



Regina Public Library Stakeholder Engagement Summary March 2019

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As the role of libraries in cities across Canada continues to evolve, Regina Public Library is interested in what its community partners see as the library's role—particularly as a partner in social and economic development.

On behalf of the library, Praxis conducted a series of one-on-one interviews with stakeholders as well as an online survey. Our findings are presented in this report. As a point of comparison, highlights from the 2019 Community Perception Survey are attached in the appendix.

Highlights

Snapshot of Community Partners

Through one-on-one interviews and the online survey, 53 valued community partners were engaged in sharing their thoughts on the role of Regina Public Library (RPL) in the community.

Almost all of the community partners who participated in one-on-one interviews (15 out of 16) and 76% of those who completed the online survey represent locally-based organizations. Most are non-profits or community service organizations.

Existing Relationships

Community partners describe a wide variety of relationships with Regina Public Library. Within this diversity, however, are three main categories:

- Those who frequently use library services and programs
- Those with informal, mutually supportive relationships
- Those with formalized partnerships

Library loans, library programs and library events are the pillars of most relationships with community partners. All use these resources to varying degrees. This often involves relationship building, as stakeholders often work with librarians to tailor resources to their specific needs. This is reflected in the online survey, in which 92% of stakeholders agree their organization considers the library a valued community partner.

Whatever the extent of their existing relationship, a common theme among stakeholders is the desire to grow and enhance their partnership with the library.

Community Value

Community partners clearly believe the Regina Public Library is of value to the community. When asked how important they think the library is to Regina, 15 out of 16 say 'very important.' This is supported by stakeholders in the online survey—100% think Regina Public Library is 'very important' to Regina. And 86% agree the library is something Regina organizations can be proud of.

Delving deeper, 15 out of 16 community partners in the one-on-one interviews 'strongly agree' Regina Public Library provides a valuable service to its customers. This compares to 94% of survey respondents (including 70% 'strongly agree').

Similarly, 13 out of 16 community partners in the one-on-one interviews 'strongly agree' their organization considers Regina Public Library a valued community partner, compared to 92% of survey respondents (including 76% 'strongly agree').

Satisfaction

Community partners are asked to rate their satisfaction with Regina Public Library on a scale of one to 10, where 10 is 'very satisfied.' Nine out of 16 stakeholders interviewed gave RPL a 9 or 10; in other words, very satisfied. Online survey findings support this, with 95% of stakeholders saying they are satisfied with the library.

Community Support

Most community partners in the one-on-one interviews 'strongly support' Regina Public Library's objective. Again, this is backed by the online survey in which 98% of stakeholders support the library's objective, including 84% who are 'strongly supportive.'

When asked what the library could do to co-operatively enhance their relationship, the most frequent suggestion is to provide more regular, more seamless communication between the library and the community partner.

Community Hub

A community hub is described to stakeholders as a place that provides a central access point for a wide range of services supporting literacy, learning, social engagement, economic growth, culture and recreation. It is a 'one-stop-shop' for all of these things.

In one-on-one interviews, the majority of community partners say they regard Regina Public Library as a community hub. Eight out of 16 are unequivocal—they 'strongly agree' RPL is a community hub and another five 'somewhat agree.' The online survey reflects this opinion: 81% of stakeholders agree the library is a community hub.

In the one-on-one interviews, the two stakeholders who 'somewhat disagree' nonetheless support the idea of RPL as a community hub; they just feel the library has not yet achieved this position.

How does Regina Public Library support social development?

In one-on-one interviews, 13 out of 16 community partners 'strongly agree' the library contributes to social development and well-being in Regina. In the survey, 92% agree the library contributes to social development.

Different community partners tout the social benefits of different programming. Several point out the growing importance of the library as a community gathering space and what that could mean for social development in the future. Here again, the focus is on expanding and deepening community partnerships so that libraries-as-community-hubs are equipped to meet a wide variety of needs.

How does Regina Public Library support economic development?

This question poses more of a challenge for stakeholders, both in the one-on-one interviews and the survey. When asked whether the library contributes to economic growth, 8 out of 16 in the stakeholder interviews agree, 8 are neutral/unsure. The survey shows a similar split: 57% agree the library contributes to economic development, 32% are neutral/unsure and 11% disagree.

Community partners are intrigued by the question, even if they don't know the answer. "Could being able to rent or use the resources at the library for free with your library card or make photocopies at a reduced rate have an economic impact?" asks one.

"I'm not sure," says another. "Maybe opportunities to explore other less traditional economic development opportunities, such as user pay programs targeted at a less broad public? Maybe look for ways to continue to serve the public, but also use its expertise to provide additional services and programming in commercial ways to non-public entities?"

Most stakeholders appear to believe social and economic development are too closely linked to separate. One stakeholder illustrates this point well, saying, "I don't think libraries need to justify themselves. They impact social development and that can help drive our economic development. Literacy, for example, equates directly to economic development, so if they're impacting literacy, they're impacting economic development."

What other roles could RPL play in the community?

Libraries are clearly seen as a hub for literacy and lifelong learning, with the potential to expand their influence in this sphere. Libraries are also seen as becoming a safe place to "hang out." The consensus among community partners is that libraries can provide an inclusive, judgment-free gathering space—for children and youth, Indigenous youth, newcomers, vulnerable populations, seniors, low income families, all families.

To position itself this way, RPL needs to be seen by its many audiences as a warm, welcoming space, a place where people can sit and chat (for free), use public access computers or tablets, listen to music or play games, even grab a coffee from an onsite café (like the one in the downtown Central branch).

Accommodating such a diverse audience/mandate will require deeper partnerships with community organizations.

Trends

In the one-on-one interviews, two emerging trends dominate responses—the ongoing transformation to a digital society and Regina's growing cultural diversity. Community partners agree that in order to continue to grow and impact the community socially and economically, the library will need to evolve in both areas.

Challenges

Community partners recognize the library faces challenges on several fronts. Stakeholders appear to agree on two major challenges: finding the necessary funding to update aging infrastructure and finding ways to continually renew RPL's programs and services so it remains relevant in a rapidly changing social context.

Final Thoughts

Given a final opportunity to share their thoughts on what the Regina Public Library could do, or should continue to do, community partners in the one-on-one interviews invariably say, "keep doing what you're doing."

Overall, community partners are impressed with the library's efforts to renew its focus and its mission, to make itself relevant in an era of digital technology, and to continue providing literacy services and supports throughout the city.

Methodology

In February and March 2019, Praxis conducted an online survey and one-on-one interviews as part of stakeholder engagement for the Regina Public Library.

Stakeholder Engagement

One-on-one stakeholder interviews were done to look at library relationships, and the programs and services associated with them, from the perspective of valued community partners in social and economic development.

Discussions with stakeholders offer insights into their perceptions of the library's role in the community as well as its relationship with their organization. The outcome of these interviews serves as baseline feedback input into the 2016–2021 Strategic Plan.

Interviews were conducted with 16 community partners, including representatives of not-for-profit and community service organizations.

In addition to the one-to-one interviews, an online survey was used to engage community partners. The survey questionnaire was designed in consultation with the library. A total of 37 online surveys were completed with Regina stakeholders in March 2019.

This report presents the analysis of stakeholder interviews and survey data, including frequency tables and charts.

Our Company

Praxis is a Saskatchewan-based strategy and research firm with offices in Regina and Saskatoon that brings together some of Saskatchewan's top management consulting practitioners. Our work has been used in policy development, issue management, business planning, membership support, service quality management, community relations, public affairs and advocacy.



Objectives & Methodology

One-on-one stakeholder interviews are an effective way of looking at library relationships, and the programs and services associated with them, from the perspective of valued community partners. The discussions offer insights from these stakeholders on the library's role in the community as well as its relationship with their organization. The outcome of these interviews serves as baseline feedback input into the 2016–2021 Strategic Plan.

Interviews were conducted with 16 community partners, including representatives of not-for-profit and community service organizations.

Interviews were scheduled with stakeholders ahead of time and took approximately 30 minutes. Each interview began with a general introduction and explanation, including:

- Stakeholders are responding to questions from the position of the organization they represent as opposed to a personal position.
- Interviews are intended to be exploratory there are no right or wrong answers.
- Interview responses are aggregated into common themes, and responses are not identified with individual stakeholders.

Interview Summary

Existing Relationships

Community partners describe a wide variety of relationships with Regina Public Library. Within this diversity, however, are three main categories:

- Those who frequently use library services and programs
- Those with informal, mutually supportive relationships
- Those with formalized partnerships

Library loans (materials and equipment), library programs and library events are the pillars of most library relationships. All stakeholders use these resources to varying degrees.

"We do monthly visits to the library for storytime." "Our partnership mostly involves outreach services, which provides audiobooks, movies and eReaders for our residents." "We partner to support new Canadians."

The consensus is that library resources enable not-for-profits and community service organizations to better meet the needs of their clients. Use of library resources involves relationship building, as stakeholders often work with librarians to tailor resources to their specific needs.

A number of stakeholder-library relationships can be described as "friendly, loose affiliations." Such relationships generally involve cross-promotion of services, programs and events. "We support each other wherever possible—we go out to their events, they come to ours."

Stakeholders involved in education appear to have more formal partnerships with the library, with literacy resources often a major focus.

But the library is increasingly being seen as a community gathering space, and its recent relationships reflect this. Library-stakeholder partnerships have led to walk-in legal advice, walk-in counselling, free music, Aboriginal storytelling and more.

Whatever their existing relationship, a common theme among community partners is the desire to grow and enhance their partnership with the library.

"We partner to provide special programming for our clients it's fantastic to have access to programming for the whole family."

Community Value

Community partners clearly believe the Regina Public Library is of value to the community. When asked how important they think the library is to Regina, 15 out of 16 say 'very important.'

- 15 out of 16 stakeholders 'strongly agree' Regina Public Library provides a valuable service to its customers.
- 13 out of 16 stakeholders 'strongly agree' their organization considers Regina Public Library a valued community partner.
- 13 out of 16 stakeholders 'strongly agree' Regina Public Library contributes to social development in Regina.

Stakeholders are less clear about the library's economic contribution to the city. When asked whether the library contributes to economic growth in our community, three out of 16

stakeholders 'strongly agree,' five 'somewhat agree' and eight are 'neutral/unsure.' We'll return to this point on the next page.

Satisfaction

Community partners are asked to rate how satisfied they are with Regina Public Library using a scale of one to ten, with ten being 'very satisfied.' Nine out of the 16 stakeholders interviewed gave RPL a 9 or 10; in other words, very satisfied.

The remaining six rated RPL 7 or 8 on the scale, and only because they have concerns about up-to-date program information on the website or they believe their relationship hasn't yet achieved its full potential.

Community Support for RPL

Most community partners 'strongly support' Regina Public Library's objective. When asked what the library could do to co-operatively enhance their relationship with the library, several suggest regular check-ins to discuss services, programs and possible collaborations.

Another frequently mentioned suggestion is to develop more seamless communications with partners. Suggestions range from giving each stakeholder a single library contact to having a central library access point/person for events, programs or services.

"Good engagement with partners and stakeholders is important. I think the library does a really good job in this area. If it cultivates and develops relationships with other partners and stakeholders in the community, it would put them in a pretty strong position."

Community Hub

A community hub is described to stakeholders as a place that provides a central access point for a wide range of services supporting literacy, learning, social engagement, economic growth, culture and recreation. In short, it is a 'one-stop-shop' for all of these things.

Most community partners already regard Regina Public Library as a community hub. Eight out of 16 are unequivocal—they 'strongly agree' RPL is a community hub; another five 'somewhat agree.' That leaves two who 'somewhat disagree' and one who is 'neutral/unsure.' It is important to note that the two stakeholders who disagree support the idea of the library as a community hub but feel the library has not yet achieved this position.

"I see all kinds of potential for the library as a community hub, but have they arrived? Somewhat. With the right partnerships, they could be community hubs."

The idea of a community hub also differs by location. Many stakeholders see the library's Central branch as a community hub, but opinion differs on the smaller branches.

"I think with some of the locations, like the branch near Al Ritchie, everyone goes there after school and hangs out. It works well if there is a recreation space, but maybe not so much for some of the other libraries with more traditional library space."

How can the library become a community hub?

Stakeholders offer a variety of suggestions to help the library become a community hub. A common thread throughout the interviews, however, is the need for more/better communication—the library needs to position itself as a community hub, both to its community partners and to the public.

"Continue to get your brand out there." "Clearly speak to the benefits and value the library provides to the community." "Create a communications strategy to demonstrate that RPL is more than just a lender of books." "Advertise more, get the word out." "Continue to explore partnerships." "Create a culture of partners and champions."

One stakeholder points to the mâmawêyatitân centre as "the best example of where RPL does really well. There's a library combined with a high school, policing and social services for youth. It's an example of a library focusing on integration of community services and sharing space."

Another stakeholder notes, "To me, a community hub implies shared aspirations that we shape together. As a partner, we'd be open to being part of those conversations."

How does Regina Public Library support social development?

As noted earlier, the majority of stakeholders agree the library supports social development and well-being in the city, largely through its programming.

Different community partners tout the social benefits of different programming—child literacy, adult literacy, lifelong learning, career supports, ESL, parenting, arts, music, culture, digital media, computer access, online resources, equipment loans, writer-in-residence, reconciliation events, storytelling ... the list goes on.

Several point out the growing importance of the library as a community gathering space, and what that could mean for social development in the future. "Maybe we station more outreach services in libraries," says a representative of one community service organization. "Go to where the people are rather than have them come to us."

Here again, the focus is on expanding and deepening community partnerships so that libraries-as-community-hubs are equipped to meet a wide variety of needs. In many cases, this means the basic need for a warm/cool safe space for vulnerable populations.

Accommodating such a diverse audience/mandate will require deeper partnerships with community organizations as the library seeks to balance the needs of many users. Stakeholders believe partnerships are the key. "I don't see the library as recreating what other organizations can do better," says one stakeholder.

How does Regina Public Library support economic development?

This question poses more of a challenge for stakeholders. As noted earlier, stakeholders are not unanimous in their agreement that the library contributes to economic growth. But only one stakeholder actually disagrees, saying, "I see their role as social, not economic."

Community partners appear intrigued by the question, even if they don't know the answer. "Could being able to rent or use the resources at the library for free with your library card or make photocopies at a reduced rate have an economic impact?" asks one.

"I'm not sure," says another. "Maybe opportunities to explore other less traditional economic development opportunities, such as user pay programs targeted at a less broad public? Maybe look for ways to continue to serve the public, but also use its expertise to provide additional services and programming in commercial ways to non-public entities?"

Leasing space, building renovations and construction are all seen as economic spin-offs. Several wonder if the library's 3D printer could offer economic opportunities. Others suggest that making meeting space available to small businesses or start-ups might be helpful.

A number think the library supports economic development by offering upgrading and career resources. Most appear to believe social and economic development are too closely linked to separate.

One stakeholder illustrates this point well, saying, "I don't think libraries need to justify themselves. They impact social development and that can help drive our economic development. Literacy, for example, equates directly to economic development, so if they're impacting literacy, they're impacting economic development."

"Libraries are connectors for people who are socially isolated, which is strongly connected to physical health, which could avoid some health care costs."

What other roles could RPL play in the community?

The consensus among stakeholders is that libraries can provide a safe, inclusive, judgment-free gathering space—for children and youth, Indigenous youth, newcomers, vulnerable populations, seniors, low income families, all families.

Libraries are clearly seen as a hub for literacy and lifelong learning. They could also expand their influence in literacy beyond individuals to community-based circles through "proactive outreach or bold, audacious convos (conversations)."

"I think libraries can make a big difference, each branch, within their own neighbourhood."

Community partners also see libraries becoming a safe place to "hang out." To position itself this way, RPL needs to be seen by its many audiences as a warm, welcoming space, a place where people can sit and chat (for free), use public access computers or tablets, listen to music or play games, even grab a coffee from an onsite

café (like the one in the downtown Central branch). Again, accommodating such a diverse audience/mandate will require deeper partnerships with community organizations.

Trends

Two emerging trends dominate stakeholder interviews—the ongoing transformation to a digital society and Regina's growing cultural diversity. In order to continue to grow and impact the community socially and economically, Regina Public Library will need to evolve in both areas.

"We've seen a 200% increase in self identified minorities in the last 10 years in Regina," says one stakeholder. "By 2030, over 30% could be Indigenous and new Canadian, so the trend toward diversity is key. The library can assist with community conversations about inclusion, reconciliation and bridging economy and community."

"The musical instrument lending library and digital media studio are getting lots of inquiries from students. And the library's virtual reality headset—our students lost their minds, they want to try it!"

Challenges

Community partners recognize that the library faces challenges on several fronts. First, finding the necessary funding to update aging infrastructure. Second, finding ways to update and continually renew its programs and services to remain relevant in a rapidly changing social context.

Final Thoughts

Given a final opportunity to share their thoughts on what the Regina Public Library could do, or should continue to do, community partners invariably say, "keep doing what you're doing." They are happy with their existing relationships and excited to see the library's recent innovations through new partnerships, such as walkin counselling, the musical instrument lending library and the digital media studio.

Overall, community partners are impressed with the library's efforts to renew its focus and its mission, to make itself relevant in an era of digital technology, and to continue providing literacy services and supports throughout the city.

"Regina Public Library is important to our community. The library needs to inform the public about the value it brings, promote the idea that people can access material from home, promote visiting the library and explain why it's important to support the library. Don't be afraid to get out in the community."



Objectives & Methodology

As part of the Regina Public Library stakeholder engagement, Praxis conducted an online survey with community partners to explore perceptions and opinions regarding the library's relevance and important to their own organization, as well as to the community as a whole.

The survey questionnaire was designed in consultation with RPL. It was programmed into an online survey platform and pre-tested to ensure the questions flowed efficiently and incorporated correct branching and skip patterns.

Invitations to complete the survey were emailed to a list of community partners provided by the library. A total of 37 online surveys were completed by stakeholders in March 2019. This report presents the analysis of survey data, including frequency tables and charts.

Drilling down, 38% of stakeholders describe their industry sector as education (early years to university), 32% as community-based (community associations, community services, arts, language, culture, heritage, seniors), 16% as non-profit (often national organizations) and 14% as health-related.

Stakeholder Profile

8 out of 10 Are Locally-Based

Q. Is your organization locally based or do you have offices outside Regina?



 Approximately three-quarters (76%) of stakeholders who completed the survey represent locally-based organizations, while a quarter (24%) represent organizations with offices outside of Regina.

Q. What category best describes your organization?

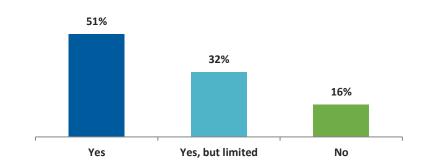


• Approximately 57% of stakeholders describe their organization as a not-for-profit, 43% as a community service organization.

Existing Relationship with Library

- Q. Does your organization have an existing relationship with the library?
- Half (51%) of community partners say their organization has an existing relationship with Regina Public Library, while another 32% say they have an existing, but limited, relationship.
- Approximately 16% do not currently have a relationship with the library.

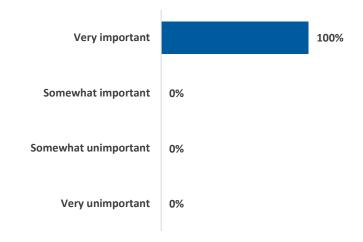
8 out of 10 Stakeholders Have Existing Relationship with RPL



Perceived Importance of Library

- Q. How important do you think Regina Public Library is to Regina?
- 100% of the community partners surveyed think the Regina Public Library is 'very important' to Regina.

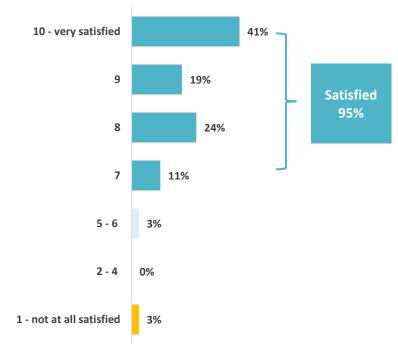
All Stakeholders Agree Library Is Very Important to Regina



Satisfaction with Library

95% of Stakeholders Satisfied with Library

Q. Regardless of whether or not you use the library, overall how satisfied are you with Regina Public Library?



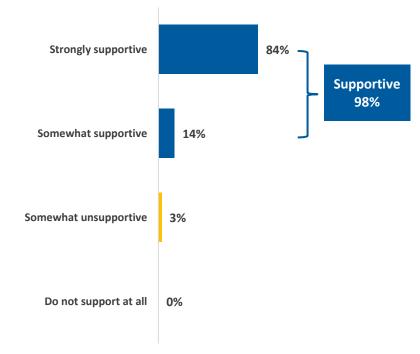
*Chart may not total 100% due to rounding

• Nine out of ten (95%) community partners are satisfied with Regina Public Library, including the majority (60%) who are highly satisfied (9 or 10 on 1-10 scale).

Support for RPL Objective

98% of Stakeholders Support RPL Objective

Q. To what extent do you support Regina Public Library's objective?



*Chart may not total 100% due to rounding

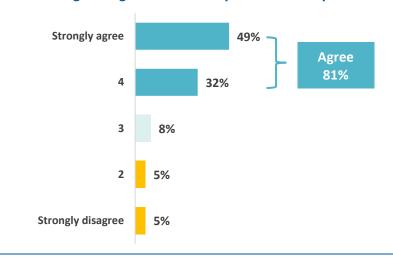
 Virtually all (98%) stakeholders support Regina Public Library's objective—with the large majority (84%) 'strongly supportive.'

Perceptions of Regina Public Library

RPL as a Community Hub

- Q. Community hubs provide a central access point for a wide range of services supporting literacy, learning, social engagement, economic growth, culture and recreation to nourish community life. In other words, a community hub is a "one stop shop" for all these things.
 - How much do you agree that Regina Public Library is a community hub?
- Eight out of ten (81%) community partners agree Regina Public Library is a community hub, meaning a 'one stop shop' for literacy, learning, social engagement, economic growth, culture and recreation.

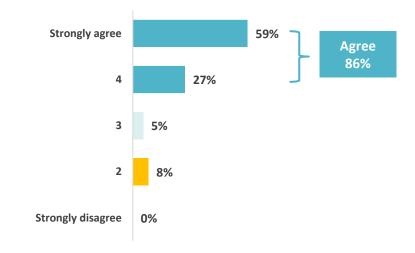
8 out of 10 Agree Regina Public Library is a Community Hub



Pride in Regina Public Library

- Q. Do you agree that Regina Public Library is something Regina organizations can be proud of?
- Nine out of ten (86%) stakeholders agree the Regina Public Library is something Regina organizations can be proud of, including the majority (59%) who 'strongly agree.'

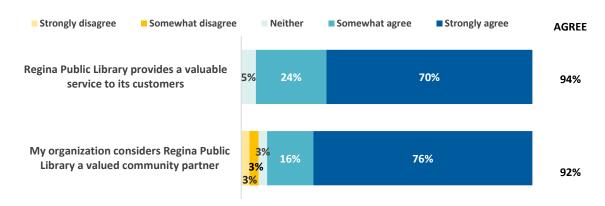
9 out of 10 Agree Regina Organizations Can be Proud of Library



RPL as Valued Service Provider & Partner

9 out of 10 Agree RPL Provides Valued Service

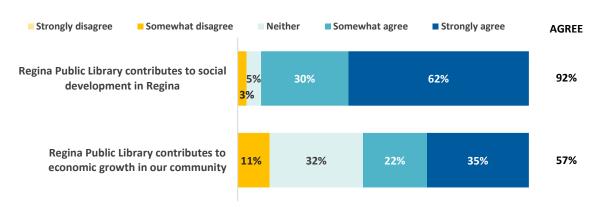
- Q. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
- Nine out of ten (94%) community partners agree Regina Public Library provides a valuable service to its customers—with the large majority (70%) saying they 'strongly agree.'
- Nine out of ten (92%) also agree their organization considers the library a valued community partner, with over three-quarters (76%) saying they 'strongly agree.'



RPL Contributes to Social & Economic Development

9 out of 10 Agree RPL Contributes to Social Development

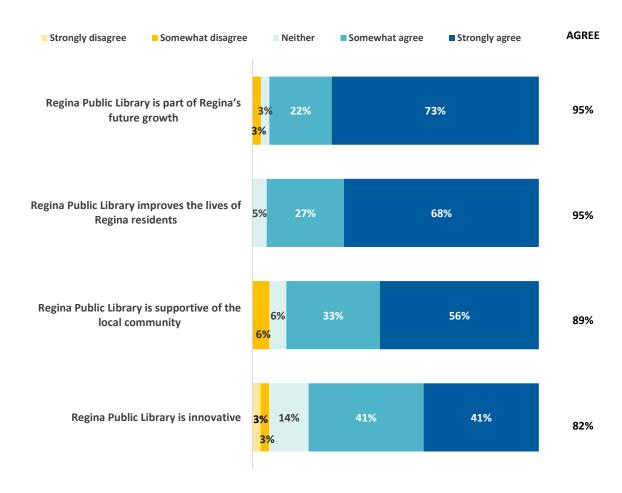
- Q. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
- Nine out of ten (92%) community partners agree Regina Public Library contributes to social development in Regina, including 62% who 'strongly agree.'
- Six out of ten (57%) agree the library contributes to economic development in Regina, with 35% saying they 'strongly agree.'



RPL as Contributing to Community

9 out of 10 Agree RPL Contributes to Community

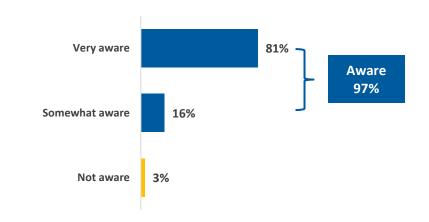
- Q. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
- Nine out of ten (95%) community partners agree Regina Public Library is part of Regina's future growth, including the large majority (73%) who 'strongly agree.'
- Nine out of ten (95%) agree Regina Public Library improves the lives of Regina residents, again with the large majority (68%) who 'strongly agree.'
- Nine out of ten (89%) agree Regina Public Library is supportive of the local community, with over half (56%) saying they 'strongly agree.'
- Eight out of ten (82%) agree Regina Public Library is innovative.



Awareness of Free Programs & Services

- Q. Are you aware that almost all the programs and services offered by Regina Public Library are free?
- Virtually all (97%) community partners are aware that the programs and services offered by Regina Public Library are free.

97% of Stakeholders Know RPL Programs & Services Are Free



Access to Information

- Q. Are you, as a stakeholder, receiving the information you need regarding Regina Public Library and its programs and services?
- Eight out of ten (76%) stakeholders say they are receiving the information they need about Regina Public Library programs and services.

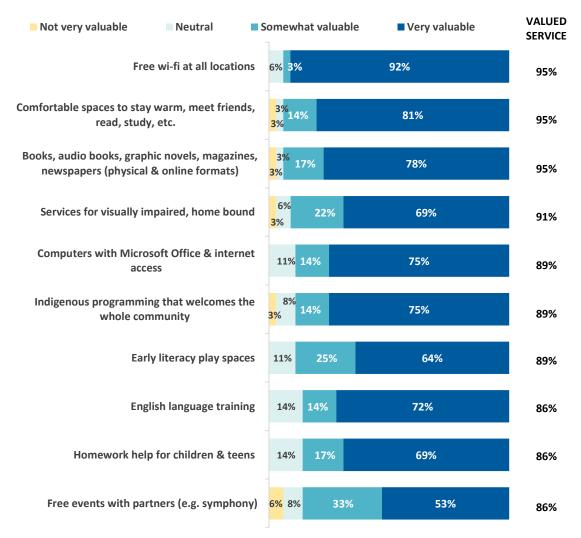
8 out of 10 Stakeholders Are Getting RPL Information



Most Valued Library Services

Community Partners Value Wide Variety of RPL Services

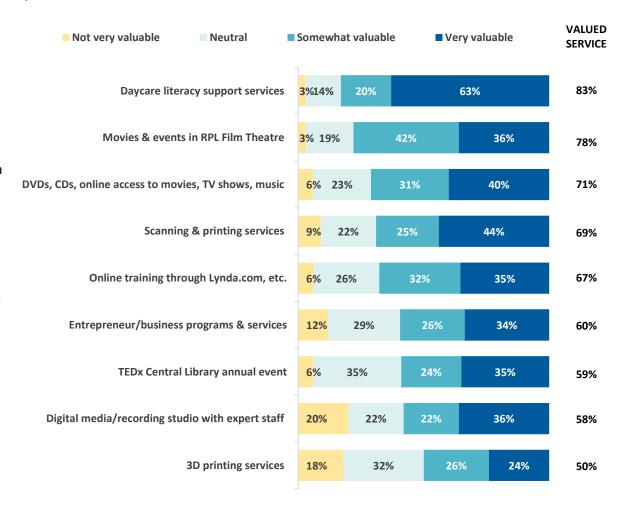
- Q. How much do you value the following Regina Public Library services?
- Nearly all community partners value:
 - o Free wi-fi
 - Comfortable spaces
 - Books, magazines, etc. in physical and online formats
 - Services for visually impaired, homebound
- Nine out of ten value:
 - Computers with Microsoft Office and internet access
 - Indigenous programming
 - o Early literacy play spaces
 - o English language training
 - Homework help
 - o Free events (e.g. symphony)



Praxis | Research | Strategy | Results

Most Valued Library Services (continued)

- Eight out of ten stakeholders value:
 - Daycare literacy support
 - RPL Film Theatre
- Seven out of ten value:
 - DVDs, CDs, online access to TV series and music
 - Scanning/printing services
 - Online training via Lynda.com physical/online formats
- Six out of ten value:
 - Entrepreneur/business programs and services
 - Annual TEDx event at Central Library
 - o Digital media studio and staff
- Five out of ten value:
 - o 3D printing services
- Suggestions for services include providing services for those with disabilities/ mental health issues (e.g. dedicated space for autism), French language supports for adults/kids, activities for low income families, community events that bring partners together.





2019 Regina Public Library Community Perception Survey Highlights

Importance of RPL

9 out of 10 Think RPL Is Important to Regina



Satisfaction with RPL

75% Are Satisfied with Regina Public Library



RPL as Community Hub

7 out of 10 Agree Regina's Libraries Are Community Hubs



RPL as Essential Service

9 out of 10 Think RPL Provides Essential Service



Pride in RPL

7 out of 10 Agree Residents Can be Proud of RPL

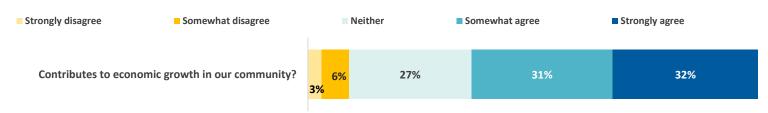


Importance of RPL as Community Hub

7 out of 10 Think It's Important for RPL to be Community Hub



Contribution to Economic Development



Community Contribution

