

***New Jersey
Public Library Survey***

**Customer Survey of New Jersey
Residents About Libraries**

Conducted June 2007

**Potomac Incorporated
Bethesda, Maryland**

New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) New Jersey Public Library Survey (June 2007)

About Potomac Incorporated

- Researching opinions and attitudes for 25 years
- Widely publicized voter surveys for media
- Studies for major corporations: Verizon, Comcast, Marriott
- Issues: Schools, health care, housing, economic development, charitable giving, traffic, higher education, energy
- Work for state public libraries
- Expertise with strategic communications

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Methodology

- **Telephone survey**
 - 1,800 adult residents sampled statewide
 - CATI-equipped phone center; live interviewers
 - Conducted May 23-June 6, 2007
 - Maximum statewide sampling error $\pm 2.3\%$
 - Sample balanced by gender, race and geography
 - 100+ interviews in 10 jurisdictions
 - Regional breakdowns

New Jersey Library Association (NJLA)

New Jersey Public Library Survey (June 2007)

Research Objectives

- 1. Survey New Jersey residents on perceived value of public libraries**
- 2. Look specifically at return on investment of government dollars in public libraries**
- 3. Provide information pertinent to public sector funders of libraries**
- 4. Use results to brand NJLA and libraries throughout the State**

New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) New Jersey Public Library Survey (June 2007)

Research Subject Matter

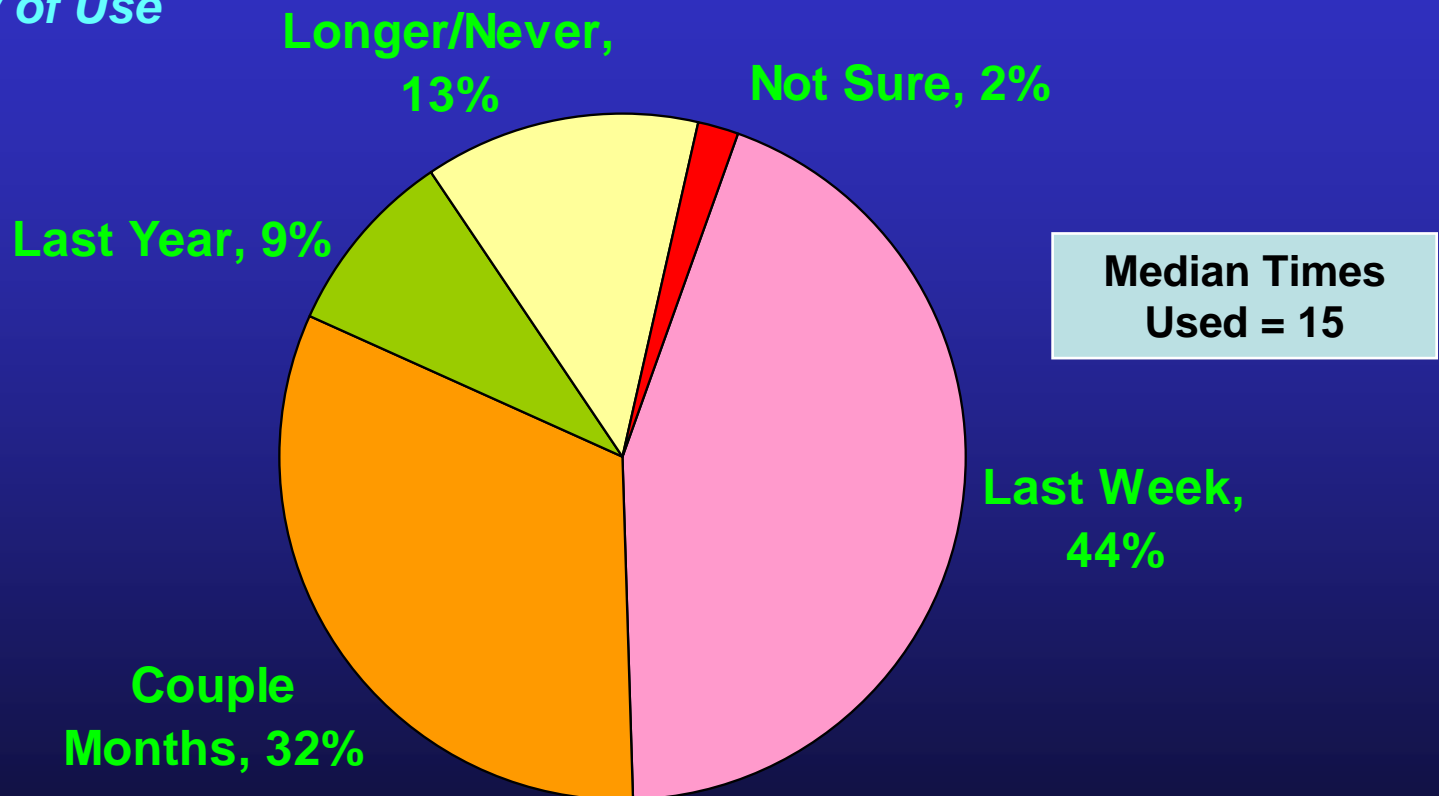
- Rate local public services
- Overall impressions of public libraries
- Specific library job ratings
- Economic development impacts
- Public library funding
- Library usage
- Demographics

Research Findings

Public Library Usage

New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) New Jersey Public Library Survey (June 2007)

Frequency of Use

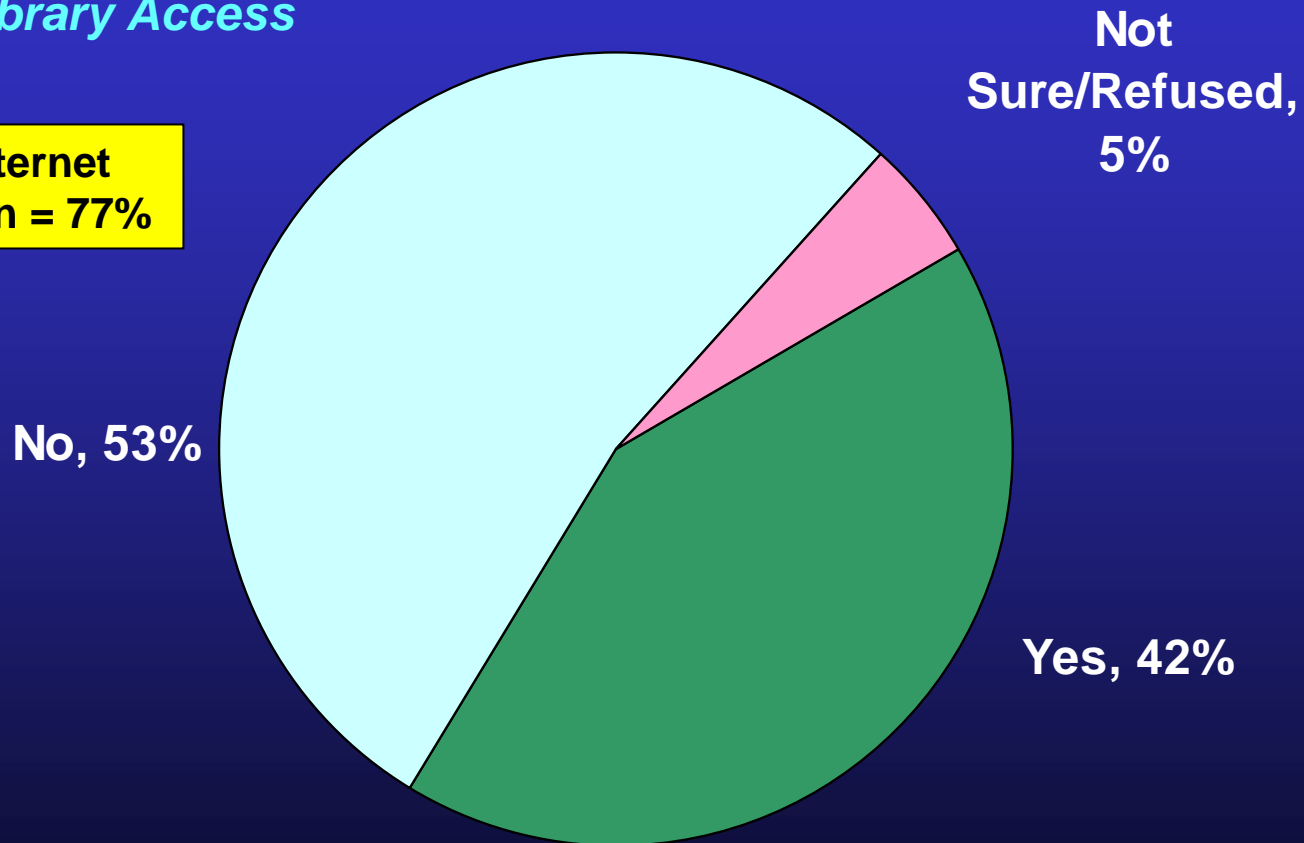


Q19. When was the last time that someone in your household visited a local public library in-person?
Was it within the last week, the last couple months, last year, or longer ago than that?

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On-Line Library Access

Home Internet
Penetration = 77%

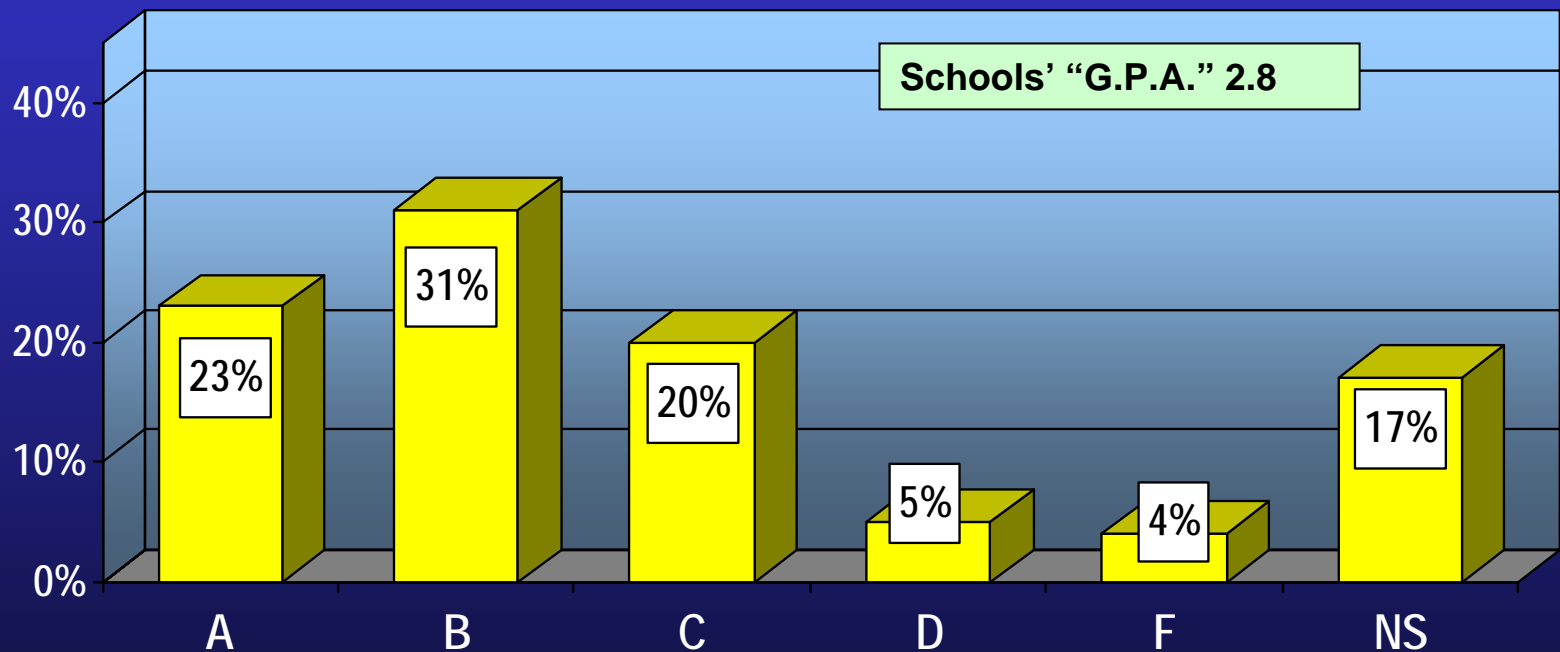


Q.20 Has anyone in your household ever accessed your local public library's resources on-line?

Rating Public Services

New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) New Jersey Public Library Survey (June 2007)

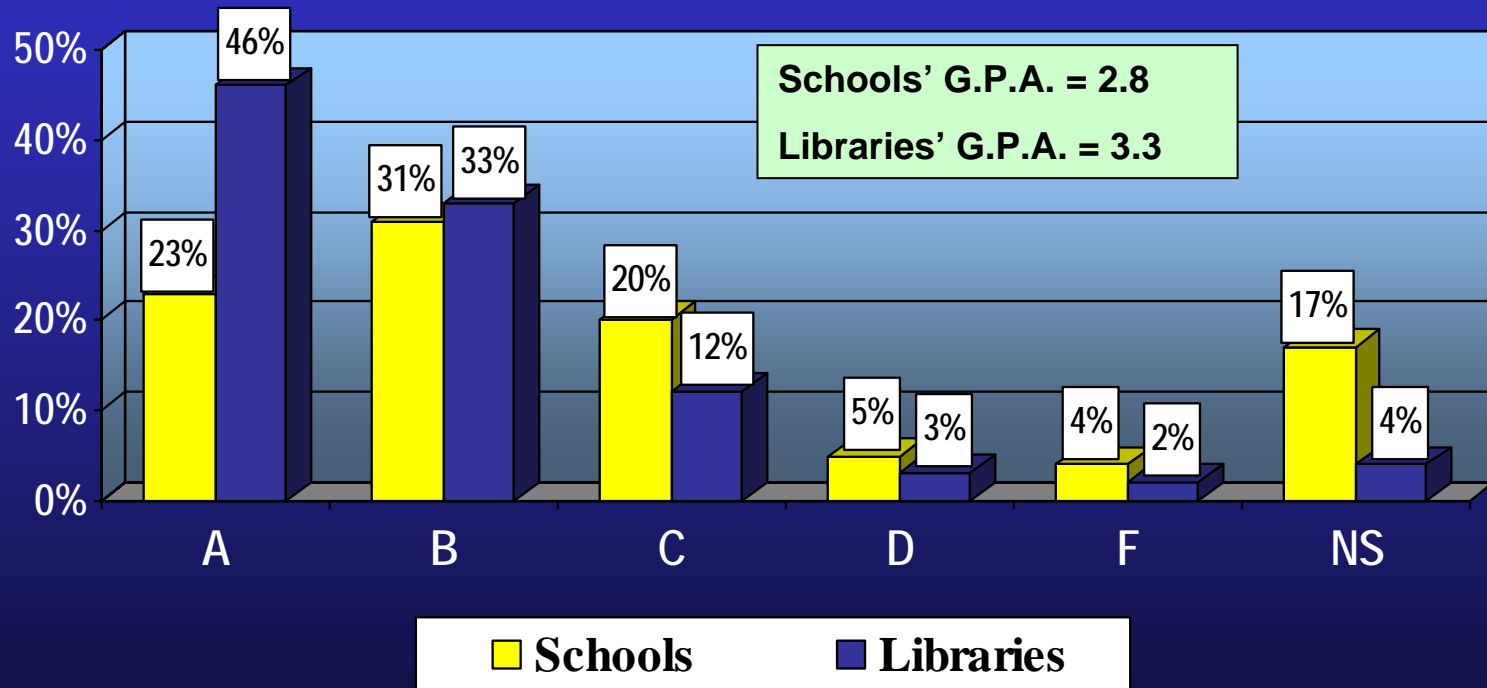
Grading the Local Public Schools



Q.3 Students are often given the grades of A, B, C, D, or Fail as a way to rate the quality of their work. Suppose the public schools themselves, in your community, were graded in the same way. What grade would you give the public schools in your community: A, B, C, D, or Fail?

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Grading Public Libraries



Q.4 Using that same A through F scale, how would you rate each of these other services of your local government?...Public libraries?

New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) New Jersey Public Library Survey (June 2007)

Grading Local Services

	"A"	G.P.A.
Public libraries	46%	3.3
Police and public safety	39%	3.0
Parks and recreation	31%	2.9
Public schools	23%	2.8
Social services	17%	2.6
Roads and mass transit	15%	2.4
Local government efficiency	11%	2.3

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New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) New Jersey Public Library Survey (June 2007)

Most Desired Community Asset

Park	46%
<i>Public Library</i>	<i>21%</i>
Police Station	13%
Elementary School	10%
Job Center	4%
All/None/Not Sure	6%

Q. 6 If you were moving into a new community, which of these would you most want to have on your own street or road?

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Most Desired Community Asset: Second Choice

Public Library	38%
Park	22%
Elementary School	17%
Police Station	15%
Job Center	5%
All/None/Not Sure	3%

Q. 7 *What would be your second choice?*

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Most Desired Community Asset: Combined

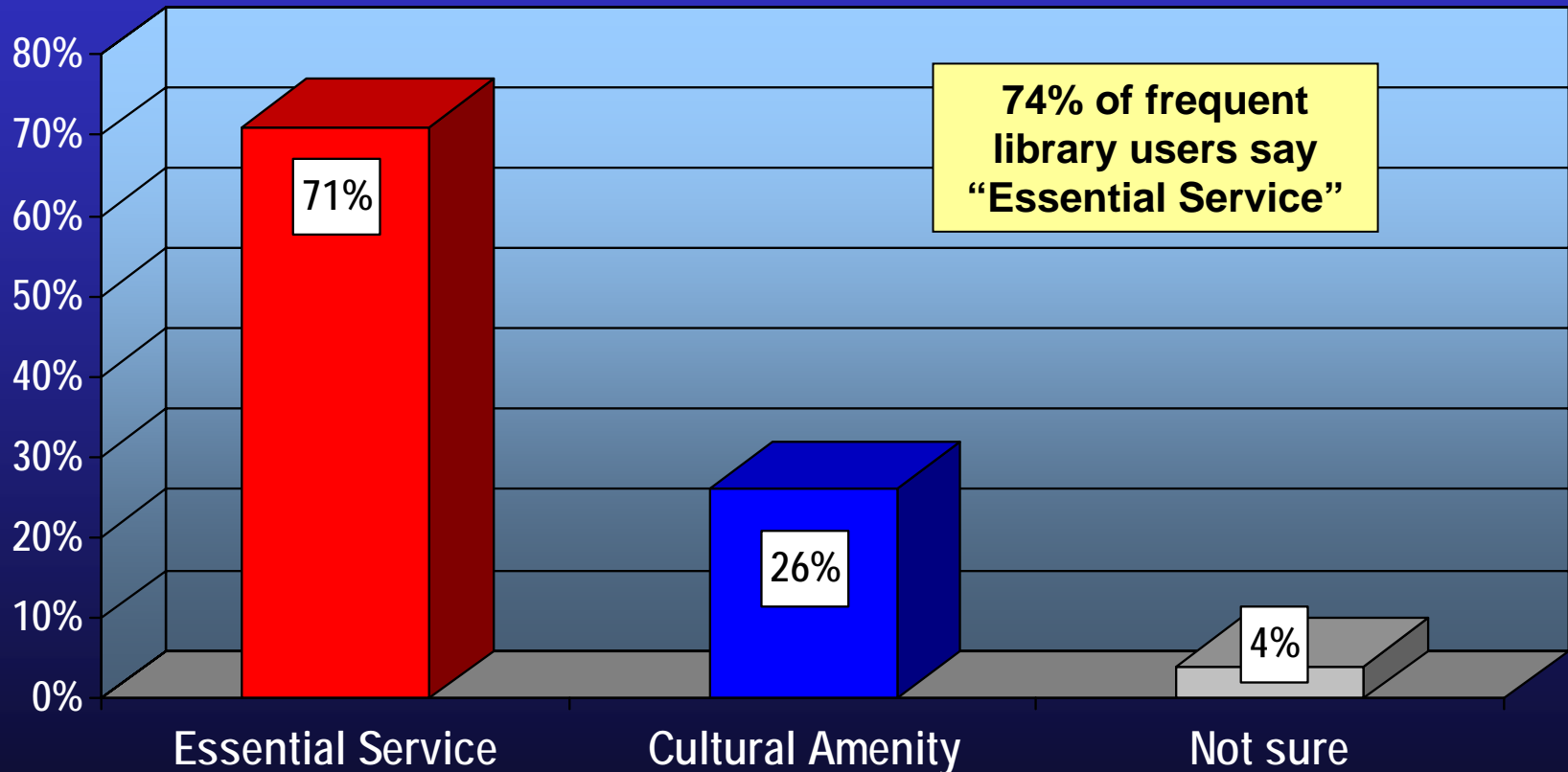
Park	67%
<i>Public Library</i>	56%
Elementary School	26%
Police Station	26%
Job Center	10%
All/None/Not Sure	2%

Q.6 If you were moving into a new community, which of these would you most want to have on your own street ?

Q.7 And what would be your second choice?

New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) New Jersey Public Library Survey (June 2007)

Essential Service or Cultural Amenity?



Q.8 Turning now to public libraries specifically, are you more likely to think of your local public library as (rotate): [an essential service like a school, (or more of) a cultural amenity like an art gallery]?

New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) New Jersey Public Library Survey (June 2007)

Public Library Services

Borrow/check out materials and books	34%
Use the Internet/Accessing on-line catalog	27%
Bring a child for homework or a program	21%
Research/Find reference information	17%
Read newspapers/Magazines/Books	12%
Attend adult program/Classes and training	10%
Community activities/Attend meetings	9%

Q.9 Can you name two services that your local public library performs?

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Public Library Job Ratings

	Good job	Could do better	Not sure
Branch close enough	78%	18%	4%
Being open when you want to visit	71%	24%	5%
Access to website and on-line catalog	64%	19%	17%
Large enough collection	64%	30%	6%
Most updated collection	58%	33%	9%

Q.10 . When you think about your local public library, would you say it does a good job or could do a better job at each of these?

- A. Having a branch close enough to your home or work
- B. Being open when you want to visit
- C. Having access to website and on-line catalog
- D. Having a large enough collection of books and materials
- E. Having the most updated collection of books and materials

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Importance of Public Library Jobs

	Very important	Somewhat Important	Not very important
Large enough collection	73%	20%	6%
Most updated collection	72%	22%	6%
Being open when you want to visit	67%	26%	6%
Branch close enough	54%	33%	12%
Access to website and on-line catalog	52%	29%	18%

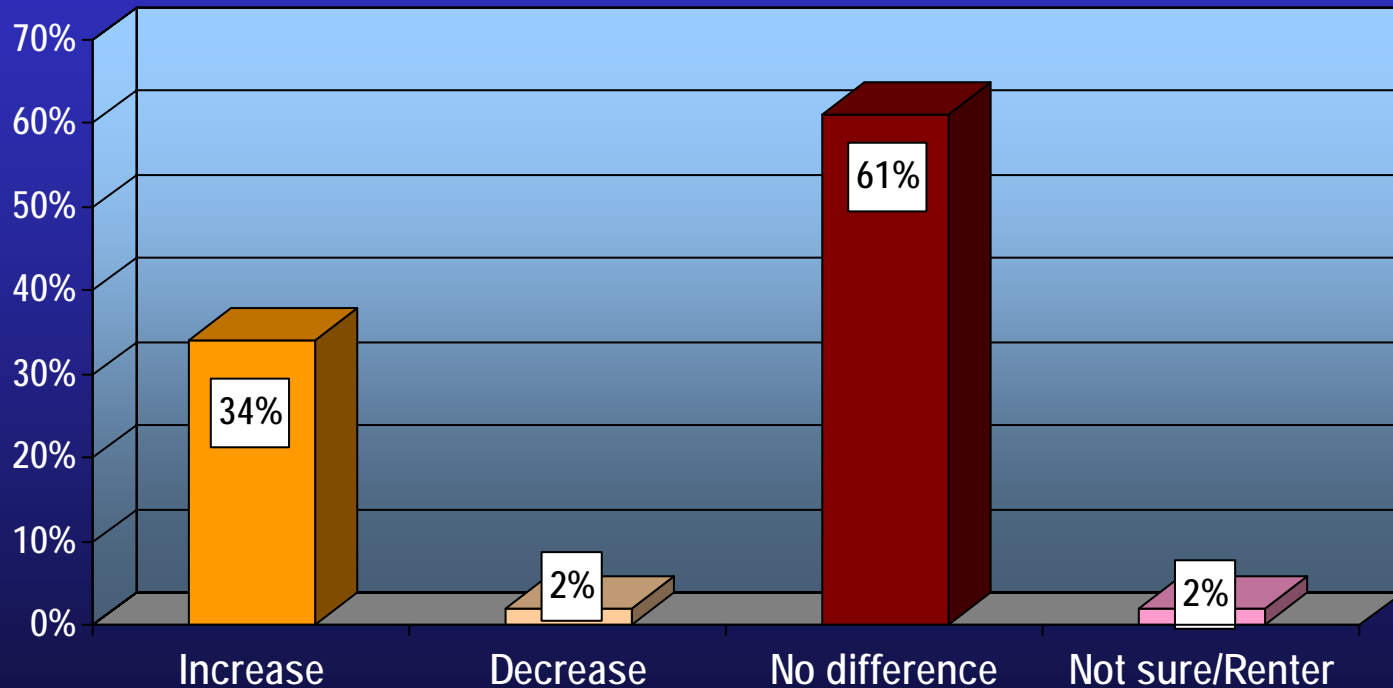
Q.11 *I would like to read you that list again, and for each one please tell me if it is very important, somewhat important, or not very important to you.*

- A. *Having a large enough collection of books and materials*
- B. *Having the most updated collection of books and materials*
- C. *Having a branch open when you want to visit*
- D. *Having a branch close enough to your home or work*
- E. *Having access to the website and on-line catalog*

Economic Development

New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) New Jersey Public Library Survey (June 2007)

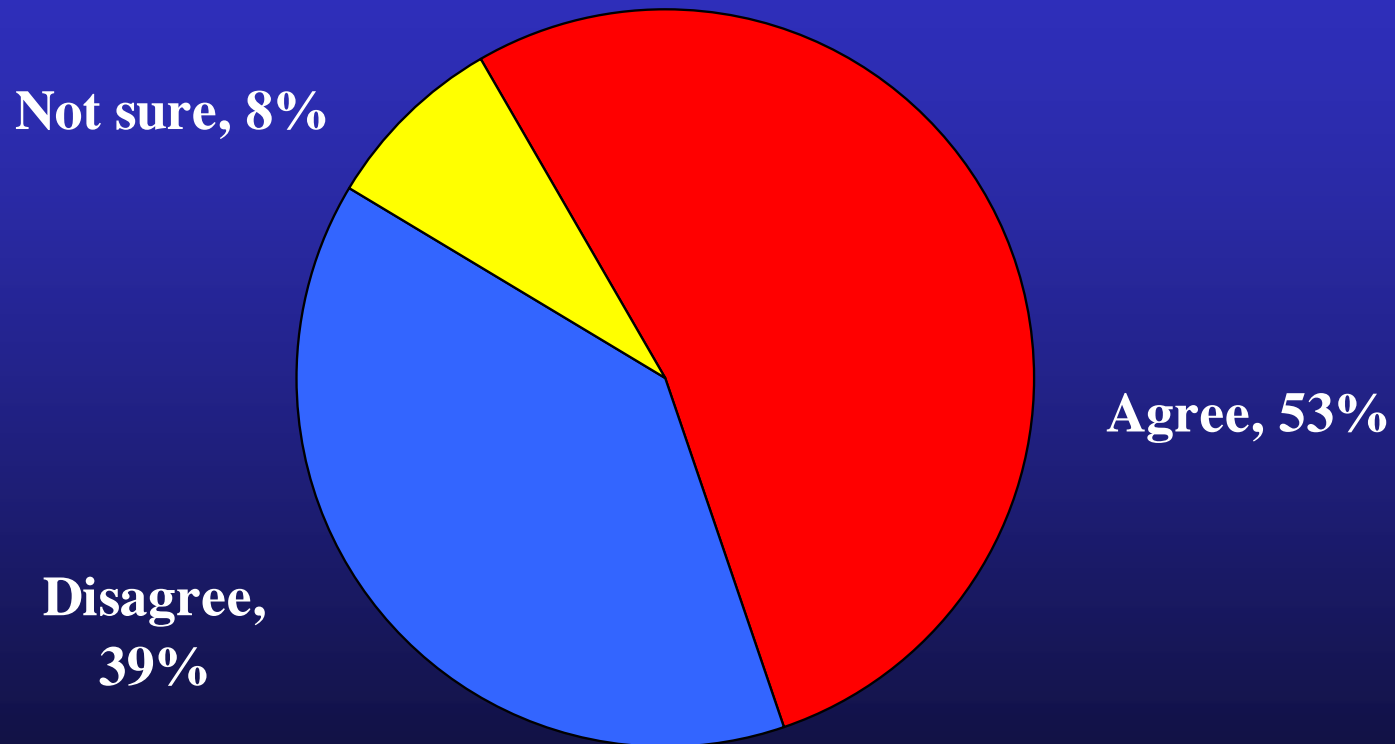
Impact on Property Values



Q.12 Do you think that having a public library located very close to your own home would: increase or decrease property values, or would it make no difference?

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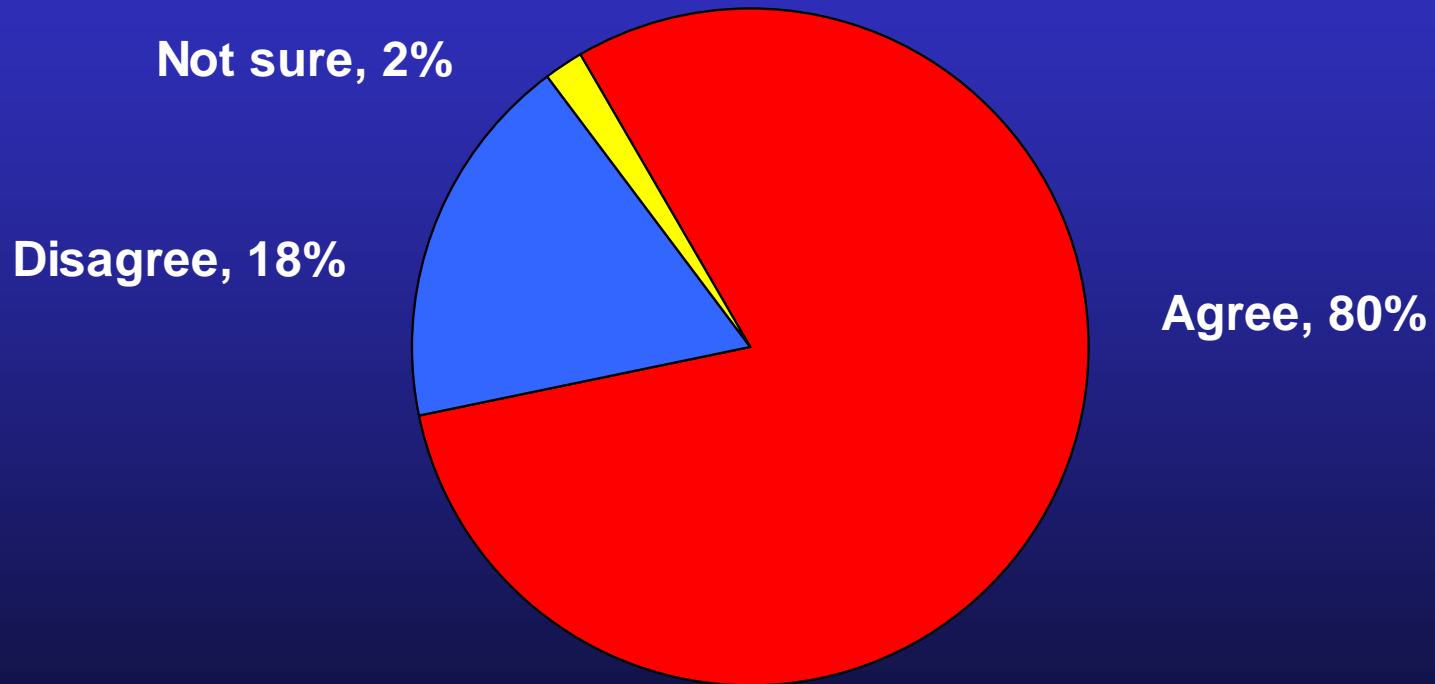
Economic Anchor



Q.13 Do you agree or disagree with this idea? Having a public library located within a community helps to attract good business to the area.

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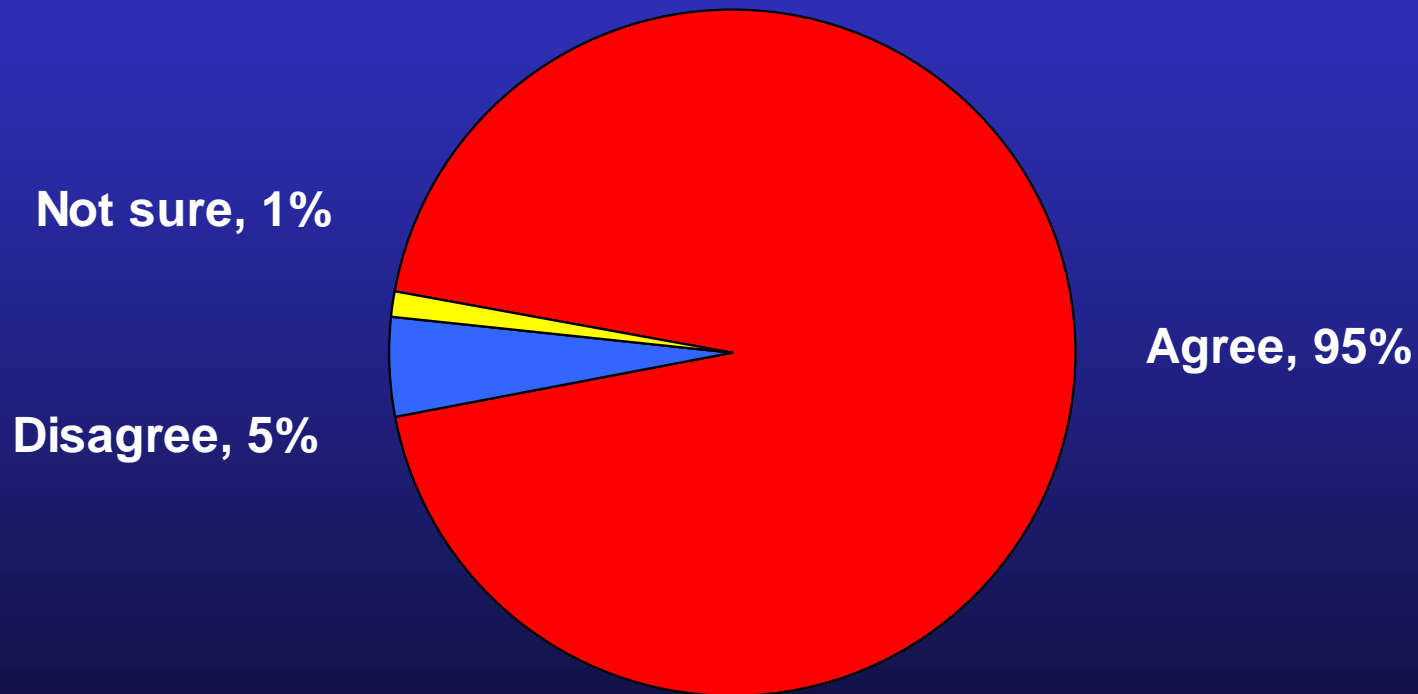
Teaching Job Skills



Q.14 And do you agree or disagree with this idea? Public libraries improve a community by helping people learn new skills so they can get better jobs.

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Lifelong Learning

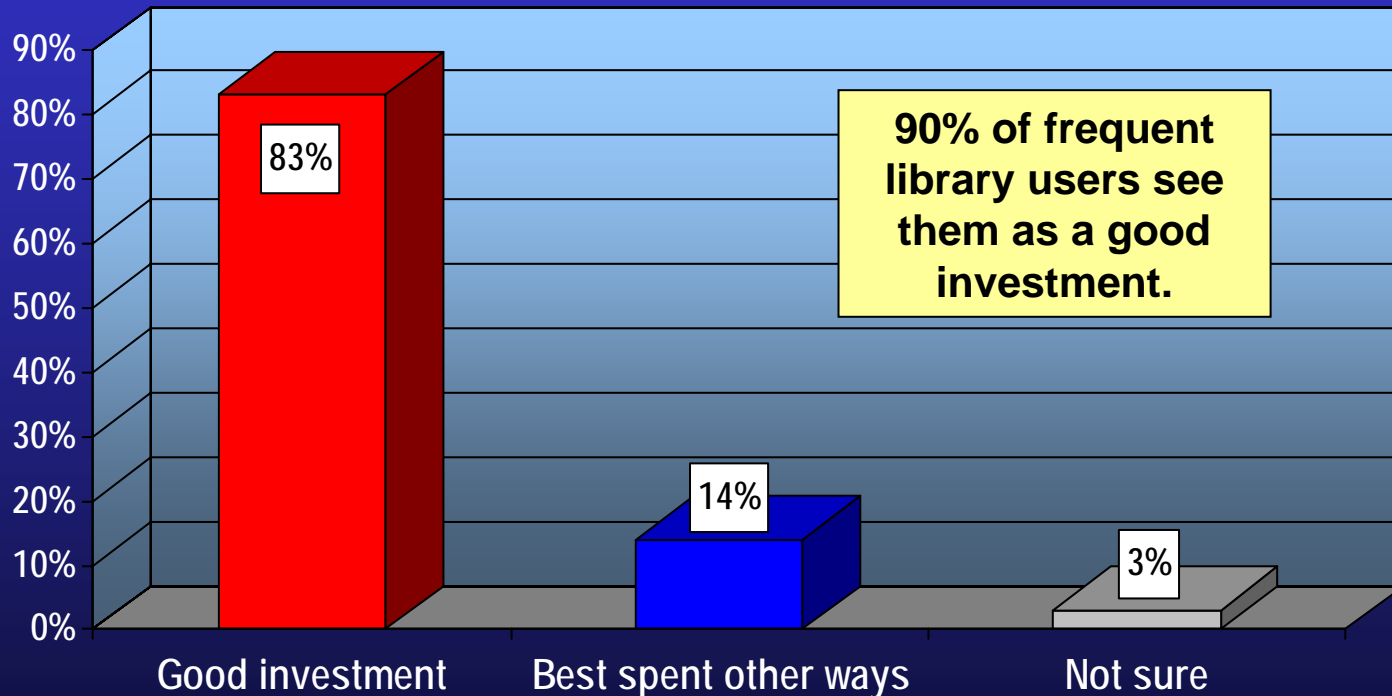


Q.15 Do you agree or disagree? Public libraries help people learn new things no matter what their age.

Public Library Funding

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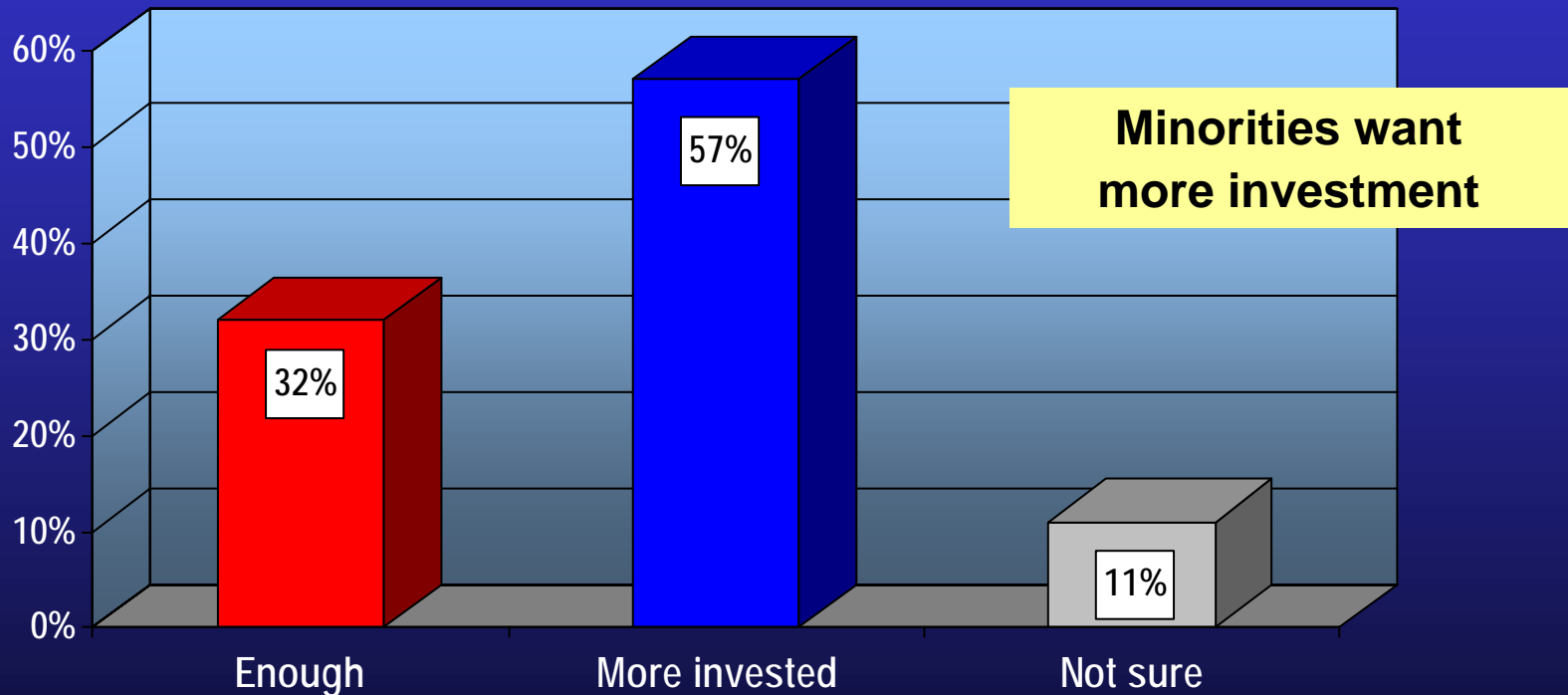
Good Investment of Tax Dollars



Q.16 Generally, do you think public libraries are a good investment of your tax dollars, or do you think those taxes would be better spent in other ways?

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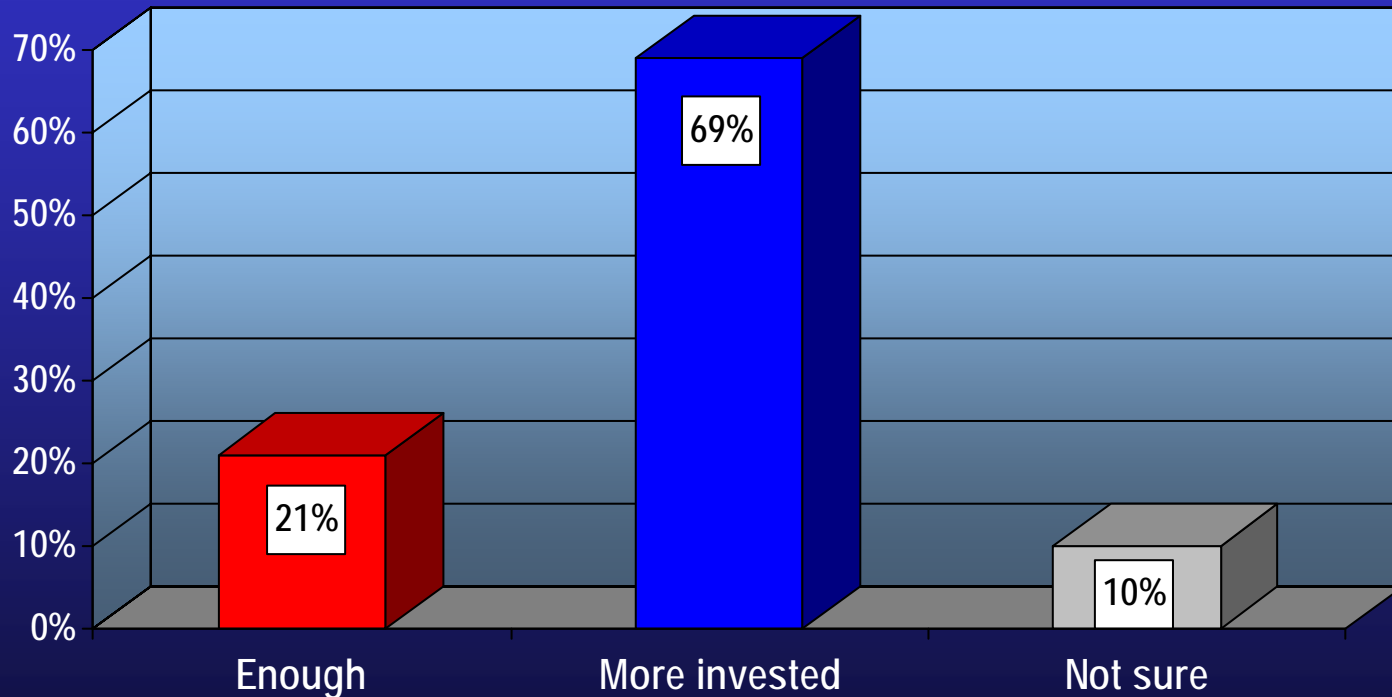
Communities' Investment



Q.17 If you knew that public libraries in New Jersey typically receive less than 2 percent of the overall community and school's budget, would you think this was enough, or would you think more money should be invested in public libraries?

New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) New Jersey Public Library Survey (June 2007)

State Investment



Q.18 If you knew that public libraries in New Jersey typically receive less than one tenth of 1 percent of the state's budget, would you think this was enough, or would you think more money should be invested in public libraries?

Conclusions

New Jersey Library Association (NJLA)

New Jersey Public Library Survey (June 2007)

Conclusions

- Public libraries are being extensively used – in-person and on-line
- Rate at the very top of local public services
- People want to live near libraries, as an amenity
- Most view local libraries as essential
- Positive performance scores, on matters important to consumers

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Conclusions

- Consumers want larger and current collections, and expanded hours
- Many see positive economic impacts from libraries
- Libraries are viewed as a solid public investment
- Large majorities want more public money spent on libraries
- Public library system in New Jersey is heavily used and extremely well-regarded

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Conclusions

- Few institutions can match such a positive image, strong performance evaluation and cost-benefit analysis
- This story must be told aggressively
- Collaterals, bookmark, posters, ads
- Hold local media press conferences – report results with local angle, with state legislators and other support groups to make “critical funding case”