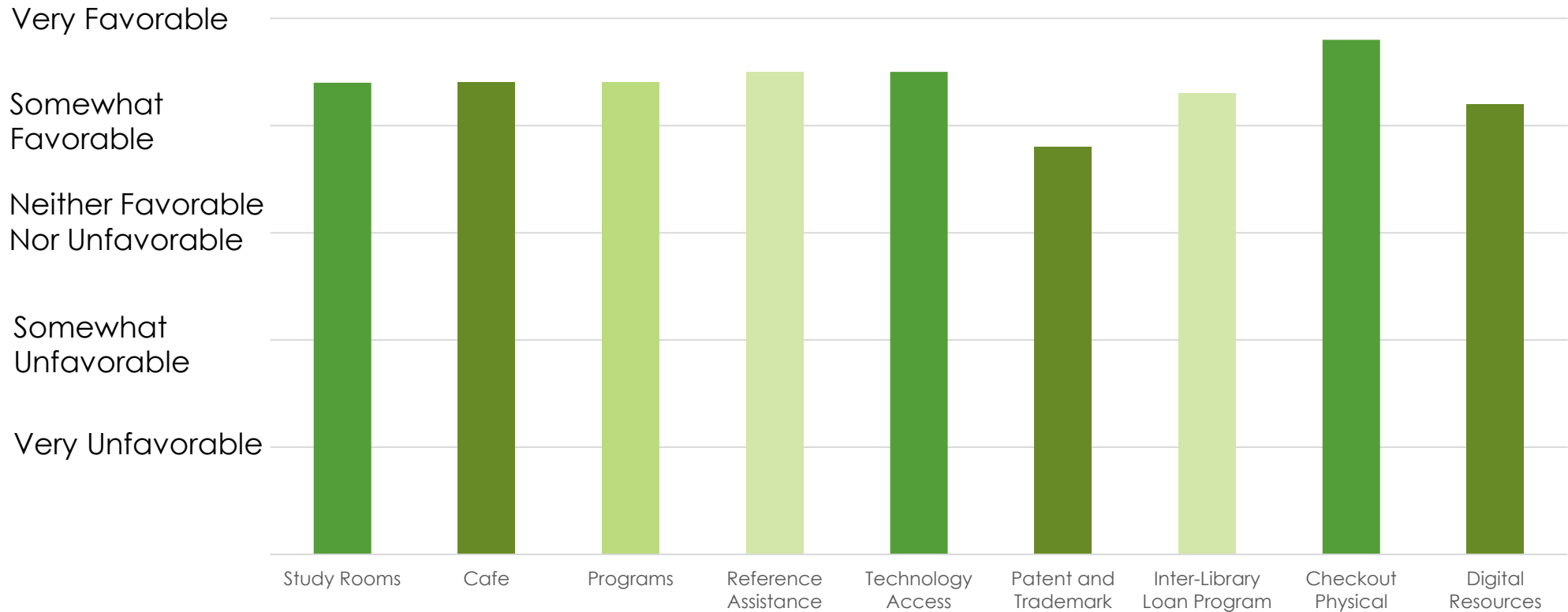


Familiarity With Certain Durango Public Library Services



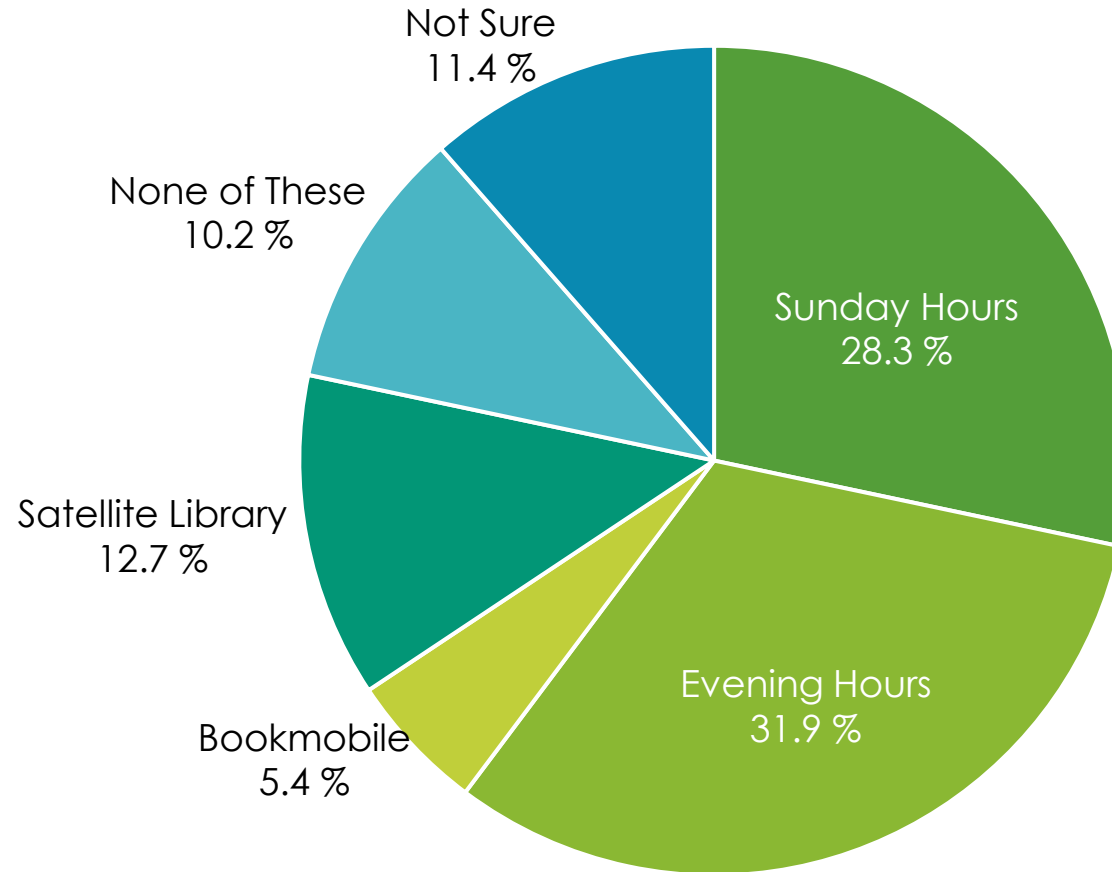
| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| All Responses (shown) | 3.5 | 3.6 | 3.4 | 3.6 | 3.9 | 2.3 | 3.4 | 4.5 | 3.3 |
| Frequent Users | 3.6 | 3.8 | 3.7 | 3.9 | 4.1 | 2.3 | 3.6 | 4.7 | 3.5 |

Opinion Of Certain Durango Public Library Services



| | Study Rooms | Cafe | Programs | Reference Assistance | Technology Access | Patent and Trademark | Inter-Library Loan Program | Checkout Physical | Digital Resources |
|-----------------------|-------------|------|----------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| All Responses (shown) | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.5 | 3.7 | 4.2 | 4.7 | 4.1 |
| Frequent Users | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 3.8 | 4.3 | 4.8 | 4.2 |

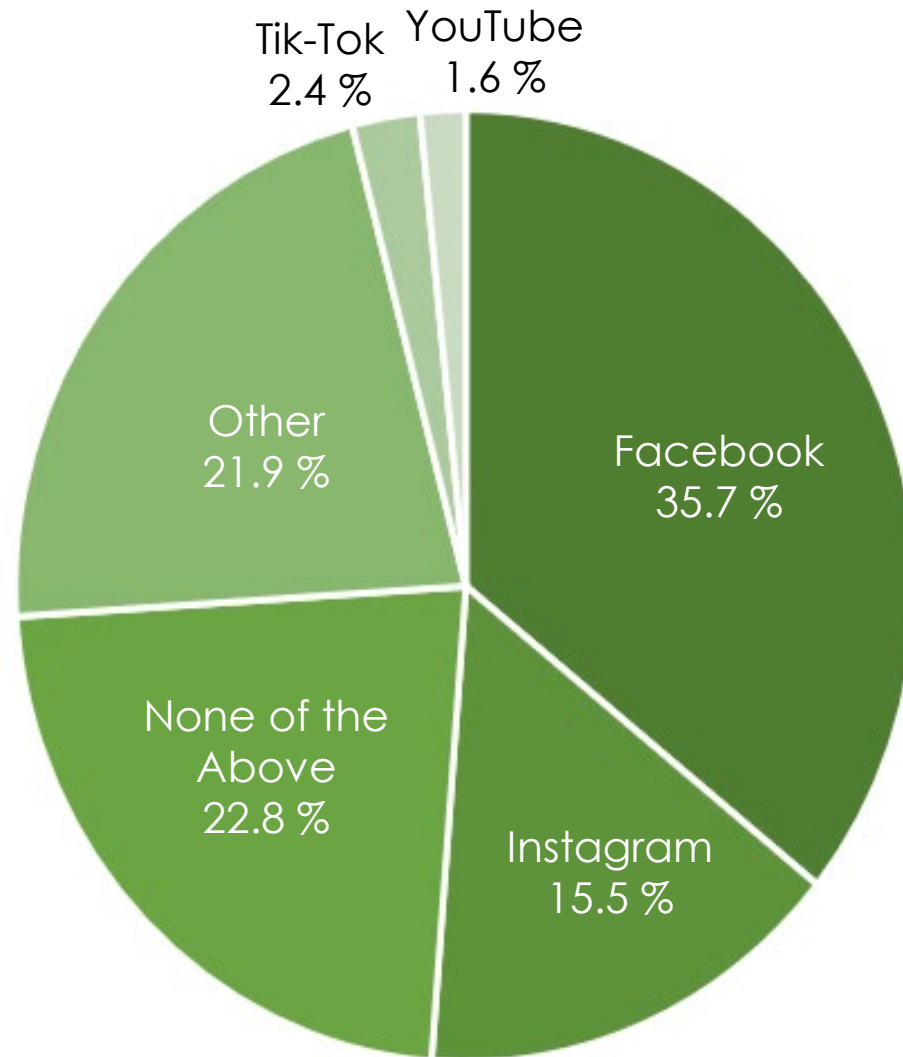
Preference for Expanded Library Services



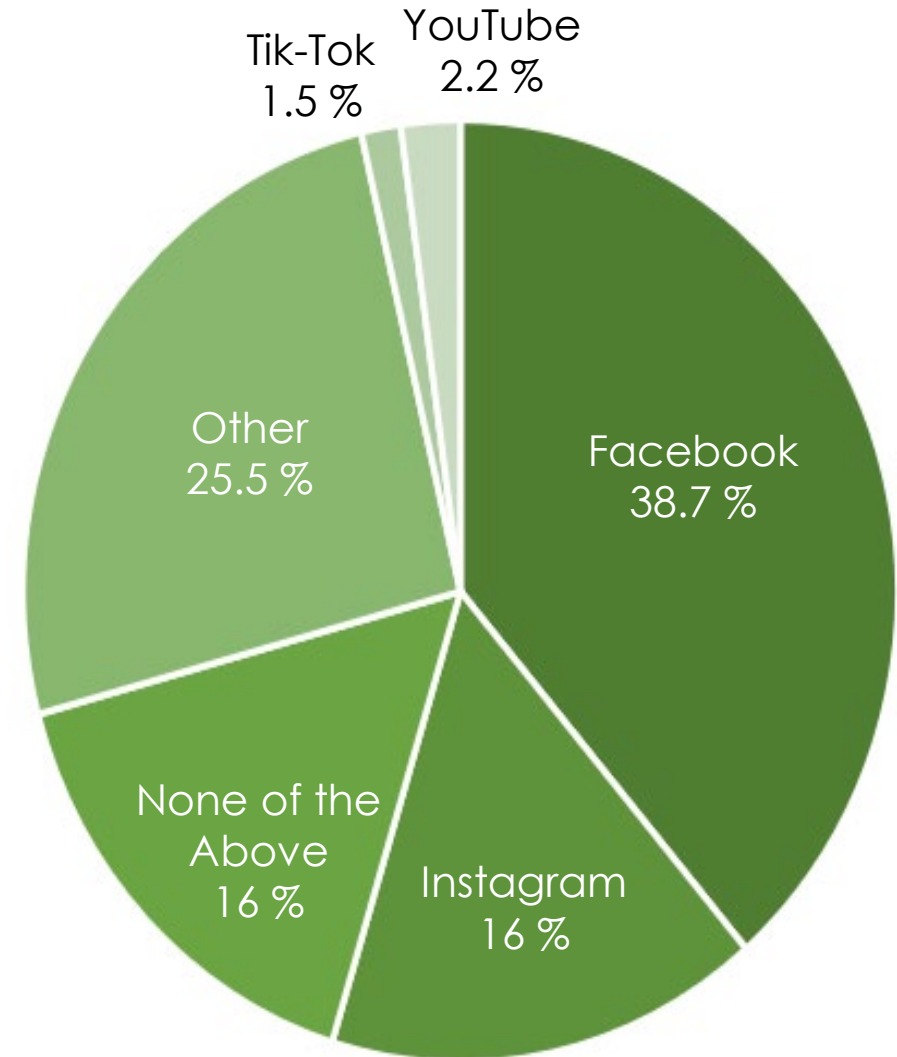
| | Sunday Hours | Evening Hours | Bookmobile | Satellite Library | None of These | Not Sure |
|----------------|--------------|---------------|------------|-------------------|---------------|----------|
| All Responses | 28.3 % | 31.9 % | 5.4 % | 12.7 % | 10.2 % | 11.4 % |
| Frequent Users | 35.0 % | 33.4 % | 4.9 % | 12.2 % | 9.8 % | 4.9 % |
| Likely Voters | 29.7 % | 29.7 % | 6.5 % | 12.3 % | 11.6 % | 10.1 % |

Social Media Platforms Used for Community News & Events

Frequent Users



Likely Voters



Observations & Recommendations

Section 4

Observations

1. While familiarity with Library services is higher among recent users, the favorability of those services is less affected by frequency of use. That is, all users generally have the same opinion of services (favorability scores) as frequent users.
2. Expanded hours in the evenings and on Sundays are the two most favored service expansion proposals that were considered in the survey. These options are favored by both frequent users and likely voters at generally the same level of the overall population.
3. Facebook is the primary social media site utilized by both frequent library users as well as likely voters.

Recommendations

1. Additional marketing of certain services may increase familiarity of those services amongst possible user groups. Such marketing should be initially targeted to less frequent users to increase their level of familiarity to match more frequent users. However, all Library users would benefit from increased awareness of services based on current familiarity levels.
2. There is significant interest in expanding the public hours of operation of the Durango Public Library, both in the evenings as well as on the weekends. City leadership should evaluate opportunities for offering such services within both the current operating model as well as any future operating model that may exist.