



STAFF REPORT TO COMMUNITY AND LIBRARY SERVICES COMMISSION (CLSC)

TO: Chair Yamamoto and Members of the CLS Commission

SUBMITTED BY: Alison Peters, Senior Community Library Manager

MEETING DATE: November 10, 2025

TOPIC: Contra Costa County Library Patron Survey

RECOMMENDATION:

Share key takeaways and comments from the 2025 Library Patron Survey and Hercules Library Values Statement.

BACKGROUND:

In 2025, the Hercules Library team created a values statement, based on what we believe the library should be to the community, the essential traits of a library worker, and in alignment with the Contra Costa County Library mission and strategic plan.

Also in 2025, the County Library conducted a Patron Survey. Below is a sample of the Hercules Library Values Statement and key takeaways from the Patron Survey, via patrons who primarily frequent Hercules Library.

Hercules Library: Building connection, one act of kindness at a time.

The Contra Costa County Library's 2024 strategic update addresses evolving community needs in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and other societal shifts. The core mission remains "Bringing people and ideas together," with a vision to be "the pulse of our community, sparking imagination, fueling potential, and connecting people with ideas and each other." Key challenges identified include the digital divide, loneliness, low literacy rates, and the fight for intellectual freedom amidst increased book challenges. The Strategic Plan outlines four main goals:

1. enhancing literacy and lifelong learning
2. fostering inclusivity and belonging
3. delivering consistent high-quality experiences
4. and effectively promoting the library's value.

Key qualities Hercules staff believe are essential for library workers: empathy, knowledge, and patience. We strive to embody these qualities, while adhering to our core values, as a team:

- **Service Excellence and Customer-Centricity.** Hercules staff value a strong emphasis on empathy, kindness, service, and a proactive approach to community engagement. These qualities are vital for making patrons feel welcomed, seen and valued.

- **Community Support and Connection.** We aspire to be giving information professionals who provide resources, support and encouragement to patrons of all ages, abilities, nationalities, income levels-everyone, from all walks of life.

- **Professional Competence and Adaptability.** We believe that knowledge, and sharing knowledge, helping patrons access information, is a highly valued attribute of library workers.

Finally, Hercules library staff are living examples of **equity, diversity, and inclusion**, and champion the library as a place for everyone via our programs and outreach, customer service, and kindness. Our daily goal is to be a welcoming, friendly, vibrant resource and haven for our community.

2025 Contra Costa County Library Patron Survey Takeaways

Top 3 Library Uses:

- Borrow adult print books
- Borrow eBooks
- Borrow eAudiobooks
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Barriers for Library Use:

- Too busy
- Transportation
- Prefer to buy their books.

Services and programs communities most need/request:

- **Job resources & assistance.** Hercules Library has plans in the works to support this need in 2026.
- **Mental health support.** Hercules offers a monthly meditation program, in addition to county-provided mental health resources and one-time programs, such as sound healing, and herbal wellness workshops.
- **Aging/elder care services.** Hercules frequently holds programs such as Getting Your Affairs in Order: Advance Healthcare and Will Workshops; Saving for your Future: Personal Finance seminars; Don't Get Scammed (English & Mandarin); monthly Senior Center Outreach; and Game Night, per Hercules Senior Center patron requests.
- **Computer & technology help.** We offer a monthly Teen Tech Help program, where tech-savvy teens work one-on-one with adults to help with tech support. In addition, Hercules Library staff provide support to patrons on a daily basis: email and password recovery, resume writing tools and assistance, online job searching and applying via virtual job applications, Microsoft Word/Excel/PowerPoint tutorials via Brainfuse Help Now, online test studying and test taking, and much more.
- **Accessibility.** Our branches are more accessible than ever, and as you can read in the survey comments, patrons appreciate that Hercules Library is accessible with ADA/automatic doors, good lighting, comfortable seating and study areas, parking,

easy pathways, accessibility devices and the inclusion of sensory backpacks for children, plus our monthly Hercules Insiders meet ups for adults with disabilities.

Also mentioned: patrons appreciate the free WiFi, space to work/study, and a reasonably quiet environment, all of which Hercules Library provides.

ANALYSIS:

People love Contra Costa County Libraries!

Of 11,138 responses from current patrons, and 509 from non card-holders, patrons are in agreement: Contra Costa County Libraries, and particularly Hercules Library, excel at providing good books, resources, and programs. People enjoy coming to Hercules library, feel safe here, and appreciate all we offer. We are particularly proud that patrons make note of the excellent customer service staff provide.

We hold an engaging array of programs and services tailored towards our diverse community, with the continual goal to make everyone feel welcome, like they belong, that they can come to the library and get what they need. We are proud to represent and care for the Hercules community.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with receiving this report.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2025 Patron Survey Key Findings
2. Hercules Library 2025 Patron Survey Responses