



**CITY OF SURPRISE**  
**Library Advisory Commission**  
**16755 W. Vereda Solana Dr.**  
**Surprise, AZ 85387**  
Thursday, May 8, 2025 @ 6:00 PM  
Asante Library

- A. Call To Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Pledge of Allegiance
- D. Staff Reports
- E. Library Commission Agenda:

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC:**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** In order to address the Board\Commission, you will need to fill out a Call to the Public Form available at the front counter, and then turn it in to the Secretary before the meeting begins.

Note: A.R.S. 38-431.01(H) - During this time members of the public may address the Board\Commission only on issues within the jurisdiction of the Board\Commission which are not an item on the agenda. At the conclusion of the open call, the Board\Commission may respond to criticism, may ask staff to review the matter or may ask that the matter be put on a future agenda. No discussion or action shall take place on any item raised.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**REGULAR AGENDA ITEM - NON-PUBLIC HEARING:**

- 1. Citywide      Consideration and action pertaining to the April 10, 2025      Arts, Culture &  
Library Advisory Commission meeting minutes.      Library Department
- 2. Citywide      Discussion and review pertaining to the Surprise Public      Arts, Culture &  
Library Strategic Plan first draft for review and feedback.      Library Department
- F. Other Business and Future Agenda Items
- G. Current Events and Reports
- H. Adjournment

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KRISTI PASSARELLI, CITY CLERK

**POSTED: Monday, May 5th, 2025 @ 1:15 PM**

**SPECIAL NOTE: PERSONS WITH SPECIAL ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS, INCLUDING LARGE PRINT MATERIALS OR INTERPRETER, SHOULD CONTACT THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE @ 623.222.1200 OR CLERK@SURPRISEAZ.GOV, BY NO LATER THAN 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING TIME.**



**CITY OF SURPRISE**  
**Library Advisory Commission**

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Council Meeting Date: May 8, 2025                      Contact Person:  
Submitting Department: Arts, Culture & Library      District: Citywide  
Department  
Staff Recommendations:

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Consent: No              Regular: No              Public Hearing: No              Report/Discussion: No

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**Agenda Wording:**

Consideration and action pertaining to the April 10, 2025 Library Advisory Commission meeting minutes.

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**Motion:**

I move to approve the April 10, 2025 Library Advisory Commission meeting minutes.

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**Background:**

Not applicable.

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**Objective Analysis:**

Not applicable.

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**Policy Compliant:**

This item is consistent with the City and Council policies.

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**Financial Impact:**

There is no anticipated financial impact related to this item.

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**Budget Impact:**

There is no anticipated budget impact related to this item.

**FTE Impact:**

There is no anticipated FTE impact related to this item.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. 041025 LAC Meeting Minutes DRAFT
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**CITY OF SURPRISE  
Library Advisory Commission  
16089 N. Bullard Ave.  
Surprise, Arizona 85374**

Thursday, April 10, 2025 @ 6:00 p.m.

Surprise Regional Library

**DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

A. Call to Order

B. Roll Call

Chair Kady McCarthy, Vice Chair Tomasina DiCapo, Commission members Deborah Gentry, Mark McCall and Jamie Baker

Absent: Commission members Annie Ansell and Desiree VanLoon

Staff: Ashley Ware –City Librarian and Heather Donaldson – Sr. Management Analyst

C. Pledge of Allegiance

D. Staff Reports

Ms. Ware reported on the following items:

- We would like to take a moment to remember Commissioner Bill Shields. He was on our first commission and did so much to promote the library and make sure we could be successful.
- We are in the process of hiring a new part-time library assistant for Hollyhock Library.
- We have a new commissioner, Annie, who will be at our next meeting in May!
- Spring into the library starts this Saturday.
- Summer Reading is happening! Registration starts on May 1st.

E. Library Commission Agenda

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC:**

None

**REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS – NON PUBLIC HEARING:**

1. Consideration and action pertaining to the March 13, 2025 Library Advisory Commission meeting minutes.

Vice Chair DiCapo moved to approve the March 13, 2025 Library Advisory Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Baker 2<sup>nd</sup>. 5 Yes votes. Motion carried.

2. Discussion and review pertaining to data collected for the Surprise Public Library Strategic Plan initiative.

City Librarian Ware lead a discussion with the Commission regarding the strategic plan draft. She discussed the following topics with the Commission to gain their input:

- Library system’s support of the City’s mission:
  - Library system’s contribution to creating a safe and attractive community.
  - Examples of how the Library system acts in fiscally responsible manner while fulfilling its own mission.
  - Library system’s focus on multi-generational literacy initiatives and how they align with the City’s goal of helping residents thrive.
  - Ways that the “cutting edge technology” and “engaging programs” of the Library system contribute to the “innovative public service” aspect of the City’s mission.
  - Ways that the Library’s vision of being a “vibrant heart of the community” support the City’s aim of creating and attractive community.
  - Library system’s commitment to “equal access and opportunity for all” and how it reinforces the City’s broader goal of residents thriving.
- Library system’s mission:
  - Areas that the Library system could focus on to achieve its vision.
  - Resources necessary to fully support the Library in achieving its mission.
  - Library’s role in supporting economic development and business growth within the City, in alignment with the City’s mission.
- How do our “top line items” support the Library system’s mission and what key performance indicators could we use to measure the success and impact of each of them:
  - Books, movies, music & things.
  - Free access to information.
  - Socialization, inclusion and supporting the community.
  - Lifelong learning.
  - Programs, community engagement and special events.
- Library system strengths:
  - Ways that the Library system can empower its staff to enhance the patron experience and address community needs effectively.
  - Ways that the Library system can strengthen "building relationships" with patrons and community stakeholders.
  - Ways that the Library system’s "hours of operation" meet the needs of the community and opportunities for adjustments.
  - Ways that the Library system’s "facilities" meet the current and future needs of the community.
  - Ways that the Library system can continue to cultivate "city support."
  - Ways that the Library system can further empower its advocates.
- Library system near-term goals (within one year).
- Library system long-term goals (within five years).
- Ways the Library system can respond if current conditions evolve/change.
- Ways the Library system can turn it’s goals into action.

F. Other Business and Future Agenda Items:

- Commissioner Baker requested Surprise Public Library System data on MAX and ILL.
- Chair McCarthy wants to find out how the Commission can be more involved with the Summer Reading Program.

G. Current Events and Reports

- Vice-Chair DiCapo enjoyed the Boards and Commission Dinner. She also stated that the storytimes at the stadium went really well and were very well attended.
- Commissioner Gentry suggested that at the Boards and Commissioner Dinner the different commission members should be sat with each other rather than all at the same tables. She also mentioned how she has enjoyed shelving books at the library, and that she participated in her first book club.
- Chair McCarthy took a moment to honor Commissioner Shields. She also stated that she is grateful for all that the library does, and she recognized National Library Week.

H. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn at 7:40 pm – Commissioner McCall made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Baker 2<sup>nd</sup>. 5 Yes votes. Motion Carried.

	<hr/> Kady McCarthy, Chair
<b>ATTEST:</b>	<hr/> Heather Donaldson, Sr. Management Analyst

**CERTIFICATION:**

I, Ashley Ware, City Librarian for the City of Surprise Arts, Culture & Library Department, Maricopa County, Arizona, do hereby verify that these are the true and correct minutes of the Library Advisory Commission meeting held on April 10, 2025.

	<hr/> Ashley Ware, City Librarian
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**CITY OF SURPRISE  
Library Advisory Commission**

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Council Meeting Date: May 8, 2025                      Contact Person:  
Submitting Department: Arts, Culture & Library      District: Citywide  
Department  
Staff Recommendations:

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Consent: No              Regular: No              Public Hearing: No              Report/Discussion: No

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**Agenda Wording:**

Discussion and review pertaining to the Surprise Public Library Strategic Plan first draft for review and feedback.

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**Motion:**

None.

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**Background:**

The Library division was established to provide city-operated library services. To support the future direction of the Library division, to ensure the community has a voice, and to expand upon the current services previously provided, the Library would benefit from a strategic plan.

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**Objective Analysis:**

The strategic plan will develop the mission, vision, goals, and strategies for the Library to guide future policies, programming, and budgets.

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**Policy Compliant:**

This item is consistent with the City and Council policies.

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**Financial Impact:**

There is no anticipated financial impact related to this item.

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**Budget Impact:**

There is no anticipated budget impact related to this item.

**FTE Impact:**

There is no anticipated FTE impact related to this item.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Surprise Public Library Strategic Plan 2025 DRAFT
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# Surprise Public Library Strategic Plan 2025

## Acknowledgments

Library Advisory Commission

Kady McCarthy – Chair

Tomasina DiCapo – Vice Chair

Annie Ansell

Deborah Gentry

Mark McCall

Jamie Baker

Desiree Van Loon

Surprise City Staff

Bob Wingenroth, City Manager

Tracy Montgomery, Assistant City Manager

Andrea Davis, Deputy City Manager/Chief Financial Officer

Kelsey Lamphier, Arts, Culture, & Library Director

Ashley Ware, City Librarian

**Letter from the Director**

Kelsey Lamphier – Arts, Culture, & Library Director

## **Background and History**

### **TIMELINE**

- 1980's Hollyhock Library was donated and opened
- 1987 Maricopa County Library District was created and Surprise joined
- 2002 Surprise Regional Library opened
- 2019 Asante Library opened
- 2022 Arts, Culture, & Library Department Established
- 2023 Library Division established
- July 1, 2023, Grand Reopening of Surprise Public Library System

### **BACKGROUND & HISTORY**

The journey of Surprise Public Library began with the Hollyhock Library, a smaller community library nestled in the original square mile of Surprise. For many years, Hollyhock Library, along with what would later become Surprise Regional Library and Asante Library, were part of the Maricopa County Library District (MCLD), providing essential library services to the growing community. In a significant transition completed in July 2023, the City of Surprise took over the management and operations of these three libraries, establishing the Surprise Public Library System and marking a new chapter in local library service.

### **RELATIONS TO OTHER PLANS & STUDIES**

Developed to guide the new Library division, this Strategic Plan purposefully builds upon and broadens the scope of the principles outlined in the City Council Strategic Plan (2023) and the American Library Association's Core Values and Mission, providing a more detailed focus on the Library's services, and future growth.

### **American Library Association**

#### **MISSION**

The mission of the American Library Association is to provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.

## CORE VALUES

- Access
- The Public Good
- Confidentiality/Privacy
- Preservation
- Democracy
- Professionalism
- Diversity
- Service
- Education/Lifelong Learning
- Social Responsibility
- Intellectual Freedom
- Sustainability

## **City Council Strategic Plan (2023)**

### *SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY*

*Maintain a safe and healthy community amid historical growth.*

There is a growing body of research demonstrating the significant role libraries play in creating safer and healthier communities. Studies have shown libraries are considered trusted community anchors and safe spaces for people of all backgrounds. Libraries are designed to be open and accessible for everyone regardless of socioeconomic status, age, or other factors. This inclusivity fosters social interactions across different groups to bridge cultural and multigenerational gaps. Libraries offer opportunities for social connection through programs and simply provide a welcoming space for people to interact, which can play a crucial role in mental and emotional health, especially for seniors and isolated individuals. Research has also shown libraries provide free access to reliable health information through books, databases, and specialized programs. Librarians and staff often help patrons navigate this information, improving health literacy.

### *ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL VITALITY*

*Promote a healthy economy through strategies that add employment, attract new businesses, and capital investment; support opportunities for veterans and people of all abilities and income levels to thrive; and provide tourism and cultural opportunities.*

Libraries are vital hubs significantly contributing to a healthy economy through various strategies. Research indicates a positive impact on employment, investment opportunities for diverse populations, business, and tourism. Libraries offer access to free planning tools, legal and online databases, educational programs, and public computers reducing the cost for Veterans, entrepreneurs, and local business startups. Often, libraries are the connection for people to find dedicated information and resources to improve their financial well-being.

### *COMMUNITY LIVABILITY & LIFE-LONG LEARNING*

*Provide a high quality residential and business-built environment; revitalize at-risk communities and assist vulnerable populations; collaborate with K-8 schools, skill centers, and higher educational institutions to support innovative services/programs and learning opportunities for all ages.*

Libraries are crucial for fostering a community of lifelong learning through impactful collaborations, programs, and resources. Research highlights the contributions of libraries as a community hub, attracting

people and fostering a sense of place. Libraries have been known to revitalize neighborhoods and commercial areas, making them more attractive for residents and businesses alike. Libraries offer resources for job searching, veteran resources, addressing homelessness, food insecurity, healthcare, and mental health, acting as crucial support to systems for vulnerable populations. Moreover, libraries champion early literacy, school assistance, and continuous learning for all ages through summer reading programs, STEAM programs, educational activities and events, and digital literacy training in an ever-growing digital world.

### *STEWARDSHIP*

*Foster a culture of transparency and fiscal responsibility in managing resources and providing excellent municipal services.*

Libraries are committed to stewardship by providing free and open access to information for all. This inherently fosters transparency by ensuring public access to a wide range of resources, including government documents, community information, and diverse perspectives. Research demonstrates their cost-effectiveness and efficient, data-informed resource management offers a significant return on investment for taxpayers. Their free services provide substantial economic value to individuals and communities. Libraries effectively deliver municipal services by adapting to diverse community needs, ensuring equitable access, forging vital partnerships with local businesses and City departments, and effective resource allocation and services.

# Public Engagement

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Public engagement was paramount in the strategic planning process because it ensured the Library's Strategic Plan would truly reflect the needs, aspirations, and priorities of the Surprise community. By actively involving residents, stakeholders, and library users, the planning process gained valuable insights, fostered a sense of ownership, and support for the Library's future direction, and ultimately led to a more relevant and impactful strategic plan.

## METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT

To achieve meaningful public engagement, we employed a combination of the following methods:

### SURVEY (794 responses)

To ensure the Library effectively addresses community needs and preferences, a comprehensive online survey garnered responses from a diverse range of residents. This feedback directly informed the strategic planning process, capturing valuable insights on current services, programs, priorities, and future initiatives.

### SURVEY OUTREACH

In 2024, the library actively sought community input through a six-week survey, widely promoted via press releases, social media, in-library signage, and outreach events. This comprehensive approach ensured residents had an opportunity to share their perspectives and contribute to the library's future direction.

### INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS (63)

Conducted over 60 individual meetings with key stakeholders, including patrons, City staff, local business owners, and community organizations. These meetings provided an opportunity for in-depth discussions, addressing specific concerns, and seeking input on the Strategic Plan.

### FOCUS GROUPS (7)

To gather in-depth perspectives, the Library organized targeted focus groups comprising a diverse range of community members, including patrons, staff, neighboring residents, and local businesses. These facilitated discussions explored key themes such as sustaining and promoting library and community

services, enhancing Surprise's engagement, identifying optimal locations for future library resources, and effectively promoting existing Surprise libraries.

## **Mission and Vision of Surprise Public Library System**

### **City of Surprise Mission**

The City of Surprise delivers exemplary and innovative public service with integrity and professionalism; in a fiscally responsible manner; creating a safe and attractive community where residents and business can thrive.

### **Surprise Public Library Mission**

The Surprise Public Library System fosters community connection and intellectual freedom through multi-generational literacy initiatives, cutting edge technology, and engaging programs that ensure equal access and opportunity for all.

### **Surprise Public Library Vision**

To be a vibrant heart of the community that welcomes individuals of all ages and backgrounds to explore, learn, and thrive together. Cultivating a responsive collection that meets the needs of our community. Providing accessibility initiatives through a wide variety of library services. Welcoming everyone with a focus on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging.

## Strategic Goals

### Goal 1

#### **Grow community connection to improve the lives of Surprise residents.**

Provide seamless and user-centered experiences across all library services to positively reflect the Library's commitment to service and the unique needs of residents.

Establish beneficial partnerships with community organizations, schools, and businesses to expand the Library's reach and service offerings.

Ensure equitable access to library resources and services for all community members to create a central gathering place.

## Strategic Goals

Goal 2.

**Develop and encourage lifelong learning through innovative and impactful programming, collections, and resources addressing community interests and needs.**

Implement a comprehensive lifelong learning ecosystem through programs from birth through adulthood, with optimal learning opportunities for every person in our community to support their unique interests and needs.

Curate and promote relevant and unique collections to meet the evolving needs of the community.

Foster a positive and passionate work environment to attract and retain talented library staff. Enhance staff expertise and community engagement by creating professional development pathways for staff to succeed in their roles.

## Strategic Goals

Goal 3.

**Strengthen the visibility of the library to broaden the perception of what a library could be for the community.**

Ensure fiscal and financial stability by demonstrating the value and return on investment of the library to the community and stakeholders through sustained data.

Capitalize on opportunities to develop and implement a targeted marketing strategy to increase library visibility and attract new patrons to resources and services.

## Strategic Goals

Goal 4.

**Explore options for library expansion for the growing needs and population of Surprise to enhance the community experience and improve services.**

Develop a comprehensive long-term facilities plan for consideration for a larger main library or expansion of existing buildings to guarantee all residents of Surprise have accessible access to library resources and services.

Consider and develop preliminary library designs through community input on needs and current space limitations.

## Bibliography

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## Community Input Survey

Community feedback served as a crucial foundation for developing the Library’s Strategic Plan. This process involved various engagement methods, such as focus groups, meetings with community stakeholders, and a comprehensive survey that garnered 794 responses. The analysis of the survey data took careful consideration of the unique circumstances of the Library transitioning from County-led to City-led operations. The assessment aims not only at overall satisfaction levels but also to pinpoint emerging concerns or successes. By conducting this survey, the Library gained a deeper understanding of the community and has taken informed steps to enhance the patron experience.

The survey data below shows the top percentages of the survey responses to focus on key trends for actionable insights and to identify the viewpoints of the majority in our community.

Overall, how important is the library to you and your family?

- 61.10% Very Important
- 28.82% Important
- 5.48% Somewhat Important

On average, how often do you visit a Surprise Library?

- 30.85% Monthly
- 30.09% Less than once a month
- 29.08% Weekly

How would you rate each of the following Surprise Library services?

Customer Service	62.60% Excellent	24.55% Good	3.60% Fair
Collections (books, movies, etc. )	42.86% Good	21.62% Excellent	18.40% Fair
Programs	52.96% Not applicable	18.89% Good	17.61 Excellent
Online Services	34.24% Good	29.44% Excellent	21.14% Not applicable
Library Policies	33.81% Good	31.45% Excellent	25.43% Not applicable
Facilities	50.59% Excellent	39.69% Good	8.67% Not applicable
Hours of Operation	46.13% Excellent	39.69% Good	8.38% Not applicable
Overall, how would you rate the Library?	42.16% Good	40.49% Excellent	9.38% Fair

How important is each of the following library services to you?

Borrowing materials	76.02% Very Important	14.54% Important	3.57% Somewhat Important
Reference	22.55% Somewhat Important	21.91% Important	20.23% Very Important
Programs	24.42% Not applicable	23.78% Very Important	17.48% Important
Internet Access	35.35% Very Important	19.48% Important	18.84% Not applicable
MAX Lending/Inter Library Loans	39.20% Very Important	23.93% Important	17.72% Not applicable
Online Services	51.16% Very Important	25.19% Important	10.28% Not applicable

What type of library materials do you check out the most?

- 77.23% Physical books
- 26.54 DVDs & Blu-rays
- 41.48% eBooks & eAudiobooks

Which library do you attend programming at most often?

- 86.89% Surprise Regional
- 11.43% Asante Library
- 1.68% Hollyhock Library

How do you typically find out about library programs?

- 53.02% Library website
- 33.05% Signs or flyers at the Library
- 23.32% Social media

## Survey Comments

“A good library is an essential component of the city.”

“Expands my knowledge and the enjoyment of books.”

“Gathering place, place of peace and welcome. Great variety of books and resources.”

“The [Library’s] computers and internet, the newspapers are needed because there are still people who do not have access to them. The Mobile Library is a great way to service those who don’t drive or are home bound.”

“Just continue to grow and meet the needs of the community. I think we have a large population of people with disabilities/neurotypical differences, so maybe some programming that is sensory friendly or partnering with Adapted Recreation would be beneficial.”

“The wealth of information. The Surprise Library is a wonderful area to sit and read and enjoy a beautiful view.”

“Excellent staff: friendly and knowledgeable.”

“I love that I can share the gift of reading with my grandbabies. Going to pick out books weekly and choosing themes teaches them skills they will hopefully care through life.”

“We love the ability to meet neighbors, and people of the community while sharing a common interest and enjoyment of reading.”

“I value the community space where my children can read and be able to play with other children.”

“The programs (like baby and toddler time) and events (like zoo/science center collaborations) have been huge for me and my two kiddos. I get to meet other moms, they get to tumble around with kids their own age and learn hands-on, not sitting at a desk! The library staff really kills it too; they bring so much energy and make it fun for the kids.”

“[The Library] allows my child and I to bond and spend time with each other in an educational setting outside of the home as well as allows socialization with other for free.”

“It’s a needed place for many community members. It allows for people to do work, be entertained, have a place to get out of the heat, and a place for people to come together.”

“What I value is also how it benefits access to entertainment, education, safe spaces, and helping those without computer access.”

“Very comfortable and inviting environment at no cost to enjoy.”

“Brings us together, all ages and life experiences.”

“I have little kids, so the little classes/storytimes are our favorite.”

“The resources of the library and staff. The programs and classes they hold for the children, families, and community.”

“Having materials for research and movies to watch entertainment.”

“Supporting literacy in our community.”

“The resources available to the community. My most used resource is hands down, Hoopla.”

“I use my library card mostly to check out audiobooks via Libby. Occasionally, I visit the library to read magazines and peruse the cookbooks.”

“Easy access, excellent service, great selection of books on politics, biographies, history, new arrivals, great reading area, very clean, and lots of good things. Just love our library.”

“Books! Being able to check out eBooks online, preschool activities for my grandchildren, and reference materials.”

“I love that it’s a free place where everyone has access to knowledge, adventures and cultures all through the classes, activities, and books.”

“I love that the library is a free resource for books. I also love that it gives access to all kinds of people to love reading.”

“We use the eBooks and eAudiobooks most, but it’s a great place for families to get out of the house and have something to do on a hot summer day. It was also a great place to study when I was in school.”

“The children’s section! The ability to have our librarians purchase new titles.”

“My second grader has grown in his love of reading this year and he loves the library which is so important to me.”

“The staff and programs are wonderful. Access to materials without buying everything. Pride is taken in care and upkeep and accommodating children, lots of activities, and classes.

\*Comments may have been edited for improved clarity and grammatical accuracy.