Strategic Plan for
Timberland Regional Library
2014-2018

Background documents:

Results of Employee and Stakeholder Survey

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September 11, 2013

Timberland Regional Library
Results of Employee and Stakeholder Survey
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This report summarizes the responses to the Survey conducted between August 12 and August 26, 2013. We (Strege and Bolt) wrote the initial questions and Timberland Regional Library's Strategic Planning Committee and testers provided comments and feedback, which we incorporated into the final survey questions. **This report does not interpret these findings**. We plan to work with the Committee and the TRL Board to interpret the meanings of these results in conjunction with the findings from the focus groups, interviews, Planning Committee meetings, and the environmental scan.

This report contains the combined tally and percentages of responses to the survey's questions for all respondents. We also analyzed responses by the responder's county and two sub-groups, Friends of the Library and City or County Officials. We do not provide analysis of the other groups, with the highest response rate, TRL employees, as it unlikely that their responses will vary from the overall responses. We also do not provide analysis of the smallest groups of responses.

We provide the responses by county and by sub-group when they are <u>different</u> from the overall responses. It is important to note that the differences between the combined responses and the segmented analysis are very small, as the responses by groups or by location only vary from the overall responses by a few percentage points. Although these differences are minor, we show these variances as TRL might consider these in planning efforts.

For each closed-ended question, we chose a logical dividing line between the top responses and the other choices. We provide summaries of the major categories of responses to each open-ended question. We developed codes to categorize each response to open-ended questions (numbers 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 13) and disregarded answers that were not complete or unresponsive. We also overlooked responses for questions number 4, 6, 8, and 10 that did not provide enough information to ascertain the responder's intent. We provide a summary of overall responses to these questions and a summary of any differences by county, or the two sub-groups to questions number 4, 6, 8, and 10.

TRL should not use the result of the survey to generalize to or predict responses from any of the groups who responded to the survey, because we did not choose survey responders at random. However, because almost two-third of all TRL staff responded to the survey, we can assume that the survey reflects a majority of the opinions of library employees.

Respondents Demographics

The survey had a completed rate of 70%; 372 started and 289 completed the survey. The largest group of responders was library employees, followed by members of Friends of the Library groups.

Question 1: Choose the role that best describes you.		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Staff	70.7%	263
Friends of the Library	16.1%	60
City/County Official	5.6%	21
Local Library Board Member	4.3%	16
TRL Board Member	2.2%	8
Kiosk/Partnership Library	0.8%	3
TRL Foundation	0.3%	1
answered question		**372**

Question 2: What is your home library?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Lacey	12.6%	47
Olympia	11.3%	42
Tumwater	10.8%	40
Administrative Service Center	8.1%	30
Centralia	7.8%	29
Aberdeen	6.7%	25
Shelton	6.5%	24
Ilwaco	3.0%	11
Ocean Park	3.0%	11
Yelm	3.0%	11
Raymond	2.4%	9
North Mason	2.2%	8
Chehalis	1.9%	7
Packwood	1.9%	7

Hoquiam	1.6%	6
McCleary	1.6%	6
Oakville	1.6%	6
Salkum	1.6%	6
South Bend	1.6%	6
Tenino	1.6%	6
Westport	1.6%	6
Elma	1.3%	5
Montesano	1.3%	5
Winlock	1.3%	5
Mountain View	1.1%	4
Naselle	1.1%	4
Hoodsport	0.8%	3
Amanda Park	0.3%	1
Nisqually Tribal Library	0.3%	1
Shoalwater Bay Tribal Library	0.3%	1
Hawks Prairie (SPSCC) Kiosk	0.0%	0
North River School	0.0%	0
Rochester Community Ctr. Kiosk	0.0%	0
answered question		**372**

Responses by County

County	Respondents	Percent
Thurston	177	48%
Grays Harbor	60	16%
Lewis	58	16%
Pacific	42	11%
Mason	35	9%
TOTAL	**372**	

Community Strengths and Challenges

Question 3: Identify up to 5 significant strengths of your community. If you are aware of a strength(s) that is not on the list, you can add it under "Other". (Top choices are those with 100 or more responses and more than 30% response percent.)		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Access to recreational activities	68.5%	198
Abundant natural resources	51.9%	150
Thriving arts and cultural groups	43.6%	126
Availability of volunteers	34.9%	101
Increasing access to the Internet	34.6%	100
Dynamic community	29.8%	86
Other (please specify)	25.6%	74
Increasing availability of higher education	23.5%	68
Increasing property values	17.3%	50
Increasing broadband availability	16.3%	47
Business growth	14.2%	41
Increasing access to affordable health care	9.3%	27
Job growth	7.3%	21
answered question		**289**

A large number, 74, of respondents chose "Other" to Question 3. Twelve of these responses were about community, its pride, spirit, and the number of available community services. Six respondents mentioned the quality of local K-12 schools and three selected government as a strength. Other responses in this category included explanations of the responder's choices to this question or were different ways of expressing challenges listed as responses.

Question 3: Differences in top responses by counties (N/D shows no difference from overall responses)

County	Added community strength	Replaced community strength
Grays Harbor	N/D	N/D
Lewis	Increasing availability of higher education	Availability of volunteers
Mason	Dynamic community	Thriving arts and cultural groups
Pacific	N/D	N/D
Thurston	Dynamic community	Increasing access to the Internet

Question 3: Differences in top responses by sub-group (N/D shows no difference from overall responses)

Group	Added community strength	Replaced community strength
Officials	Increasing availability of higher education Dynamic community	Increasing access to the Internet Thriving arts and cultural groups
Friends	N/D	N/D

Question 4: Which strength is the most important for your community and why?	
Overall	Abundant natural resources

Question 4: Differences in top responses by county (N/D shows no difference from overall responses)

County	Most important community strength
Overall	Abundant natural resources
Grays Harbor	Increasing access to the internet and Abundant natural resources (tied)
Lewis	Increasing availability of higher education
Mason	N/D
Pacific	N/D
Thurston	Dynamic community

Question 4: Differences in top responses by sub-group

Group	Most important community strength
Overall	Abundant natural resources
Officials	N/D
Friends	N/D

Question 5: Identify up to 5 significant challenges facing your community. If you are aware of a challenge(s) that is not on the list, you can add it under "Other". (Top choices are those with 100 or more responses and more than 30% response percent.)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Unemployment	69.2%	200
Drug/Alcohol/Substance abuse	57.8%	167
Lack of well-paying jobs	53.3%	154
Homelessness	43.9%	127
Poverty	38.4%	111
Mental illness	35.6%	103
Slow or no growth	34.9%	101
Access to health care	23.5%	68
Other (please specify)	15.9%	46
Sex offenders	15.2%	44
High cost of living	15.2%	44
Lack of diversity	15.2%	44
The cost of higher-education	14.2%	41
Political polarization	13.1%	38
Access to technology	12.1%	35
Lack of educational choices	11.4%	33
Low adult literacy	11.1%	32
Environmental degradation	7.6%	22
Overcrowded schools	6.9%	20
Military reductions	5.5%	16
Fast growth	4.5%	13
answered question		289

Question 5: Differences in top responses by county

County	Added community challenge	Replaced community challenge
Grays Harbor	N/D	N/D
Lewis	Sex Offenders	Homelessness
Mason	N/D	N/D
Pacific	Access to health care Lack of educational choices	Mental illness Homelessness
Thurston	High cost of living The cost of higher-education	Poverty Slow or no growth

Question 5: Differences in top responses by sub-group

Group	Added community challenge	Replaced community challenge
Officials	N/D	N/D
Friends	N/D	N/D

Question 6: Which challenge is most important for your community and why?	
Overall	Unemployment

Question 6: Differences in top responses by county

County	Most important community challenge
Overall	Unemployment
Grays Harbor	N/D
Lewis	N/D
Mason	Poverty
Pacific	N/D
Thurston	N/D

Question 6: Differences in top responses by sub-group

Group	Most important community challenge
Overall	Unemployment
Officials	N/D
Friends	N/D

TRL Strengths and Challenges

Question 7: Now turn your focus to Timberland Regional Library. Identify up to 5 significant strengths of TRL. If you are aware of a strength(s) that is not on the list, you can add it under "Other". (Top choices are those with 100 or more responses and more than 30% response percent.)		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Friendly and helpful staff	94.7%	249
Efficiency and resources of a regional library system	72.2%	190
Programs and events	70.7%	186
Quality collections in all libraries	55.5%	146
Emphasis on user needs	54.4%	143
Strong community support	44.9%	118
High quality technology	43.7%	115
Independent taxing district	15.2%	40
Budget	6.8%	18
Other (please specify)	5.3%	14
answered question		**263**

Question 7: Differences in top responses by county

County	Added TRL strength	Replaced TRL strength
Grays Harbor	N/D	N/D
Lewis	N/D	N/D
Mason	N/D	N/D
Pacific	N/D	N/D
Thurston	N/D	N/D

Question 7: Differences in top responses by sub-group

Group	Added TRL strength	Replaced TRL strength
Officials	N/D	N/D
Friends	N/D	N/D

Question 8: Which strength is most important for TRL and why?	
Overall	Friendly and helpful staff

Question 8: Differences in top responses by county

County	Most important TRL strength
Overall	Friendly and helpful staff
Grays Harbor	N/D
Lewis	N/D
Mason	N/D
Pacific	N/D
Thurston	N/D

Question 8: Differences in top responses by sub-group

Group	Most important TRL strength
Overall	Friendly and helpful staff
Officials	N/D
Friends	N/D

Question 9: Identify up to 5 significant challenges facing TRL. If you are aware of a challenge(s) that is not on the list, you can add it under "Other". (Top choices are those with 100 or more responses and more than 30% response percent.)		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Budget	52.9%	139
Users with challenging behaviors	48.3%	127
Need for more or different open hours	47.9%	126
Need for more space	47.5%	125
Perception that library may become obsolete	38.8%	102
Other (please specify)	29.7%	78
Need for more technology	29.3%	77
Supporting patron devices	20.2%	53
Theft	20.2%	53
Need for more collection	19.4%	51
Providing downloadable collections	17.1%	45
Supporting multiple languages	15.2%	40
Staff retirements	11.8%	31
Need for increased Internet speed	10.6%	28
Perception that the libraries are not a part of one regional system	9.5%	25
answered question		**263**

A large number of respondents, 78, chose "Other" to Question 9. Thirty-four responses concerned staffing issues, including need (in order of number of responses) for more staff, substitute staff, staff pay, staff training, and for better library managers. The other responses in the "Other" category included explanations of the responder's choices to this question or different ways of expressing challenges listed as responses.

Question 9: Differences in top responses by county

County	Added TRL challenge	Replaced TRL challenge
Grays Harbor	N/D	N/D
Lewis	Supporting patron devices	Users with challenging behaviors
Mason	Need for more technology	Need for more or different open hours
Pacific	Need for more technology Supporting patron devices (tied)	Need for more space
Thurston	N/D	N/D

Question 9: Differences in top responses by sub-group

Group	Added TRL challenge	Replaced TRL challenge
Officials	Need for more technology	Need for more space
Friends	Need for more collection	Users with challenging behaviors

Question 10: Which challenge is most important for TRL and why?	
Overall	Budget

Question 10: Differences in top responses by county

County	Most important TRL challenge
Overall	Budget
Gray's Harbor	Users with challenging behaviors
Lewis	Lack of Space
Mason	N/D
Pacific	Budget and Need for more technology (tied)
Thurston	N/D

Question 10: Differences in top responses by sub-group

Group	Most important TRL challenge
Overall	Budget
Officials	N/D
Friends	N/D

Current Programs and Services Priorities

Question 11: The following is a list of current TRL programs and services. Please use the scale to prioritize each program or service. 5 is high and 1 is low. (Top choices are those with rating average over 4.00)	
Answer Options	**Rating Average**
Wi-Fi	4.40
Children's programs	4.39
Print collections	4.37
Computers with MS Office and Internet access	4.26
Teen programs	4.25
Adult programs	4.18
Outreach	4.06
Reference and research databases	3.99
E-books - Online and downloadable	3.89
Movies/TV shows on DVD	3.72
Audiobooks - Online and downloadable	3.69
Meeting spaces	3.69
Audiobook CDs	3.61
Online classes (e.g., Learn4Life)	3.53
Nonfiction DVDs	3.42
Music - Online and downloadable	3.24
Music CDs	3.20
Video - Online and downloadable	3.18
Assistive device checkout	2.87
Nook E-reader checkout	2.70

Question 11: Differences in top responses by county

County	Added priority	Replaced priority
Grays Harbor	Reference and research databases	Outreach
Lewis	N/D	N/D
Mason	N/D	N/D
Pacific	N/D	N/D
Thurston	Reference and research databases	Outreach

Question 11: Differences in top responses by sub-group

Group	Added priority	Replaced priority
Officials	E-Books Reference and research databases	Outreach Adult programs
Friends	Reference and research databases	Computers with MS Office & Internet

Question 12: What is the one thing you would like to see TRL do to be more relevant to the communities it serves?		
Category	**Respondents**	**Analysis Notes**
More hours	25	Particularly on weekends
Technology	22	Suggestions include training in technology, social media for the public, more computers, creating a virtual library branch and adapting new technology, providing services for people with their own devices and linking library services to personal devices.
Programming	17	Suggestions for additional programming for children, YAs, and adults, for people with special needs, and online classes. One suggested that TRL examine programs for currency and improvement.
PR/Marketing	16	Comments closely linked to the Outreach category. Many said that community members do not know about all library services. *"Publicize TRL offerings. It seems like even regular patrons are not very well informed about all of the wonderful things their library offers."*
Outreach	13	Comments related to the PR/Marketing category. Most advocated for library staff to leave the library and take its services to the community. *"Go where the people are."*
Collaboration	9	With different community agencies, particularly schools
Community Center	8	Suggestions that the library become the hub of the community, the community's "living room," and that libraries acquire the technology to become a Maker space.
Staffing	8	Suggestions that TRL hire more staff, more trained staff, and a more diverse staff.
Digital collections	4	Primarily e-books
Print	3	Maintain print collections.
Customize to branch needs	3	Acknowledge community differences and offer customized services to meet the needs of branch communities.

Question 13: What other comments would you like to share about TRL's future?		
Category	**Respondents**	**Analysis Notes**
Overall library quality	36	The highest number of comments simply praised the library. Most seem to come from non-staff who completed the survey. *"I think TRL is awesome especially in small communities and people are very appreciative for the most part."* *"A City with a Great Library is a Great City!"* *"TRL is in a strong position to create a positive, exciting future in providing services to our communities."* *"I am so excited with the future of TRL and the direction we are headed."*
Staff level, configuration, or pay	16	Frequently suggested that more staff are needed or that salaries should be higher
Administration or management	12	Either praise for the new administration of the library or suggestions changes that would improve the library's management.
Staff quality	9	Divided between staff saying how proud they are to work for TRL and library users praising TRL staff.
Communication about TRL's services	8	These comments concerned the need for better communication about the library and its services.
Technology	7	Requests for more and new technology to meet the needs of new and younger users
Programs	7	Praise for current programs and requests for new ones.
Cooperation	7	Suggestions for cooperation and collaboration with schools, business, and government *"This is a time of change for libraries and their role in the community."* *"TRL should focus on exploring innovative, outside-the-box ways of partnering with their communities so that each library meets its community's needs and resources go as far as they can."*
Print collections	5	Basically do not give up on print collections
Buildings	5	Requests for more space and building master plans
Other	23	These represent those who declined to comment or whose comments were unique.