



**CRITICAL INSIGHTS**  

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**RESEARCH FOR PRECISE PRAGMATIC DIRECTION**

# *Cape Elizabeth Resident Survey*

## Summary Report of Findings

**Prepared for:**  
**The Thomas Memorial Library**

November 2008

Focus Groups • Surveys • Public Opinion Polling

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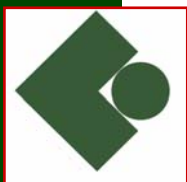
# **Executive Summary**



# Executive Summary

## Overall Perspectives Concerning Thomas Memorial Library

- Residents overwhelmingly report satisfaction with the Thomas Memorial Library.
  - While, overall, 9-in-10 residents reported being satisfied with the Library, over half of residents reported being “very satisfied”.
- Not surprisingly, satisfaction with the Library appears linked to heavier utilization of the facility, with those who use the Library more frequently - more than one visit per month - noting higher levels of satisfaction with the Library than residents who claim that they use the Library less frequently.
- Importantly, however, Cape Elizabeth residents – even those who do not use the Library – do believe having a library in the town is important.
  - Indeed, 8-in-10 residents feel that having a public library is important, with close to two-thirds (64%) of those polled viewing the presence of a public library in a community as “very important.”
  - Even among households where no one uses the Thomas Memorial Library, fully half reported that having a public library is important.
- When residents were asked what the Library’s most important role is in the Cape Elizabeth community, the most frequent response was that the Library’s role should be to ‘support children’s education and development.’
  - Interestingly, residents with children in the household were not significantly more likely to cite this as the Library’s most important role.
  - Approximately one-fifth of residents each cited “being an available resource for the whole community” (20%), “providing reading material, books, and other literature” (19%), and “serving as a resource center” (18%).



# Executive Summary

## Library Utilization

- Close to 8-in-10 (78%) residents say that at least one person in their household uses the Library, and 8-in-10 of those households use the Library at least once per month.
  - Suggesting the importance of the facility as a resource for the community's children, roughly 9-in-10 of the households with children report that they currently take advantage of the Library.
- While a large proportion of residents claim to use the Library on a regular basis, frequency of utilization varies among the residents polled.
  - Of those who answered that someone in their household uses the Library, approximately equal proportions of residents said that someone in their house hold uses the library once per week (28%), 2 to 4 times per month (26%), or once per month (27%.)
- Close to 3-in-4 residents polled claim they are using the Library with the same frequency or more frequently than they did a year ago.
  - Residents who claim to be using the Library *more* frequently, overwhelmingly responded that they use the library at least once per month. In contrast, half of residents who said they use the Library *less* than they did a year ago say they are currently use the library less than once per month.
  - “Lifestyle changes” was the primary reason given by residents claiming to use the Library both more and less frequently than they did a year ago.
  - When asked to indicate what services the Library could offer that would increase their usage, most residents (36%) replied “none” - they are happy the way it is - or “don’t know,” with one-quarter of residents unable to provide suggestions.
- Residents overwhelmingly responded that they typically use the Thomas Memorial Library to borrow books.



# Executive Summary

## Contributing to the Library

- As most residents polled believe that the Library receives funding from public sources (e.g., the Town of Cape Elizabeth), it is notable that just one-third report having made a financial donation to the Thomas Memorial Library or the Thomas Memorial Library Foundation.
  - Looking ahead, respondents who use the Library more frequently, those who have made a financial donation in the past, those making \$100,000 per year or more, women, and residents with children in the household were more likely to say they would make a donation in the future.
  - Six-in-ten residents surveyed said that whether donations went to support a particular project or to general fundraising efforts would not affect their decision to donate.
- Importantly, more than half the residents polled claim that they would likely support the Library if the organization's leaders were to document a compelling need to expand in the next five years.
  - Support for expansion is most robust among more frequent patrons, residents who have donated financially in the past, and among residents with children.
- Additionally, when respondents were asked how likely they would be to support several Library upgrades, close to 6-in-10 would support the Thomas Memorial Library's investment in "children's facilities," closely followed by "technology upgrades" and "on-line services."
  - Support for other tested upgrade concepts was more limited, with a higher proportion of residents saying they would not support the upgrades than would support them.



# **Report of Findings**



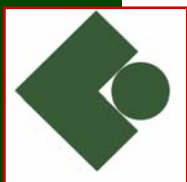
# Introduction



# Background and Objectives

- In order to assess residents of Cape Elizabeth's attitudes regarding library usage and services currently offered by the Thomas Memorial Library (TML), the Library enlisted the services of Critical Insights— a Portland-based marketing research firm — to execute a cross-sectional survey among randomly selected Cape Elizabeth residents.
- Additionally, the Library expressed interest in identifying support among different groups of residents for proposed investments and expansion efforts.
- Within these broad objectives, the specific informational aims of the research included:
  - Assessment of the attitudes and preferences of residents towards the Library, and the services and amenities it provides;
  - Development of a community profile of TML in terms of evaluating current patterns of library utilization by demographic subgroup, and perceptions of the overall importance of TML to the community as an educational and cultural center in Cape Elizabeth;
  - Identification for current levels of financial giving in the community and awareness of the TML Foundation;
  - Demonstration of support for future investments and expansion efforts;





# Methodological Overview

Sample Size	Data Collection Period	Margin of Error		Refusal Rate	Length of Interview
		90%	95%		
300	October 27-November 3, 2008	4.8	5.7	1.3%	12 mins

- The survey instrument was developed by Critical Insights in collaboration with the project team from the Thomas Memorial Library.
- Interviews were conducted by telephone from the Critical Insights Information Center employing the company's computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) system.
- Refusal rates were just 1% overall, indicating that the sample was not tainted by non-response error.
- Data were statistically weighted in order to bring the final sample into appropriate demographic alignment (based upon the proportional distribution of residents in the Town of Cape Elizabeth, using 2006 Census data projections).
  - Results presented in this report are based on weighted data.



# Research Findings



*General Perceptions of the  
Thomas Memorial Library*



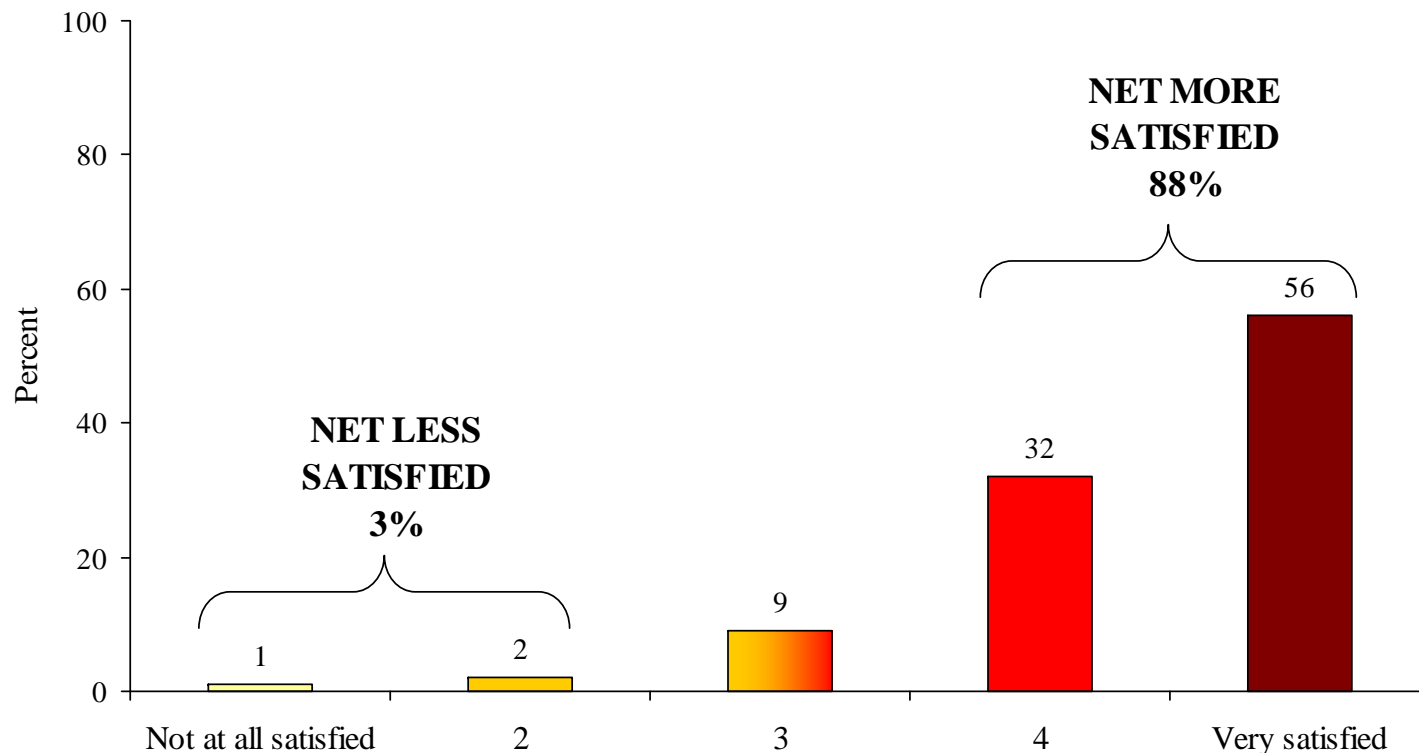
# General Perceptions of Cape Elizabeth and Its Library

- Residents appear very satisfied with living in the Town of Cape Elizabeth.
  - This result is robust as close to 9-in-10 residents polled report being satisfied with living in the Town of Cape Elizabeth, and more than one half of those surveyed claiming to be “very satisfied.”
  - Only 3% of those surveyed are dissatisfied with living in the Town of Cape Elizabeth.
- Similar positive feedback is observed with respect to residents’ level of satisfaction with the Thomas Memorial Library.
  - As with satisfaction levels for the Town, 9-in-10 residents report being satisfied with the Library, with over half reporting being “very satisfied.”
  - Not surprisingly, residents who claim that someone in their household uses the Thomas Memorial Library with greater frequency express higher levels of satisfaction for the Library than do residents who claim that someone in their household uses the Library less often (i.e. less than once per month.)



# Level of Satisfaction with Living in the Town of Cape Elizabeth

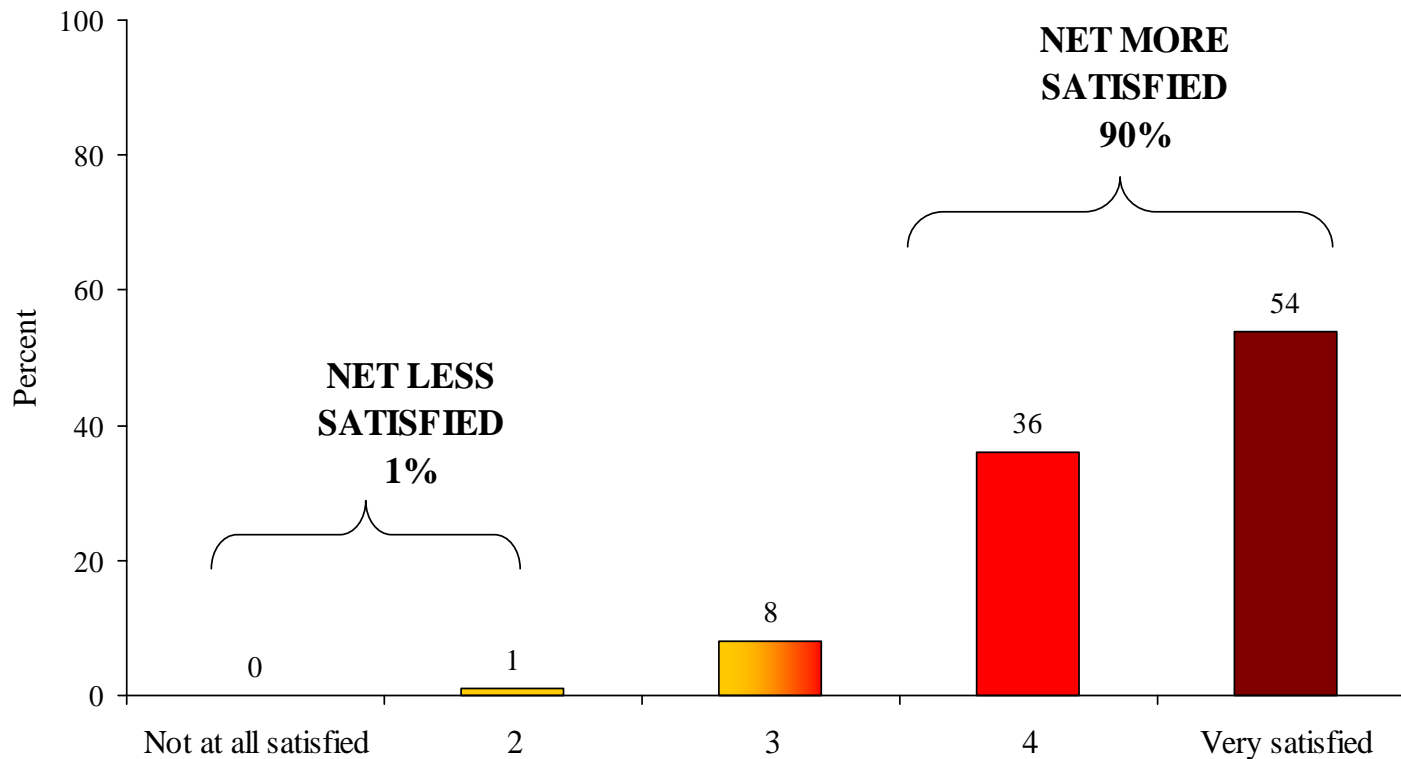
*Using a scale of 1 to 5, where a 1 means “not at all satisfied” and a 5 means “very satisfied,” how satisfied are you with living in the Town of Cape Elizabeth?*





# Level of Satisfaction with Thomas Memorial Library

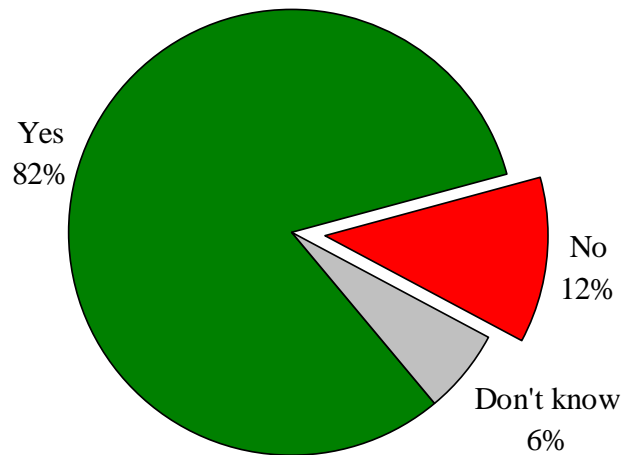
*Using a scale of 1 to 5, where a 1 means “not at all satisfied” and a 5 means “very satisfied,” how satisfied are you with the Thomas Memorial Library?*





# Perceived Convenience of Library Hours

*Currently, the Thomas Memorial Library is open 55 hours a week. Considering your own schedule, are the current Library hours convenient for you?*



Why is that? *	n=36
Not open late enough	69%
Not open enough on weekends	27
Travel a lot	7
Don't know	7

\* Based on respondents who reported that the Library's current hours are not convenient. Multiple responses accepted.

- A majority of respondents feel that the Library's current hours of operation are convenient.
- Only 12% of respondents indicate that the hours are not convenient for them, with later evening hours being the most common suggestion offered by this subgroup of residents.



# General Perceptions on the Role of Thomas Memorial Library

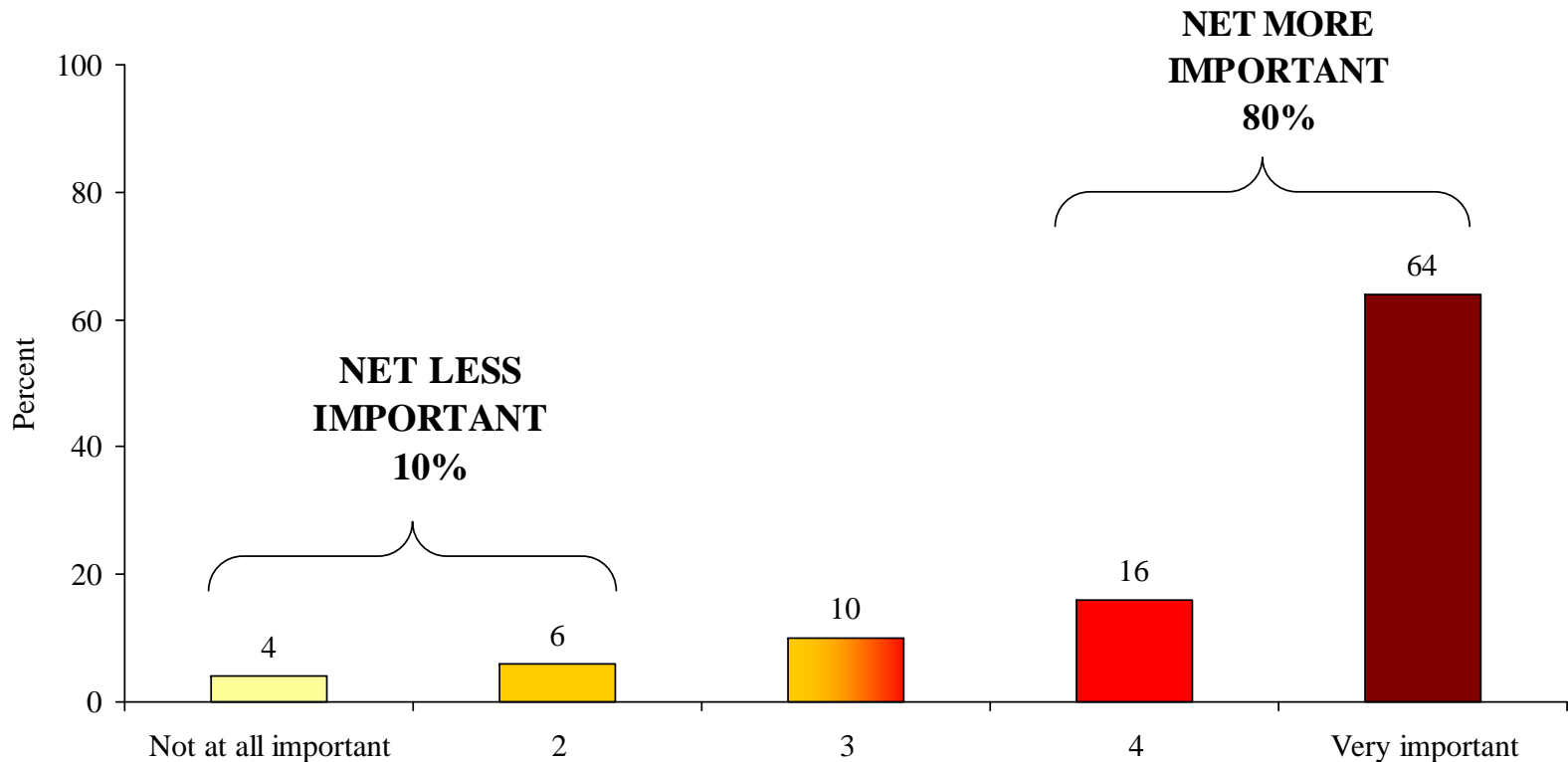
- Overall, fully 8-in-10 residents feel that having a public library is important, with close to two-thirds reporting the presence of a library in a community is “very important.”
  - Residents who use the library once a month or more were significantly more likely to say that having a library in the community is “very important.”
  - Interestingly, among residents who claim that someone in their household “never” uses the Thomas Memorial Library, fully half report that having a public library in the Town is important, and 4-in-10 report that having a library is “very important.”
- When asked to indicate what they consider to be the most important roles that the Thomas Memorial Library plays in their community, residents’ most common response was “supporting children’s education and development,”
  - Notably, residents who say they never use the library were significantly more likely to cite this as the Library’s most important role.





# Perceived Importance of Having a Public Library in Cape Elizabeth

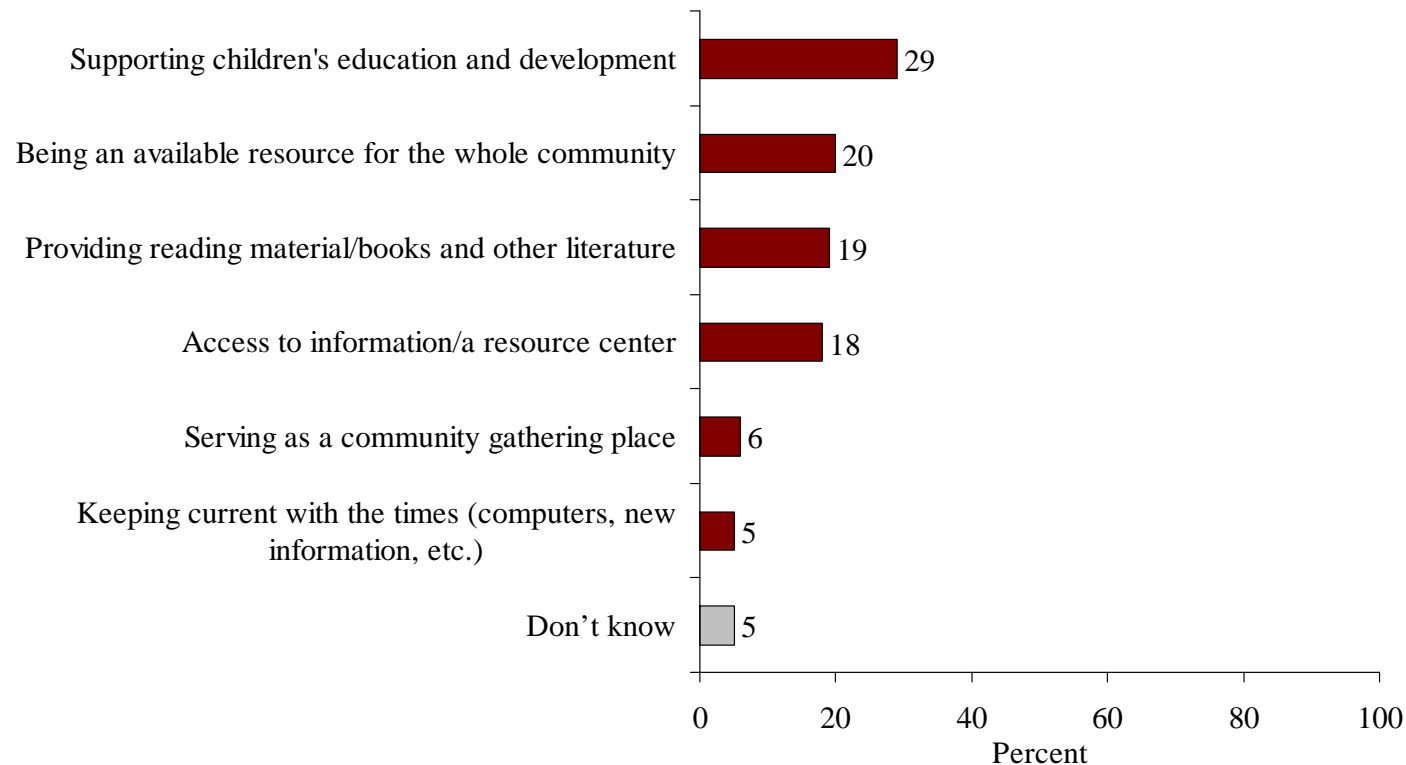
*Using a scale of 1 to 5, where a 1 means “not at all important” and a 5 means “very important,” how important is it to you to have a public library in the Town of Cape Elizabeth?*





# Role of the Thomas Memorial Library in the Community

*What do you consider to be the most important role that the Thomas Memorial Library plays in the Cape Elizabeth Community? \**



\* Only most common responses shown. All responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations.



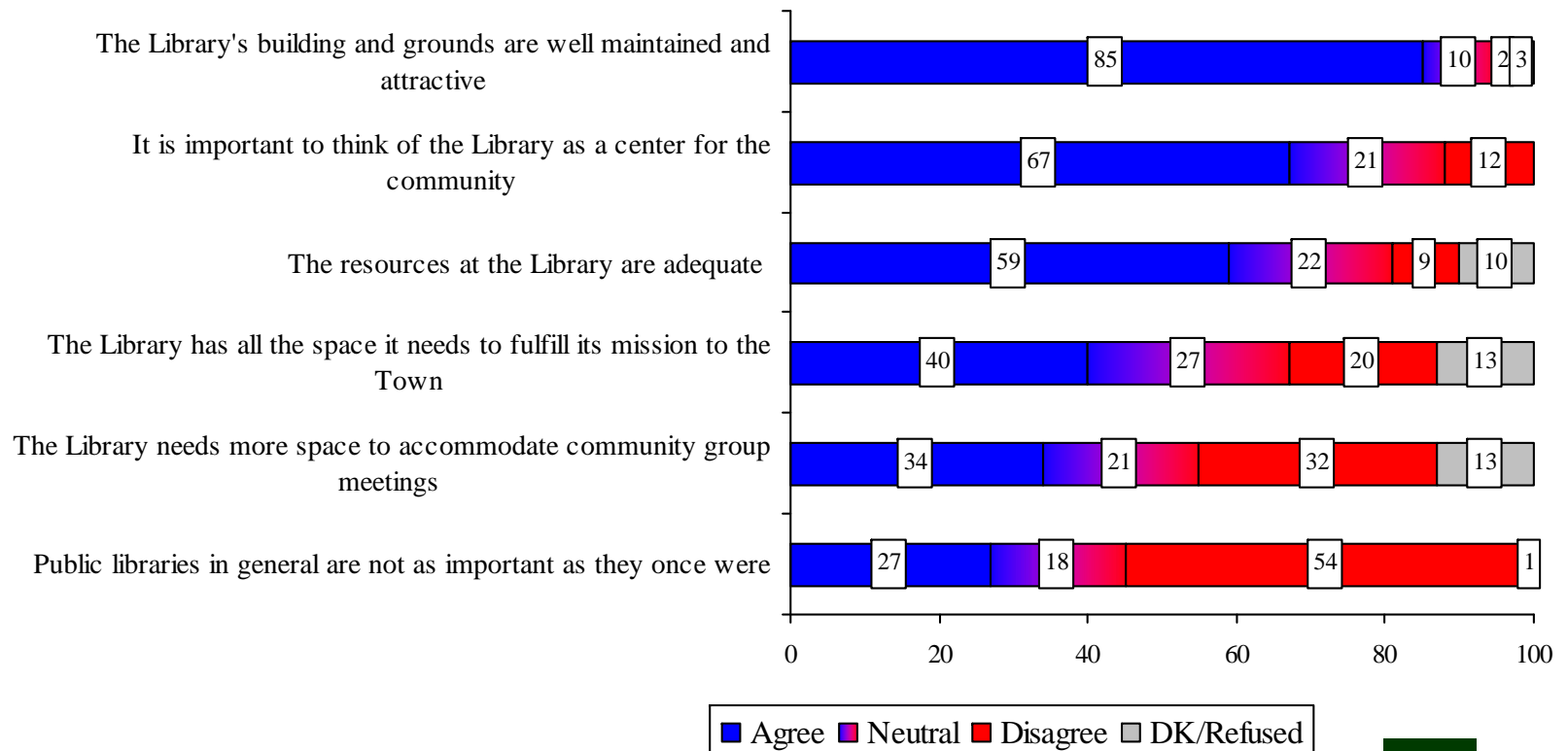
# Perceptions of Attributes of Thomas Memorial Library

- Respondents were asked to consider a variety of statements and subsequently indicate the degree to which those statements describe their perceptions of the Thomas Memorial Library.
  - Overall, Cape Elizabeth residents are overwhelmingly in agreement that “*the Library’s building and grounds are well maintained and attractive*” (85%), while another two-thirds also agree that “*it is important to think of the Library as a center for the community*” (67%). About 6-in-10 believe that “*the resources at the Library are adequate for the Town*” (59%.)
  - Perspectives were quite mixed about other key measurements regarding space needs, with sizable blocs of residents polled agreeing, disagreeing, or maintaining neutrality.
    - In addition, statements regarding space needs garnered the largest proportion of residents responding ‘don’t know’ (13%.)
    - Residents who have made financial donations to the Library in the past were significantly more likely to disagree that the Library has sufficient space to fulfill the Town’s needs
  - Conversely, the statement with which residents are most likely to disagree concerning the Thomas Memorial Library is that “*public libraries in general are not as important as they once were*” (54%.)



# Agreement with Statements Concerning Thomas Memorial Library

*Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about the Thomas Memorial Library using a scale of 1 to 5, where a 1 means “completely disagree” and a 5 means “completely agree.”*





# *Thomas Memorial Library Usage*



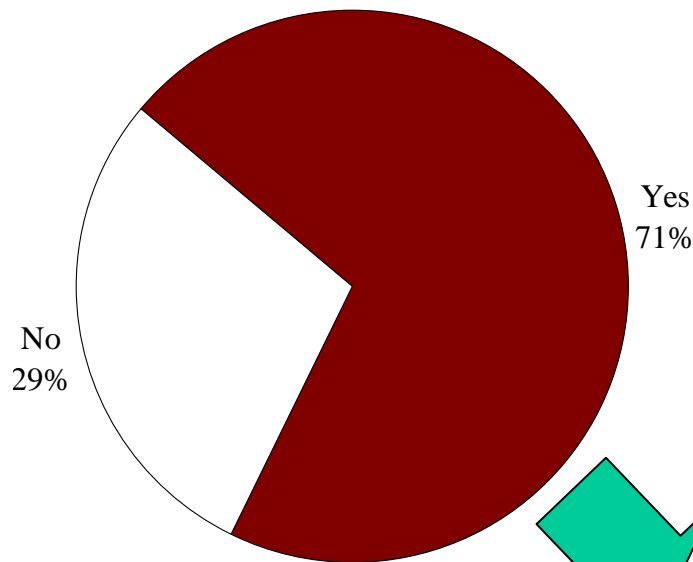
# Current Usage of Thomas Memorial Library

- Fully 7-in-10 of the individual Cape Elizabeth residents polled claim that they currently use the Town's Library.
  - Importantly, 86% of residents who said they have made a financial donation to the library in the past claim to currently use the library.
  - Women, residents under age 55, and residents with children in the household are significantly more likely to report using the Library.
- Six-in-ten residents said at least one other member of their household uses the Thomas Memorial Library.
  - Residents who use the library at least once per month, and residents with children in the household were significantly more likely to report that at least one other member of their family uses the library.
- Overall, close to 8-in-10 residents said that *someone in their household* uses the Library.
  - Of those households who use the Library, 8-in-10 use it at least once per month.
  - Those who have children in the household (35%), those who have made a financial donation to the library (37%), and those who have lived in Cape Elizabeth for less than 10 years (42%) were significantly more likely to indicate that someone in their household currently uses the Library *once per week or more*.
- More than one-fifth of residents (22%) said that no one in their household uses the library.

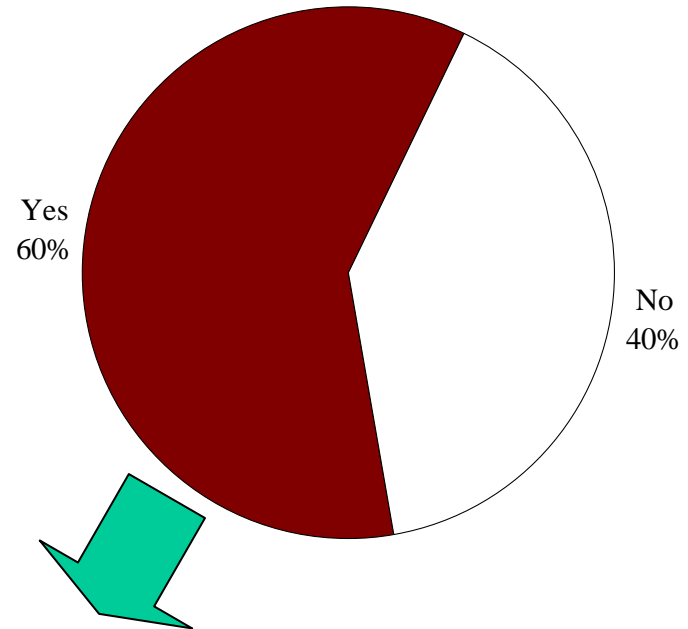


# Self-Reported Usage of Thomas Memorial Library

*Do you currently use the Thomas Memorial Library?*



*Do any other members of your household use the Thomas Memorial Library?*

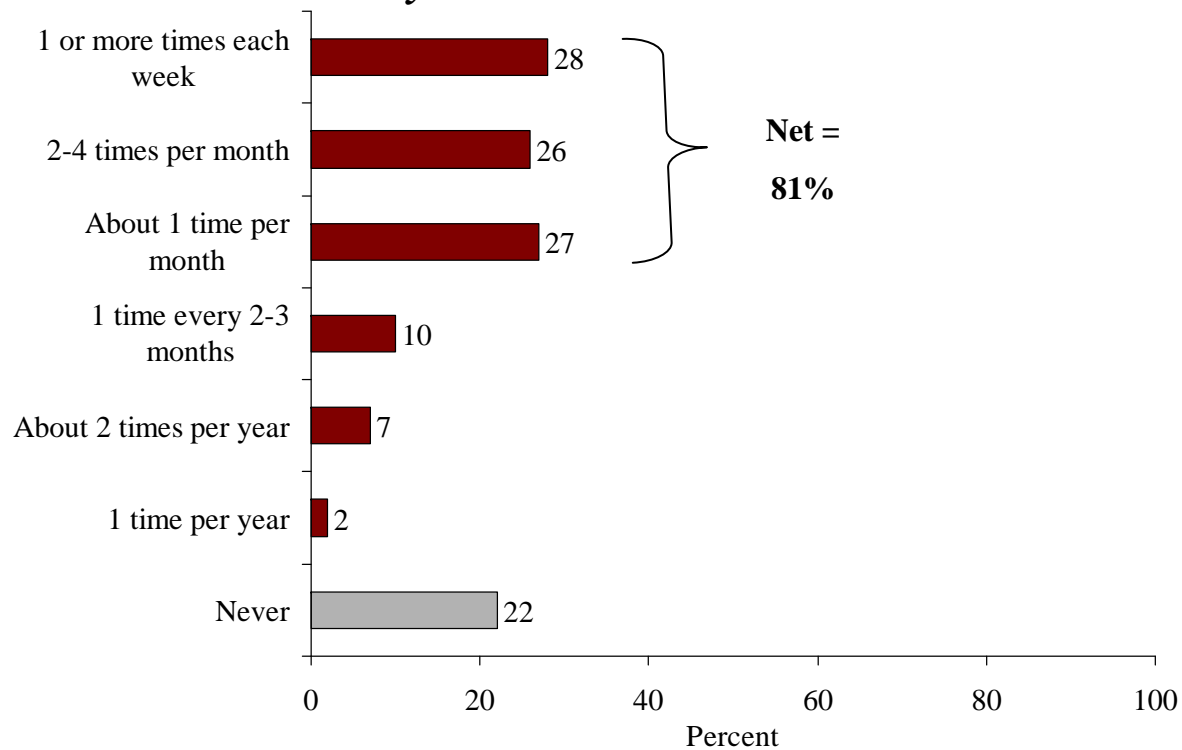


**Proportion of households that use the Library = 78%**



# Frequency of Using Thomas Memorial Library

*Approximately how often would you say that someone in your household uses the Thomas Memorial Library? \**



\* Based on respondents who reported that someone in their household uses the Cape Elizabeth Library.





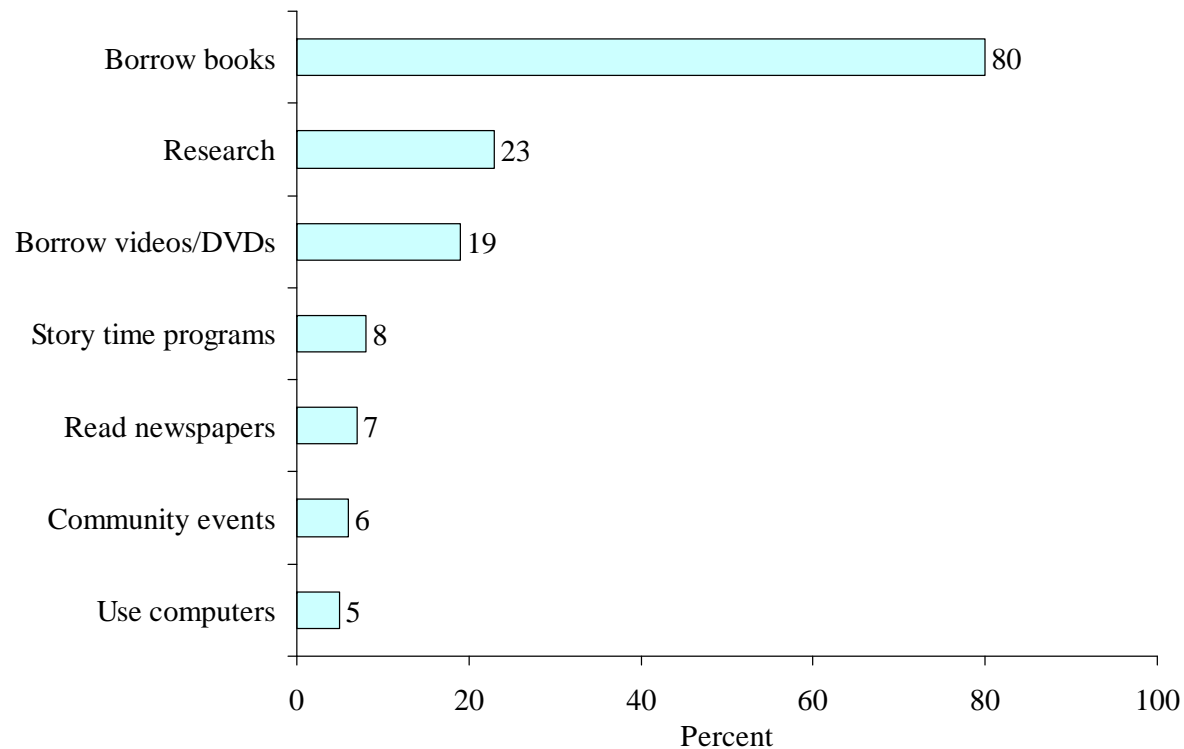
# Current Usage of Thomas Memorial Library

- Fully 8-in-10 residents polled claim that they typically “borrow books” when using the Library, close to one-fourth said that they use the Library for “research,” and approximately one-fifth reported using the facility to “borrow videos/DVDs.”
  - Residents who use the library at least once per week were significantly more likely to say they use the library to borrow videos or DVDs, with more than 4-in-10 saying they use the Library for this purpose.
  - Residents who use the library a couple times a month or less, are more likely to use the library for research purposes than are residents who visit the library weekly.
- When asked to identify their sources of information concerning the programs or services available at the Library, the most commonly cited channels through which residents obtain information is “visiting the Library” (44%) or “on-line” (23%).
  - As expected, residents who said they never use the library make up a significant portion of residents who said they “do not find out” about happenings at the Library.



# Reasons for Using Thomas Memorial Library

*What do you or other members of your household typically use the Thomas Memorial Library for?\**

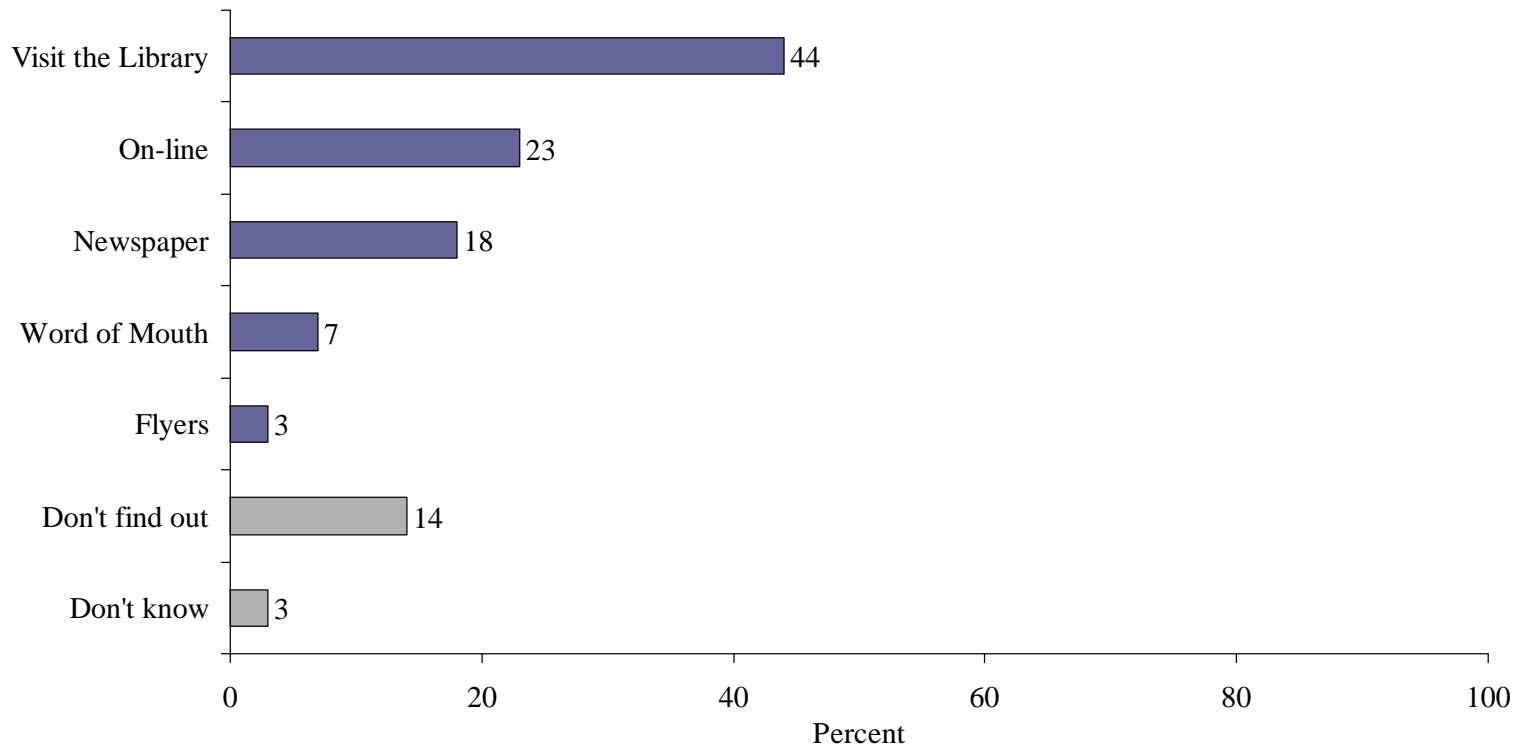


\* Based on respondents who reported that they use the Cape Elizabeth Library. Multiple responses accepted. The remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations.



# Current Channels for Learning about Library Offerings

*Currently, how do you find out about what is available at the Thomas Memorial Library?\**



\* Multiple responses accepted. The remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations.



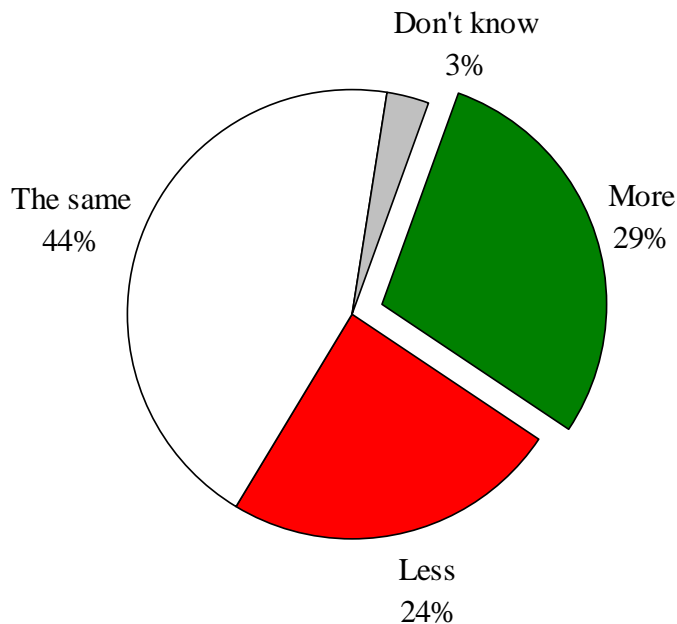
# Changes in Usage of Thomas Memorial Library

- More than 4-in-10 of those residents polled (44%) indicate that they use the Thomas Memorial Library about the same amount as they did the previous year.
  - However, 3-in-10 residents claim that they use the Library “more” often than they did last year, with half of these residents noting that a “lifestyle change” is the primary reason for increased usage of the Library.
  - Conversely, roughly one-quarter of those polled claim to be using the Library “less” than they did last year, with lifestyle changes (34%) and lack of time (28%), being the two most commonly reported reasons for residents’ decreased usage of the Library.
- When asked to indicate what programs or services the Library could offer that might increase their usage of the facility, responses were highly fragmented.
  - The largest proportion of residents (36%) said there were no programs or services that would increase their library usage, and fully one-quarter of residents said they “don’t know.”



# Shifts in Frequency of Library Usage – *More Frequently*

*Do you find that you are using the Thomas Memorial Library more or less frequently than you did a year ago?*



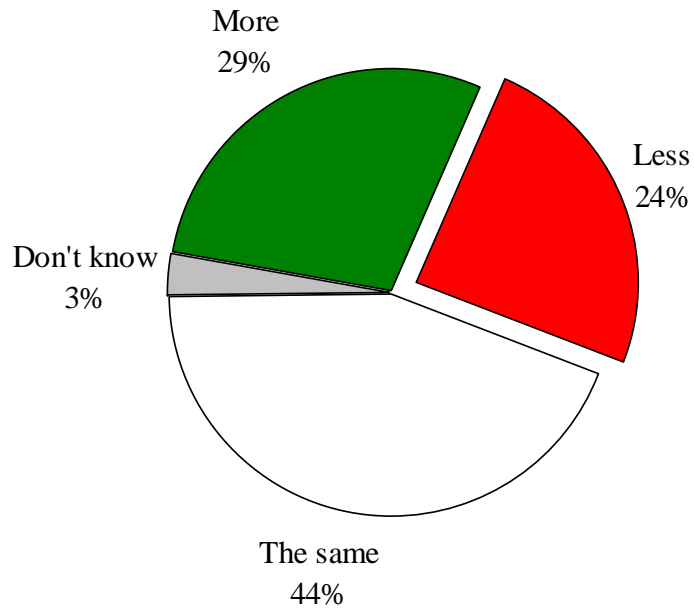
Why is that? (More Frequently)*	n=65
Lifestyle changes	49%
Economic reasons	17
Programs for kids	13
Now more aware of library and resources available	8
Use CDs, DVDs, tapes and videos	6
Other	8
Don't know	5

\* Based on respondents who indicated that they are using the Library more frequently than they did a year ago. Multiple responses accepted. The remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations.



# Shifts in Frequency of Library Usage – *Less Frequently*

*Do you find that you are using the Thomas Memorial Library more or less frequently than you did a year ago?*



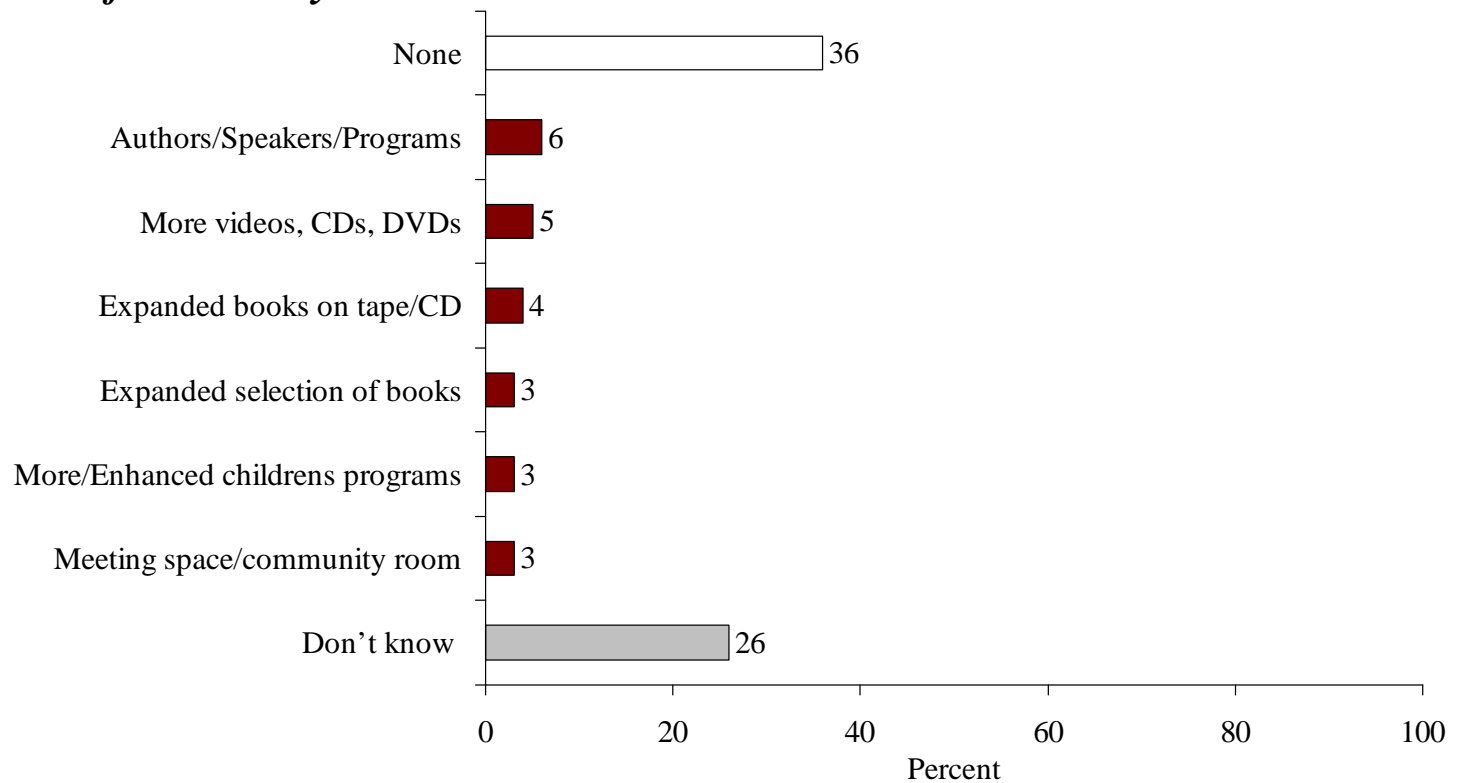
Why is that? (Less Frequently)*	n=56
Lifestyle changes	34%
Too busy	28
Nothing we need there	15
Buy books instead	6
Other	14
Don't know	3

\* Based on respondents who indicated that they are using the Library less frequently than they did a year ago. Multiple responses accepted. The remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations.



# Programs and Service Which Might Increase Library Usage

*What particular programs or services could the Library offer that would increase your use of the Library?\**



\* The remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations. Multiple responses accepted.



# Importance of Library Attributes

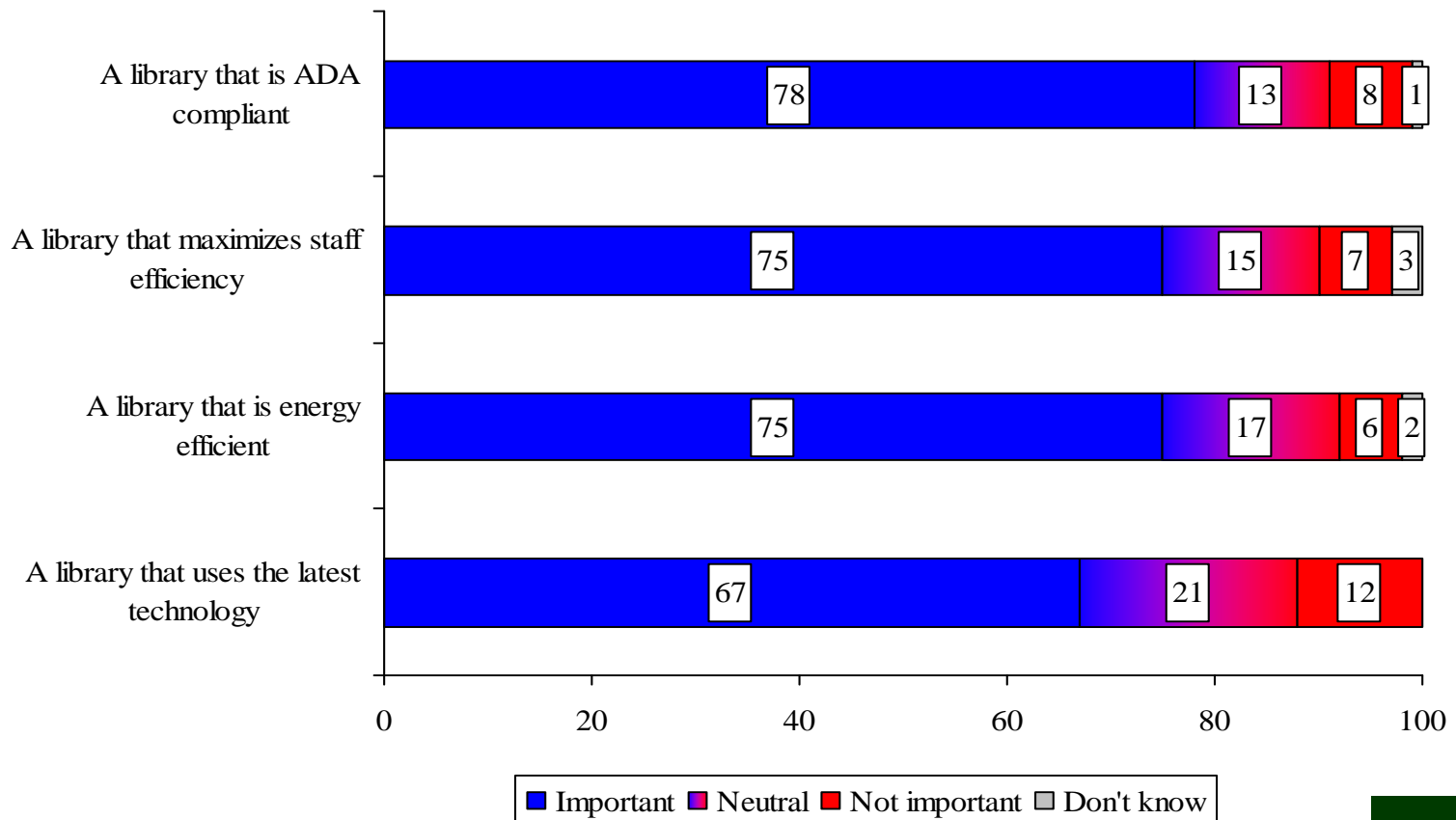
- When asked to rate a series of library attributes, residents, even those who say they never use the library, overwhelmingly rated each attribute as important.
  - More than three-quarters of residents said it is important to them that their library be ADA compliant.
    - Residents without children in the household were significantly more likely to respond that it is ‘very important.’
  - Three-quarters of residents responded that it is important that their library be energy efficient and to maximize staff efficiency.
    - Women were significantly more likely than men to say that it is ‘very important’ that their community library maximize staff efficiency *and* be energy efficient.
  - Though still important to Cape Elizabeth residents, technology demands are rated as comparatively lower in importance than the previous attributes: when asked, two-thirds said it was important that their library use the latest technology. One-in-eight rated this attribute as unimportant.





# Importance of Library Attributes

*Using a scale of 1 to 5 where a 1 means “not at all important” and a 5 means “very important,” how important do you rate each of the following:*





*Perspectives on Contributions to the  
Thomas Memorial Library*



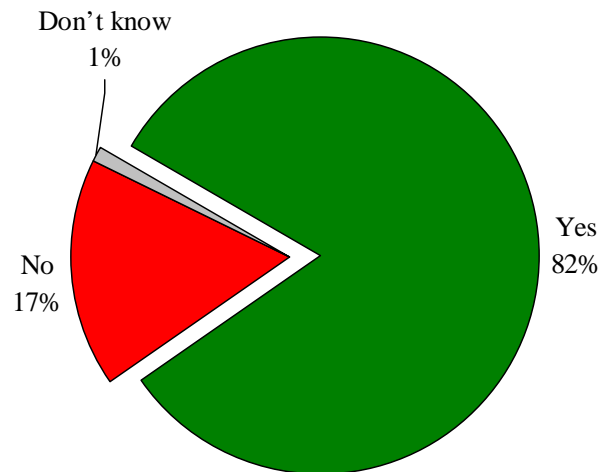
# Perspectives on Contributions to Charitable Organizations

- More than 8-in-10 residents polled claim that they currently make donations to non-profit organizations in the area.
  - Residents age 45 to 64 were significantly more likely to make donations to non-profit organizations.
  - Fully 7-in-10 respondents who make donations note that “supporting the cause” is the most important factor in their decision-making process.
- Not surprisingly, responses are quite fragmented concerning the specific organizations to which residents make charitable donations.
  - Indeed, residents mentioned a variety of charitable organizations, including educational institutions (18%), health organizations (18%), the United Way (16%), and churches (16%).
  - Notably, “libraries” in general made up only 11% of donations.
  - Residents who have made financial donations to the Thomas Memorial Library in the past were significantly more likely to say they donate to educational institutions in general.

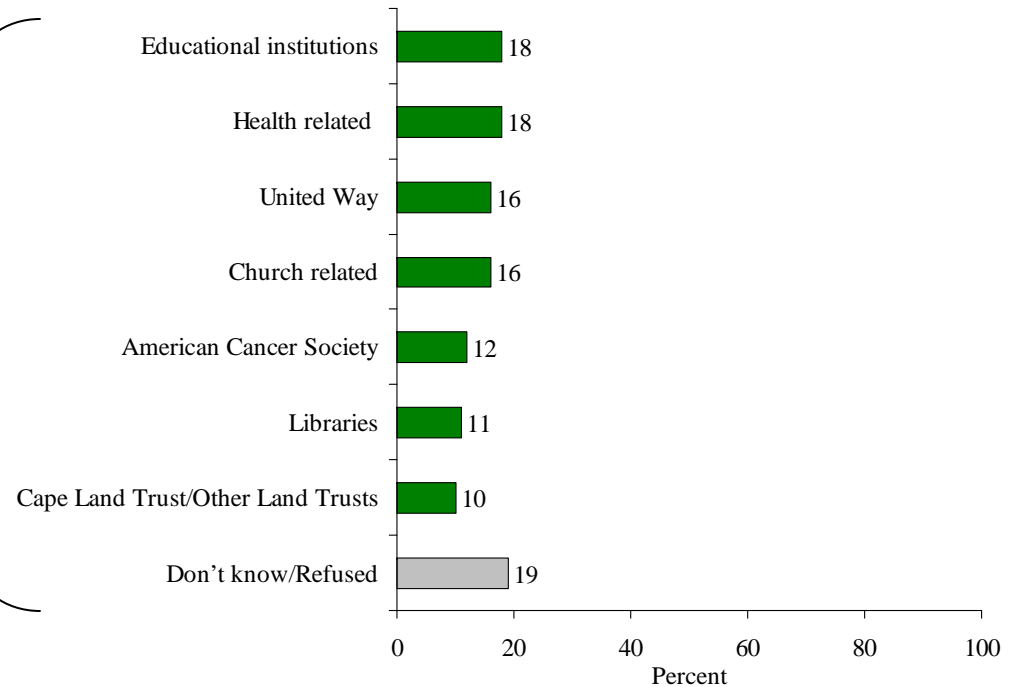


# Self-Reported Charitable Giving Behavior

*Do you currently make donations to nonprofit organizations in the area?*



*Which organizations do you make donations to? \**

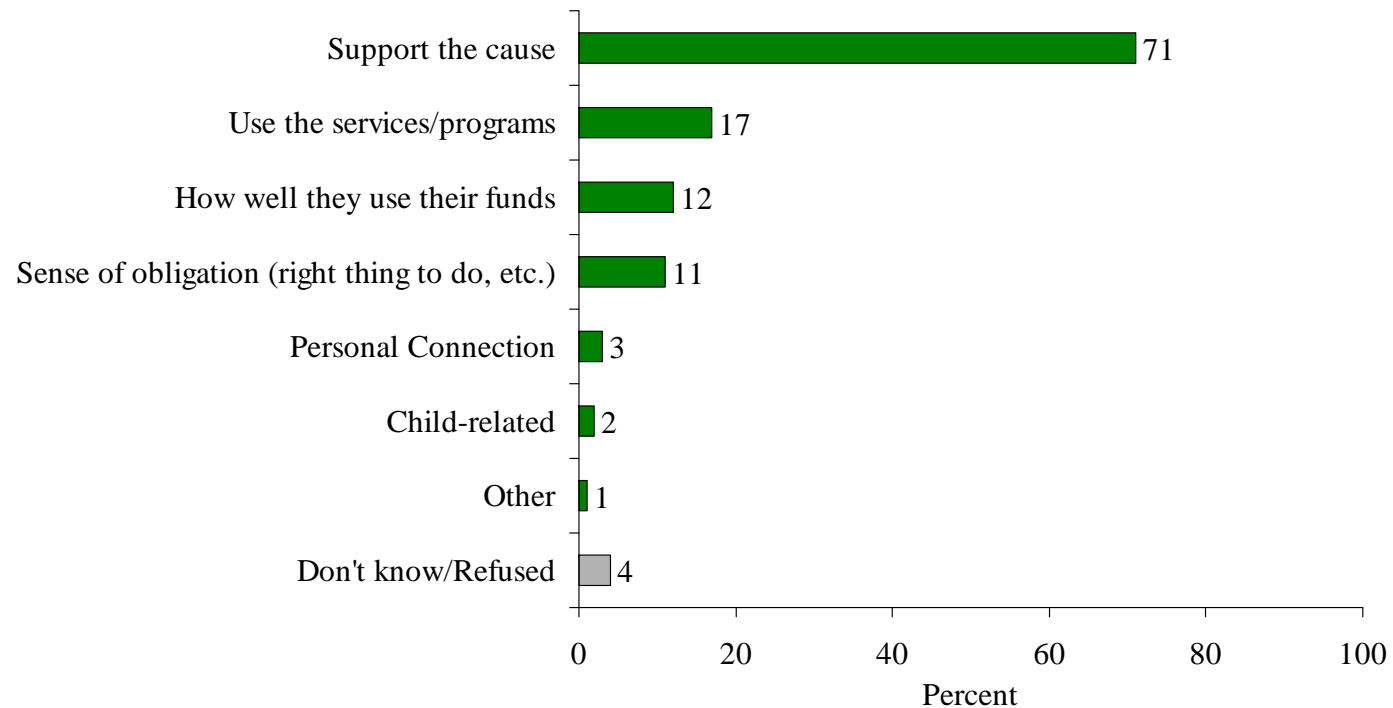


\* Based on respondents who reported that they currently make donations to nonprofit organizations in the area. Multiple responses accepted. The remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations.



# Most Important Factors in Charitable Giving Decision Making

*What factors are most important to you in deciding to donate to a non-profit organization? \**



\* Based on respondents who reported that they currently make donations to nonprofit organizations in the area.  
Multiple responses accepted.



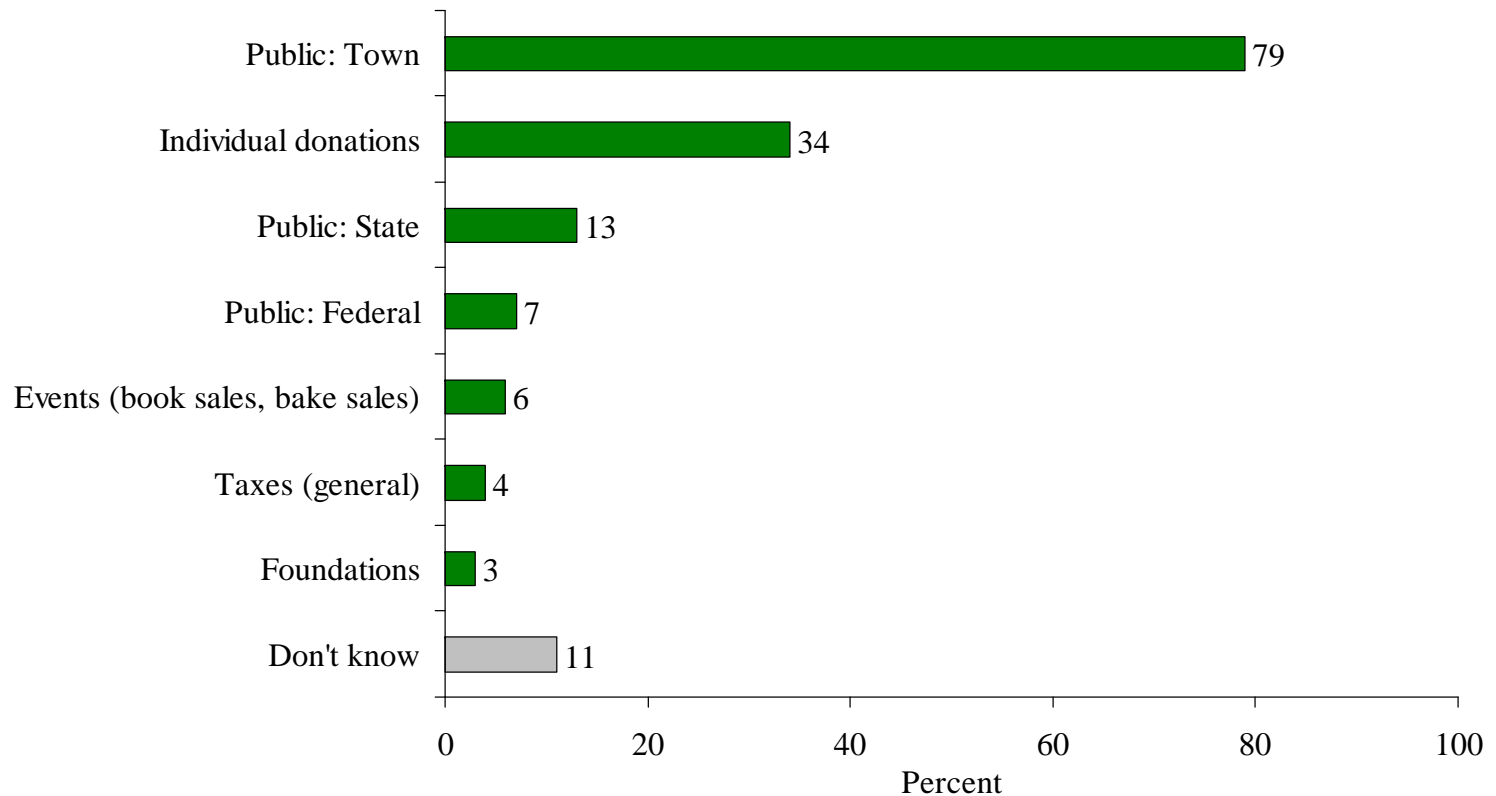
# Perspectives on Funding/Contributions to the Thomas Memorial Library

- When asked how the Thomas Memorial Library receives its funding, most residents polled believe that the Library receives its funding through public sources and, in particular, the Town of Cape Elizabeth (79%).
  - Notably, however, slightly more than one-third believe that at least some of the Library’s funding comes from “individual donations.”
- One-third of Cape Elizabeth residents polled claim that they have made a monetary donation to the Library and one-third of residents also claim they would be likely to make a monetary donation to the Library in the future.
  - Residents who patronize the Library more often, those with kids in the household, and those who have made donations in the past, were significantly more likely to say they would be likely to make a monetary donation to the Library or Foundation.
- Six-in-ten residents said the Library’s use of donations to support a particular project or fundraising effort, would not affect their decision to contribute.
  - Close to one-third of residents said that they would be more likely to contribute to the Library if the donation went to support a particular project.
- Importantly, more than half the residents polled noted that they would be likely to support the Thomas Memorial Library if the Library were to document a compelling need to expand in the next five years, with more than one-quarter noting that they would be “very likely” to support this type of expansion.
  - Of those likely supporters, 85% indicated that they would support the expansion through a financial donation to the Library.



# Awareness of Funding Sources for Thomas Memorial Library

*To the best of your knowledge, how does the Thomas Memorial Library get its funding?\**

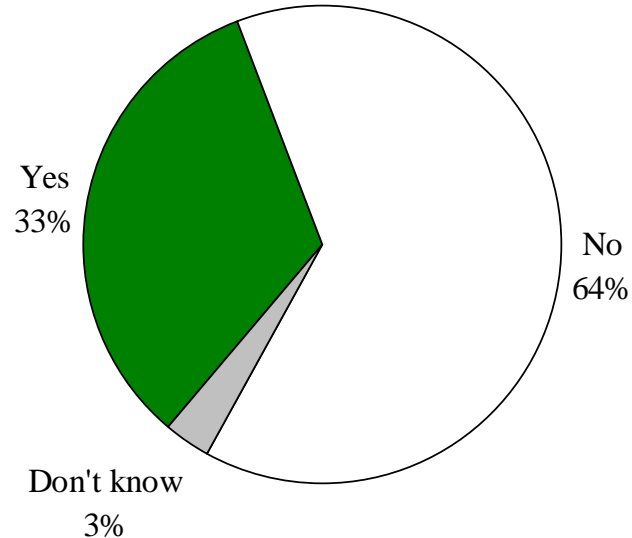


\* The remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations. Multiple responses accepted.



# Incidence of Making Donation to Thomas Memorial Library

*Have you ever made a financial donation to the Thomas Memorial Library or the Thomas Memorial Library Foundation?*

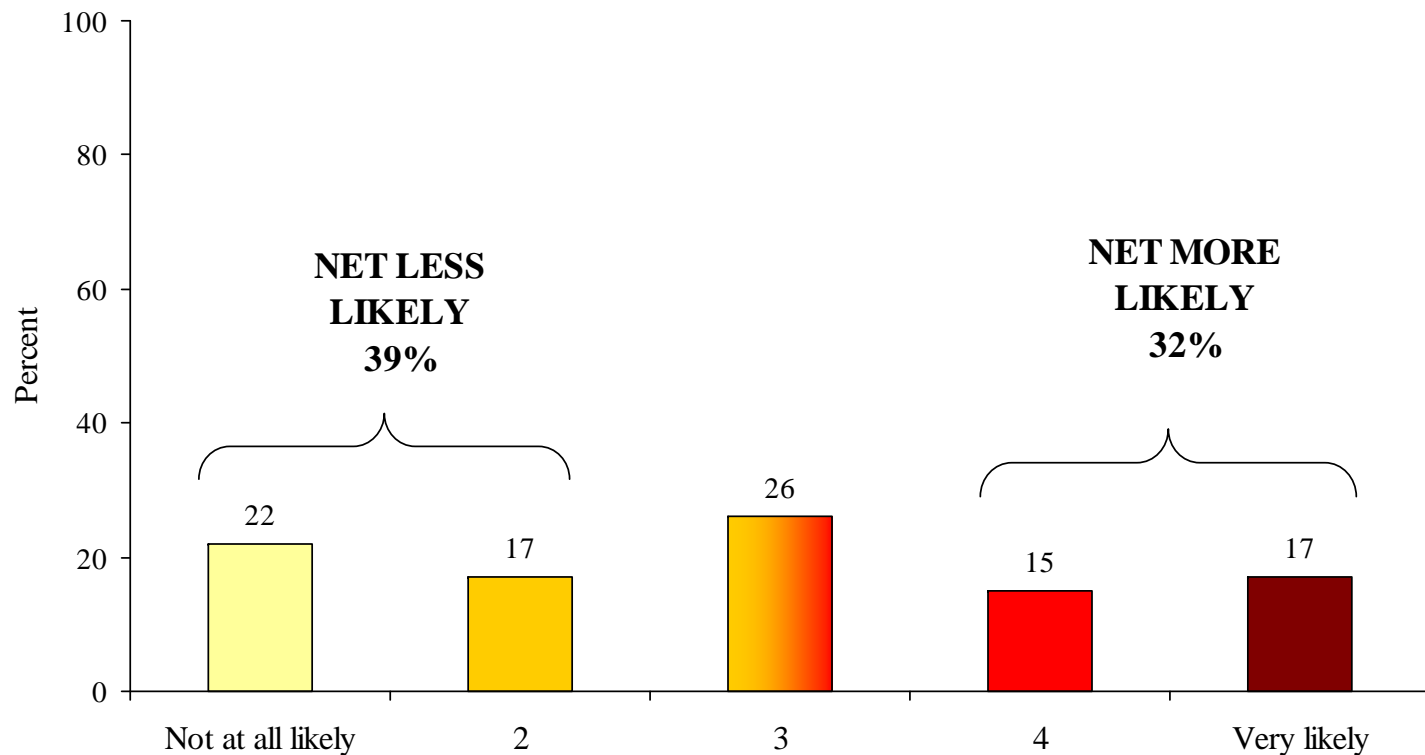






# Likelihood of Making Future Donation to Thomas Memorial Library

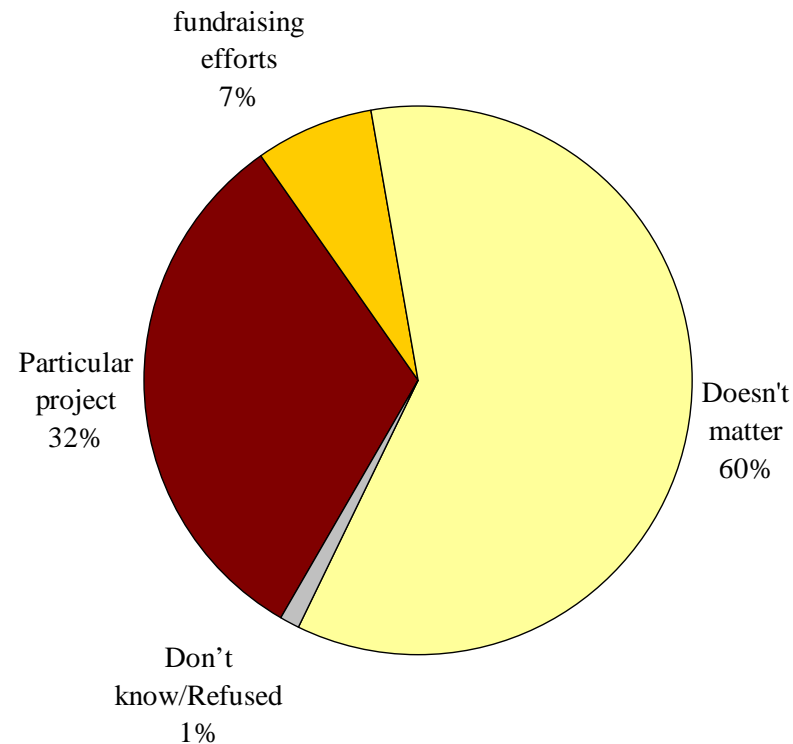
*Using a scale of 1 to 5 where a 1 means “not at all likely” and a 5 means “very likely,” how likely would you be to make a monetary donation to the Thomas Memorial Library or the Thomas Memorial Library Fund?*





# Perspective on “Ear-Marked” Donations to Thomas Memorial Library

*Would you be more likely to contribute to the Library if the donation was to support a particular project, to general fundraising efforts, or does it not matter?*

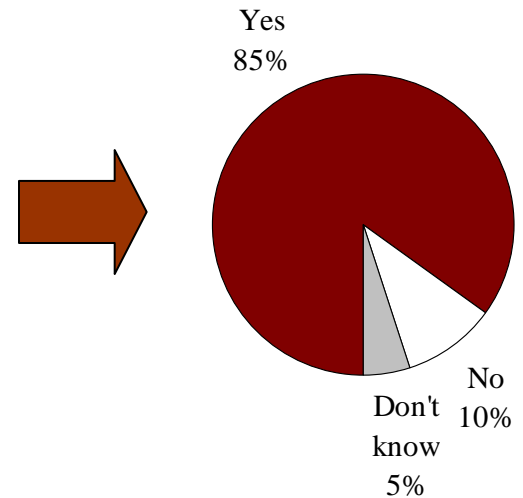
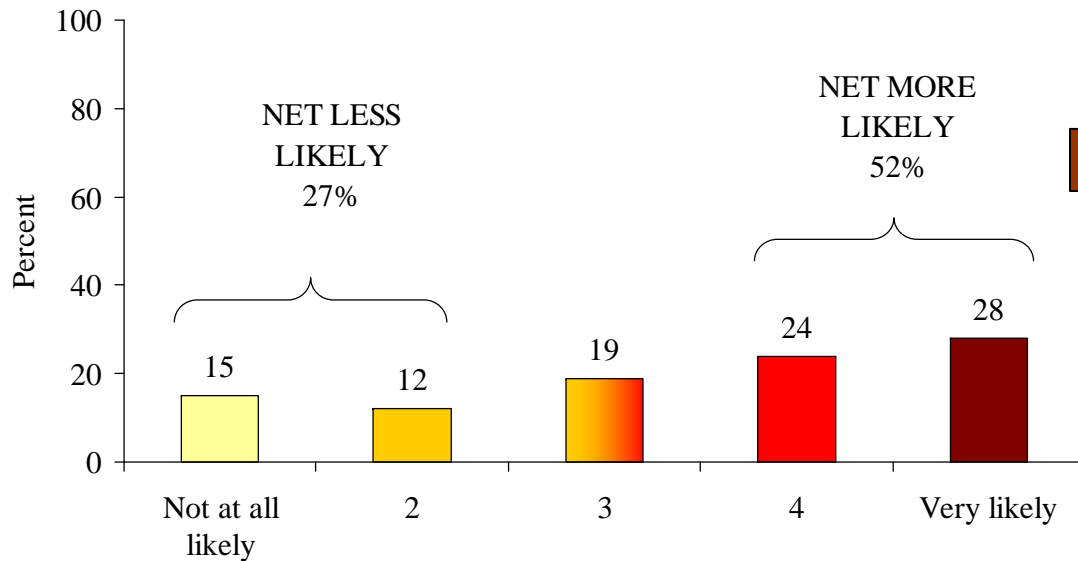




# Likelihood to Support Library Expansion Campaign

*If the Thomas Memorial Library were to document a compelling need to expand in the next 5 years, how likely would you be to support that effort?*

*Would you be willing to support the expansion through a financial donation to the Library?\**



\* Based upon respondents who are more likely to support the effort.



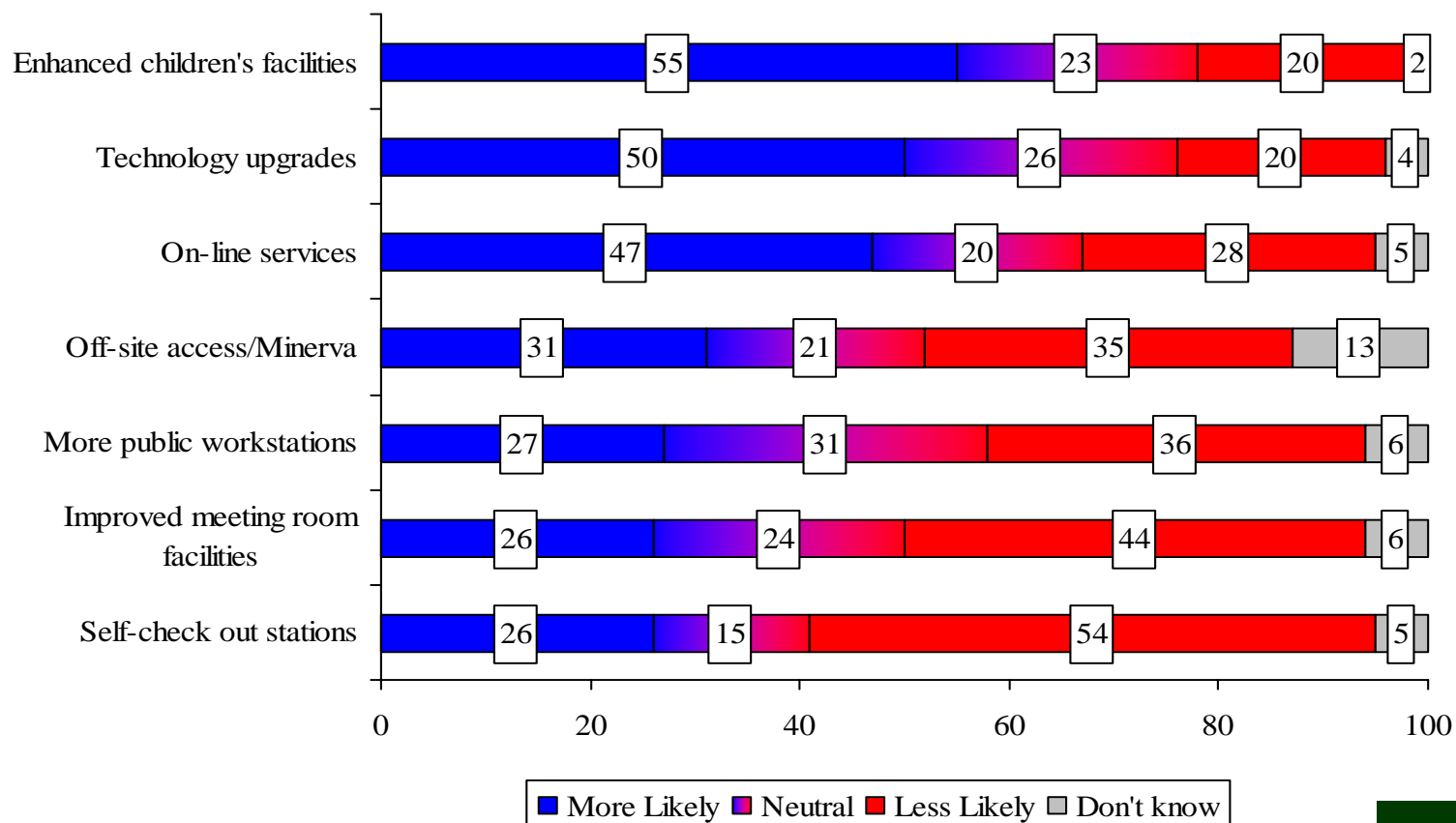
# Support for Library Improvements

- When residents were asked their level of support for particular Library enhancements, support was strongest for enhancing children's facilities.
  - Interestingly, respondents with children in the household were not significantly more likely to support this improvement.
- Half of residents polled said they would support technology upgrades.
  - Residents who use the library at least one per week, and those who have made financial donations in the past, were significantly more likely to say they would support technology upgrades.
- Close to half of residents who responded (47%) said they would support investment in on-line services.
  - Notably, residents who use the library once per month were most likely to say they would support an investment in on-line services.
- Improvements such as off-site access, more public work stations, improved meeting room facilities, and self check-out stations garnered the least support, with more residents responding that they would not be likely to support them than would support them.



# Support for Library Improvements

*Using a scale of 1 to 5 where a 1 means “not at all likely” and a 5 means “very likely,” how likely would you be to support the Thomas Memorial Library’s investment in:*

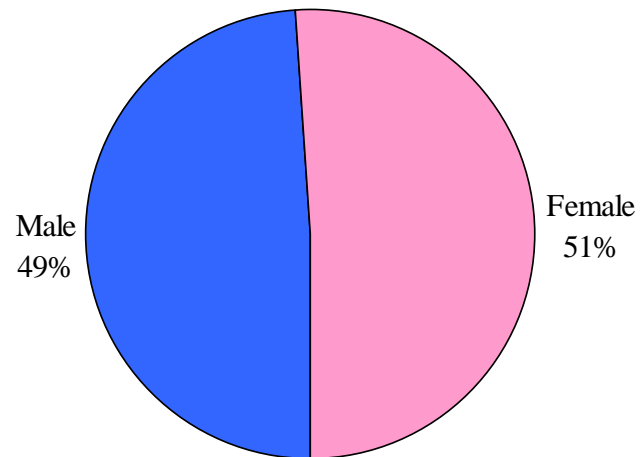




# Sample Profile



# Respondent Gender and Age

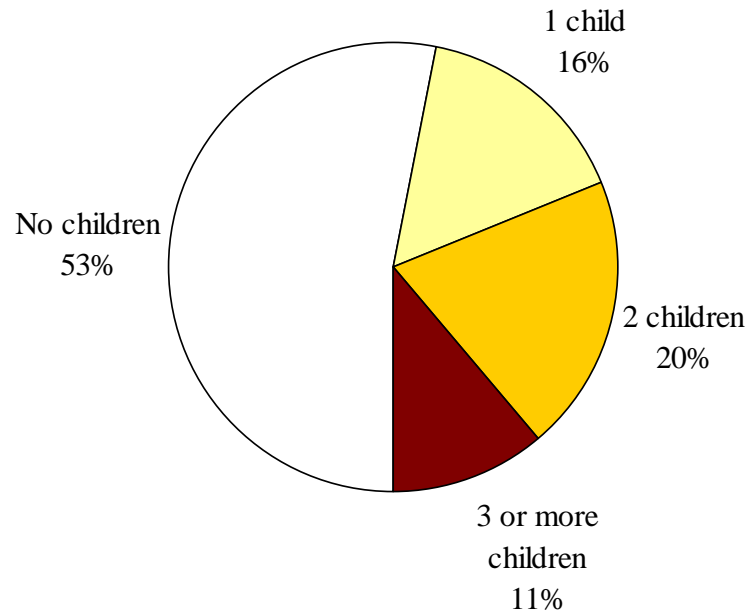


Which of the following categories does your age fall?	Percent
18 to 24	3%
25 to 34	3
35 to 44	29
45 to 54	23
55 to 64	18
65 to 74	11
75 and older	11



# Children in the Household

*How many children, under the age of 18, live in your household?*

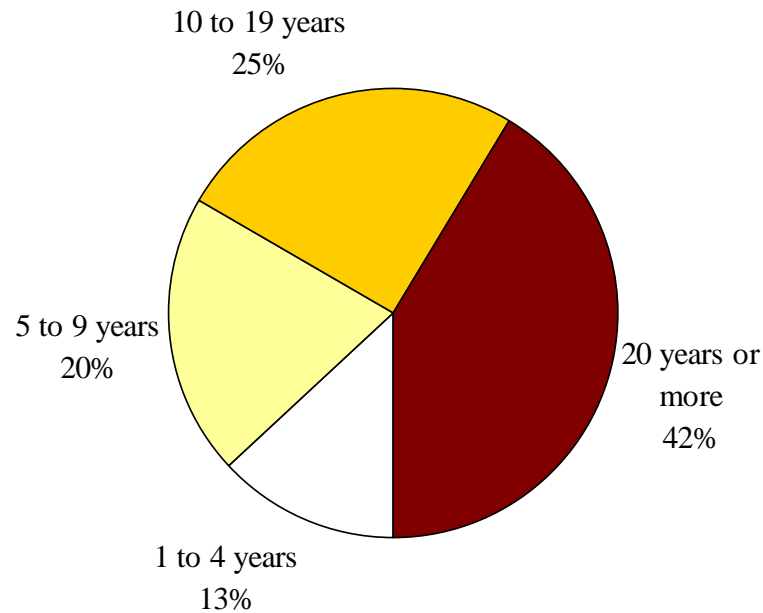


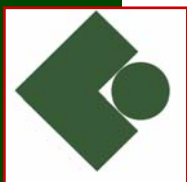




# Tenure of Residency in Cape Elizabeth

*How long have you lived in the Town of Cape Elizabeth?*

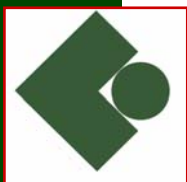




# Access to the Internet

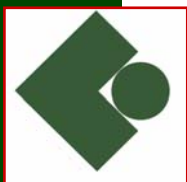
At what locations do you currently have Internet access? *	Percent
Home	89%
Work	53
Remote wireless connection	26
School	14
Cell phone	1
Do not have Internet access	8

\* Multiple responses accepted.



# Education

What is the highest level of education you have completed?	Percent
Some high school or less	1%
Graduated high school	8
Technical/Vocational/Community College	3
Some college	11
Graduated college	42
Graduate school	34



# Household Income

Which of the following categories best describes your total household income before taxes last year?	Percent
Less than \$35,000	9%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	8
\$50,000 to \$74,999	12
\$75,000 to \$99,999	13
\$100,000 to \$149,999	20
\$150,000 or more	21
Don't know/Refused	17