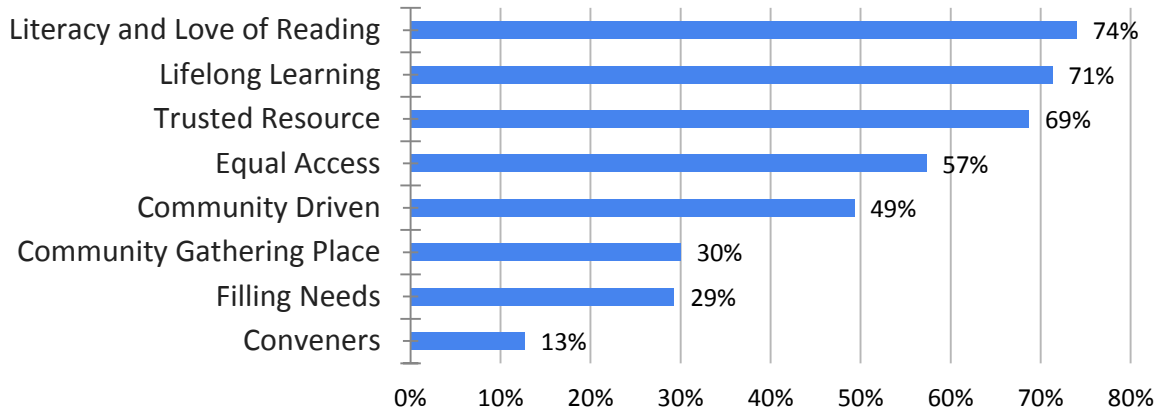# Staff Survey Results Summary

The staff survey recorded 150 responses.

Guiding Principles

Staff were asked to choose four of eight Guiding Principles for the Library.

Guiding Principles Ranked

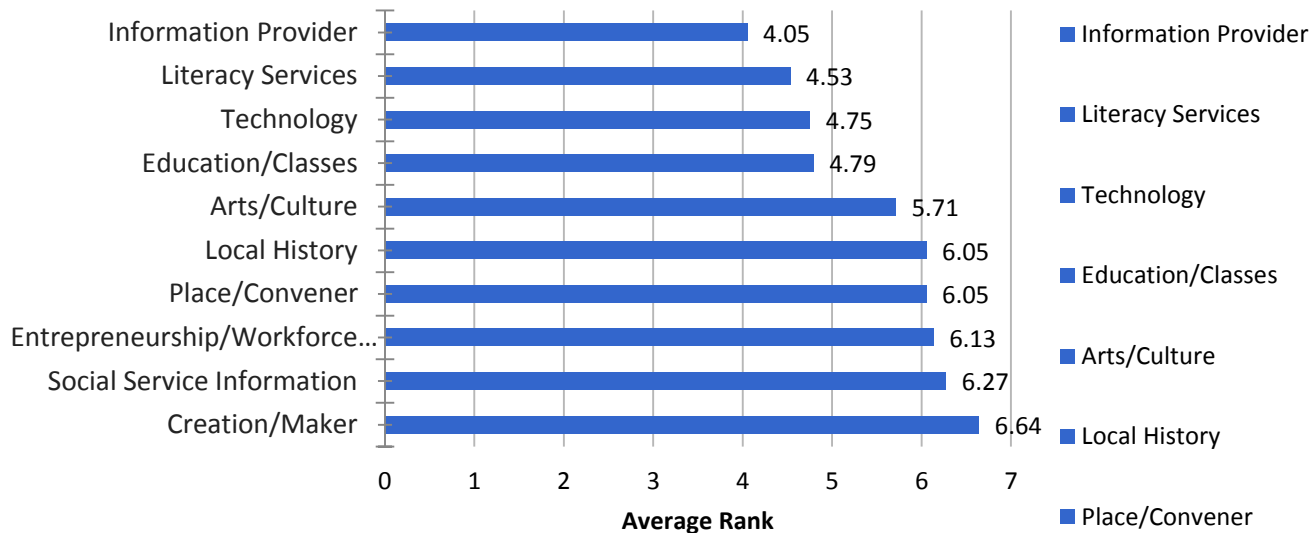| Principle	Percentage
Literacy and Love of Reading	74%
Lifelong Learning	71%
Trusted Resource	69%
Equal Access	57%
Community Driven	49%
Community Gathering Place	30%
Filling Needs	29%
Conveners	13%

Vision for 2020

Staff were then asked to envision the Library of 2020.

The library of 2020 could offer services/programming in any or all of the following areas. Rank these in order of importance, with 1 as the most important and 10 as the least.
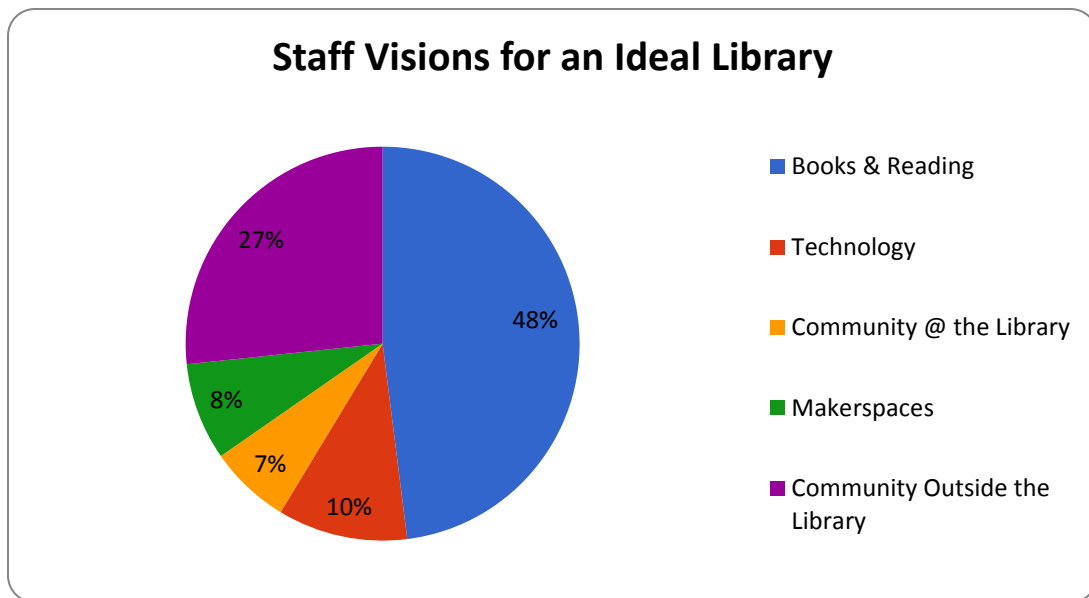
Vision 2020

Area	Average Rank
Information Provider	4.05
Literacy Services	4.53
Technology	4.75
Education/Classes	4.79
Arts/Culture	5.71
Local History	6.05
Place/Convener	6.05
Entrepreneurship/Workforce...	6.13
Social Service Information	6.27
Creation/Maker	6.64

Which statement MOST closely corresponds with your vision of an ideal library?

Choices included:

- **Books & Reading:** A library focuses on having the best collections of books and resources, helping members of the community read, research, learn, and grow.
- **Community @ the Library:** A library functions as a community gathering place, where people can attend community meetings, talk with and learn from their neighbors, and engage in shared activities together.
- **Community Outside the Library:** A library is an extension of the community, with book mobiles, pop-up libraries, and partnerships with community organizations that engage people where they are.
- **Makerspaces:** A library is where people come not just to check out books and materials, but to actually create new things at the library, working on art projects, novels, and using maker equipment such as 3D printers.
- **Technology:** A library puts an emphasis on technology, allowing community members to have easy access to computers, digital video and audio collections, and other resources they may not have.

Staff Visions for an Ideal Library

A pie chart titled "Staff Visions for an Ideal Library" with the following segments:
- Books & Reading: 48%
- Technology: 10%
- Community @ the Library: 7%
- Makerspaces: 8%
- Community Outside the Library: 27%

If you could change one thing about the option you selected, what would it be?

Nearly half of all respondents chose the "books and reading" statement as their ideal vision for the Library of the future. When asked to amend this statement, the most common suggestion was to add a technology component. Respondents also suggested including a creative component, human capital/staff, external community engagement, and other elements from the other statements. The vision statement could be altered to read "Books & Reading: A library focuses on having the best collections of books, resources, and technology, helping members of the community read, research, learn, create, and grow."

Twenty-seven percent of respondents chose the idea of community outside the library as the vision for the library of the future. Proponents of this option were heavily in favor of including technology as an important component, suggesting a mobile tech library, increased access to technology and information services, and the concept of the mobile library as a "nexus for learning." The statement could be changed to read "A library is an extension of the community that evolves to meet community needs, with mobile books and technology, pop-up libraries, and partnerships with community organizations that engage people where they are and help members of the community read, research, learn and grow."
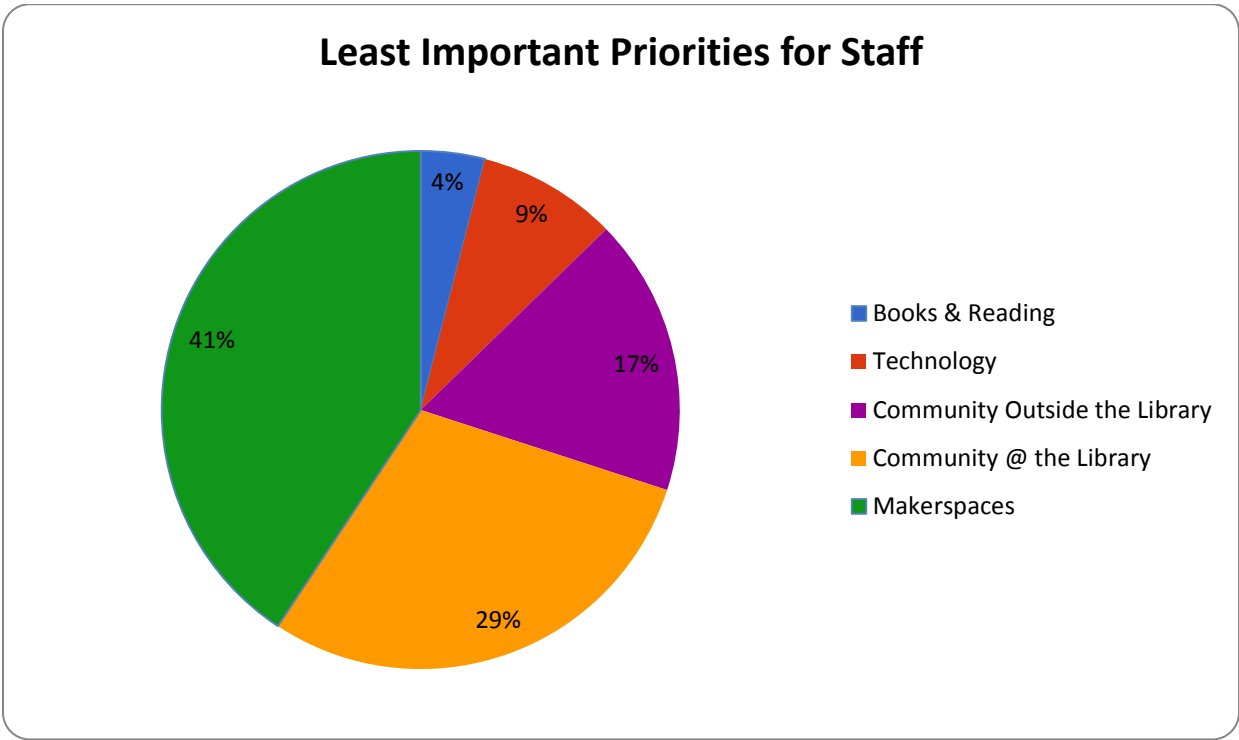
Ten percent of staff respondents chose technology as their vision for the Library in 2020. Comments to amend the statement mentioned adding the idea of entrepreneurship and workforce development, the idea of education about technology and community connections, and adding maker equipment explicitly. The statement could be edited to read "A library puts an emphasis on technology, allowing community members to have easy access to computers, high-

quality collections that are both print and digital, maker equipment and other resources they may not have as a means of promoting digital literacy and workforce skills."

Eight percent of respondents see the Library as being a hub for creation, from maker spaces to novel writing. Comments included aspects of research, collaboration, technology, engaging people where they are, and learning new things to erase the digital divide. The vision statement could be amended as follows: "A library is where people come not just to check out books and materials, but to collaborate, learn about technology, and create new things at the library, working on art projects, novels and using maker equipment such as 3D printers."

Seven percent of respondents chose the idea of the Library as a community gathering place. The most common additions or changes they proposed for this statement included emphasizing the Library as a reliable resource for all types of information from books to librarians to connections to outside resources, focusing resources on local needs or issues, and including reading and books as an important resource.

Which statement LEAST closely corresponds with your vision of an ideal library?

Least Important Priorities for Staff

- 4% Books & Reading
- 9% Technology
- 17% Community Outside the Library
- 29% Community @ the Library
- 41% Makerspaces

Why did you select this option?

Most responses stated that the library as a maker space was valid, but the lowest priority. The other listed services are considered more comprehensive and widely useful to a larger segment of the population. Maker spaces are secondary to community, technology, and literacy, and are not critical to the community. The library is also not the only venue for "creating," and the current fad for maker spaces may not be sustainable. Lastly, maker spaces are expensive and may not be the best use of the library's budget in straightened financial circumstances.

Nearly 30% of respondents claimed the library as a community gathering place was not important. Reasons fell into two main categories – one, that the idea of community space is not unique to libraries (we are not a rec center), and two, that the library is primarily a place for information and learning, not just hanging out. The library is much more than a community gathering place.

Seventeen percent of respondents listed the library as an extension of the community as being unimportant to the 2020 vision. Responses cited outreach as valuable but not the central tenet of the library. The library needs to be a part of the community, not an extension of it, and pop-ups are too temporary.

Technology was chosen by nine percent of respondents as the least important objective. Technology was mentioned as an important part of everything we do, but not its own category. Several respondents wrote that this category leaves out books, and that the emphasis should be on information and not technology.

Lastly, books & reading were chosen by four percent of respondents, because the library should be more than just books, and the library needs to grow to be relevant in the 21st century.

Moving Forward

Given the following list of nine assets, staff were asked to pick the top five needed to achieve the 2020 vision.

- Enhanced Staff Skills
- Technology
- Library material collection
- New staffing and service models
- Openness to experimentation
- Emphasis on engagement
- Interagency collaboration / leveraging partnerships
- New / stronger brand and marketing
- Buildings

Assets Needed to Achieve the 2020 Vision

Asset	Percentage
Enhanced Staff Skills	83%
Technology	61%
Library material collection	59%
New staffing and service models	59%
Openness to experimentation	55%
Emphasis on engagement	50%
Interagency collaboration / leveraging…	46%
New / stronger brand and marketing	36%
Buildings	29%
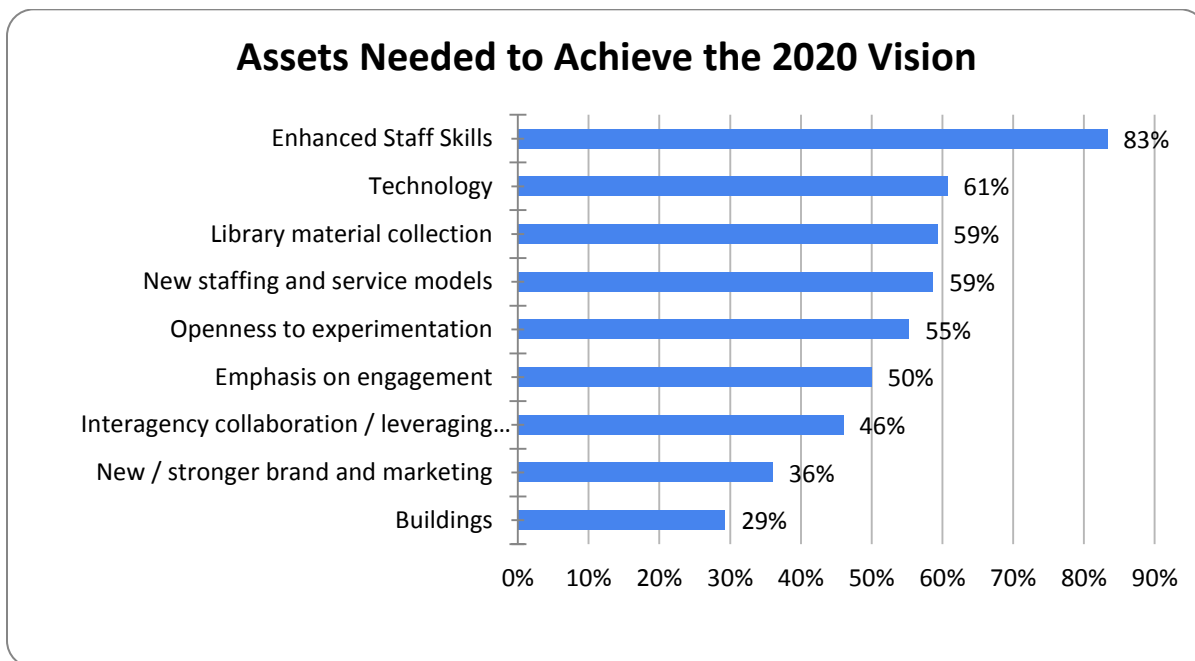
What other assets might we need to achieve the 2020 vision?

- Staff Supports:
    - Improved scheduling, work-life balance
    - Diverse staff – foreign language skills, reflective of the community, cultural competencies
        - Reclassification of DCPL pay scale; higher pay to retain high-performing individuals as librarians.
    - More staff
    - Enhanced staff skills, training & conferences, staff development
        - Training for marketing library offerings, outreach, job seeker support, teaching classes, developing community partnerships
    - Specialized staff – tech expertise, other knowledge areas
    - Structural re-think: too much "that's not my job"
- More money in the budget
- More security at the branches
- Less bureaucracy; stronger management skills and support.
- More communication between staff, between library and community ("more aggressive communications plan")
- Focus on public service, customer service
- Strategies and plans (including staff training and resources)to sustain new initiatives and long term vision.

What public library or other organization inspires you? Why does that organization inspire you?

Staff cited a number of other library systems as inspirational, including the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library system, Seattle Public Libraries, the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, and the Cleveland Public Library. The library systems of Arlington County, Fairfax County, and Montgomery County also came in for praise for being supportive of their staff and for providing excellent customer service. Closer to home, several staff mentioned DCPL branches by name, particularly MLK for the various resources it provides to the community. Other organizations included the Smithsonian, Disney, Google, and various other companies.

Overall, the following inspirational attributes were commonly listed:

- Outstanding programs and services
- Communication with and support for staff, including staff training and a "culture of harmony"
- Community engagement
- Customer service
- Collection development and maintenance
- Innovation, experimentation and partnerships, both internal and external