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STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey - 2024 Results

Date: March 24, 2025

To: Toronto Public Library Board

From: City Librarian

SUMMARY

As part of the ongoing efforts to measure impact and advance data-informed decision making, Toronto Public Library (TPL) has developed an annual survey to measure customer satisfaction and gather feedback about Library services. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the most recent survey results.

The survey was completed in October 2024 and was made available online and in branches. The survey is open to all TPL customers 13 years of age and older and was translated and made available in the five most spoken languages and French.

Overall, the survey found that customer satisfaction with the Library remains very high overall (91%). Customers also expressed high satisfaction with the helpfulness of Library staff (89%).

Highlights from the survey include:

- 82% are satisfied with the Library's digital/online services
- 81% visit a TPL branch at least once a month, with more than half of those visiting every week
- Highest areas of satisfaction were with the overall experience of using their library branch (92%) and the knowledge of library staff (91%)
- Areas of lower satisfaction were with the software on the library's computers (66%) and the variety of programs and classes offered (71%). Both areas showed improvements compared to 2022, however.

The survey also provided a broad range of open-ended feedback from customers about their experiences with using TPL services. This feedback aligns with much of the input received through the recent Strategic Plan consultation process and will be used to inform service planning and continuous improvement on an ongoing basis.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This report has no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in the current year's budget.

The Director, Finance & CFO has reviewed this financial impact statement and agrees with it.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on September 23, 2024, the Board approved the [Strategic Plan 2025-2029: Results of Survey of Toronto Residents](#) report, a survey of Toronto residents by a third-party as a component of TPL's 2025-2029 Strategic Plan consultation process.

At its meeting on October 30, 2023, the Library Board approved the [Measuring the Social Impact of Toronto Public Library](#) report, a study which used an innovative new methodology to provide an empirical, evidence based measurement approach to better understand the ways in which TPL services impact library users.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

As part of the ongoing efforts to measure impact and improve outcome measurement capacity of the organization, TPL has developed an annual survey which measures customer satisfaction and gathers feedback about Library services. The survey was developed in part to collect data to support key performance indicators used to measure TPL's progress in achieving the goals of the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan and the Digital Strategy. This survey also builds on other impact measurement initiatives like the Social Impact Study conducted in 2023 and the third-party survey conducted in 2024. It provides distinct data and insights that advance both TPL's commitment to data-informed decision making as well as customer service excellence.

In 2024, the annual system-wide customer satisfaction survey was conducted for the second time. The inaugural survey was conducted in 2022, but the 2023 survey had to be deferred due to TPL's ongoing response to the 2023 cybersecurity incident.

This annual customer satisfaction survey is distinct from the third-party survey of Toronto residents completed in 2024 as part of the Library's 2025-2029 Strategic Plan consultation process. The third-party survey is a representative sample of both users and non-users conducted every five years that measures awareness of services, perceptions of the Library broadly, as well as service use trends.

COMMENTS

The customer satisfaction survey is conducted annually and is open to all TPL customers to respond to and provide feedback about Library services.

Methodology

The survey was available for four weeks in October 2024 and was promoted broadly through the TPL website, account login page, on social media, as well as in branches. All customers aged 13 and older were eligible to participate. Close to 5,300 survey responses were received. The survey was promoted in key service areas and programs to ensure participation of equity deserving groups. The survey was translated and made available in the five most spoken languages besides English and French (Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese,

Portuguese, Tagalog, Spanish). Paper copies were available in branches and support was also offered to complete by telephone through Answerline for customers with accessibility needs.

Key Findings

Overall, the survey found that customer satisfaction with the Library remains very high overall (91%). Customers also expressed high satisfaction with the helpfulness of Library staff (89%).

Who responded to the survey:

- 8% youth (under the age of 25)
- 32% seniors (65+)
- 4% identified as a gender minority (e.g. non-binary or transgender)
- 17% identified as a sexual minority
- 29% reported household income of less than \$50,000
- 37% were not born in Canada
- 32% identified as a racialized person
- 17% identified as having a disability

Highlights from the survey include:

- 82% are satisfied with the Library's digital/online services
- Highest areas of satisfaction were with the overall experience of using their library branch (92%) and the knowledge of library staff (91%), as well as the variety of books and other materials to borrow (89%) and the attractiveness and cleanliness of the branch the respondent used (87%)
- Areas of lower satisfaction were with the software on the library's computers (66%) and the variety of programs and classes offered (71%). However, both areas showed improvements compared to 2022
- 81% of respondents visit a TPL branch at least once a month, with more than half of those visiting every week

The survey also provided a broad range of open-ended feedback from customers about their experiences with using TPL services. Common themes included:

- Open hours, including support for longer evening and weekend hours, Sunday hours in particular, and more consistent weekday hours. Customers also provided positive feedback about the expansion of hours already implemented in 2024.

- Collections, including comments about long wait times for holds, selection of audiobooks and eBooks, and multilingual collections. Customers also provided positive feedback about the range of materials available and the ease of access to both online and physical collections.
- Website, including comments about difficulty finding materials in the catalogue as well as finding information about programs, wanting more personalized recommendations, requests for an app, as well as noting frequent downtime. Many of these improvements will be incorporated into the new digital experience platform project currently underway to replace the tpl.ca website.
- Programs, including support for more programs for adults, more programs offered in local neighbourhoods, and more programs offered in the evenings and on Sundays. Customers also provided positive feedback about the high quality and diverse programming available, and the ability to improve their skills and learning.
- Other theme areas addressed topics such as [tpl:MAP](#) passes, public printing, and quality of Wi-Fi, where improvements have recently been made.

Much of the feedback received aligns with the input received through the recent Strategic Plan consultation process and will be used to inform service planning and continuous improvement on an ongoing basis. Where improvements have already been made or is planned in 2025 in response to feedback received, the survey results for next year should reflect a positive trend in those areas. Future results will be analysed both to understand impacts of service changes and to identify future areas for additional improvements.

Overwhelmingly, however, the feedback received through the survey was incredibly positive, both about the value of TPL staff and library services overall. Customers took the opportunity to share their appreciation for the professionalism and dedication of library staff and the ways that TPL has impacted their lives. A few examples are provided below:

“TPL is a treasure! Accessing books via the hold system, E-books, digital magazines and newspapers, as well as programming and physical spaces has enhanced our family’s experience of the city for many years.”

"The TPL offers an incredible wealth of resources and services to us! This year, I credit the TPL with helping me to get my current job. I used the library heavily to research for my application and interviews - I watched documentaries on Kanopy, read e-books and listened to audiobooks both on the subject area of the job but also on how to present myself with confidence and clarity. I also even printed materials for my interview (resume, portfolio files) at the library before my interview! I don't think I would have gotten this job without all the help the library provided through its resources."

"Libraries are the lifeblood of a community, and TPL exceeds all expectations. I particularly want to compliment staff on the quality of programming (stellar authors, panels and discussions, Indigenous presenters, etc.)"

"Staff are always so helpful and friendly. I am impressed with the way they interact with people who have mental health issues or physical challenges."

"The library has helped me get out of my home and start to imagine a future where I am able to thrive again. Thank you for everything you do to inspire hope."

CONTACT

Shawn Mitchell; Director, Policy, Planning and Performance Management;
Tel: 416-395- 5602; Email: smitchell@tpl.ca

SIGNATURE

Vickery Bowles
City Librarian

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Customer Satisfaction Survey 2024 Results Presentation

System-Wide Customer Satisfaction Survey 2024 Results

March 2025

background

- system-wide customer satisfaction survey conducted in October 2024
- all customers age 13 and older eligible to participate
- available online and in branches
- translated into top five languages and French
- more than 5300 responses received

overall satisfaction high

91% satisfied with the Library

89% satisfied with the helpfulness of Library staff

82% satisfied with the Library's digital/online services

who responded to the survey?

8% youth (under 25)

32% seniors

4% identified as a gender minority

17% identified as a sexual minority

29% reported a household income less than \$50,000

37% were not born in Canada

32% identified as a racialized person

17% identified as having a disability

respondents visit branches often

81% of respondents visit a TPL branch **at least once a month**, with **more than half of those** visiting **every week**

Top 5 visited branches were:

North York Central Library **4.6%**

Toronto Reference Library **3.9%**

Northern District **2.8%**

Runnymede **2.5%**

Deer Park **2.3%**

highest satisfaction

92% The overall experience of using the library branch I visit

91% The knowledge of library staff

89% The variety of books and other materials to borrow

87% The attractiveness and cleanliness of the library I use

lowest satisfaction

66% The software on the library's computers

71% The variety of programs and classes offered

74% The number of computers available for use

75% The quality of wireless internet

customer feedback – open hours

“ It would be great to have the library open consistently in the mornings and evenings

“ Longer hours would be a fantastic improvement! It would provide more flexibility for those who work irregular hours or have other commitments during the day, like school.

“ I've been coming here for 15 years. McGregor is very important to me and my community. The new hours are so helpful. I literally found a new job in part because I could access their computers in a timely manner.

customer feedback – collections

“ Some of the books I want have limited copies and they are difficult to acquire within a reasonable time frame

“ As Toronto is one of the most multicultural cities in Canada, collections in other languages [sh]ould include books for kids to learn the languages, the classics and most prominent books.

“ I borrow approx 200 items per year and find everything I need in a reasonable time. I thank everyone for the amazing job they do processing and purchasing materials. You really bring a lot of joy to my life!

customer feedback – website

“ I wish the library had a dedicated app. It would drastically enhance the user experience

“ It would be nice if the library had some kind of algorithm to provide personalized recommendations to readers based on what they had read in the past.

“ The website isn't very user friendly when it comes to searching for books by genre, age range or topic

customer feedback – programs

“ I'd suggest some arts programs or other adult programs in the evening that started after office hours so that we can engage and socialize within community

“ More community classes for families, teens, and children/babies. Also better advertising of the current classes offered, I feel like nobody knows our library even does these events.

“ It would be great if the programs listed on the website, could be available at every branch—including smaller ones. This would make it more convenient for people to attend these programs without needing to travel to larger/other branches

customer feedback – other themes

“ Tpl:MAP is inconvenient, not a fair service for individuals without internet or unable to log on at midnight.

“ Printing service at the Library needs to get back to normal level before the cyber hack.

“ Please improve wifi, it is slow and cannot handle multiple tasks. User is also disconnected after about 2 hours of connection.

positive feedback about impact of TPL services

“ The TPL offers an incredible wealth of resources and services to us! This year, I credit the TPL with helping me to get my current job.

“ The library has helped me get out of my home and start to imagine a future where I am able to thrive again. Thank you for everything you do to inspire hope.

“ The library is an amazing and important public good. I am grateful every day for the library.... The library gives us access to a world of books and resources that we can't get on our own.



Questions?