

# 2020

Report to Our Community



**SURREY  
LIBRARIES**

*discover · connect · inspire*



## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Surrey Libraries recognizes that our work takes place on the ancestral, traditional, and unceded territories of the SEMYOME (Semiahmoo), q̓ícə́y̓ (Katzie), kʷikʷə́łəm (Kwikwetlem), q̓ʷɑ:ńłəń (Kwantlen), q̓iqéyt (Qayqayt), xʷməθkʷə́y̓əm (Musqueam) First Nations and on the ancestral and traditional territory of the s̓c̓əwaθən məsteyəxʷ (Tsawwassen) First Nation.



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*Renovated lounge at Cloverdale Branch*

Our mission is to connect **people**, spark **curiosity**, and inspire **learning**, with the vision of creating a literate, inclusive, **thriving city**.

## COMMUNITY-FOCUS

We care about the broader well-being of our community and guide our services based on its changing needs.

## INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

We champion the right for different voices and ideas to be heard, and the right for questions to be asked without censorship. We respect and defend individual rights to privacy and choice.

## COLLABORATION

We support, trust, and respect each other. We share stories, ideas, and experiences with each other, our City, community, and patrons.

# VALUES

## SERVICE EXCELLENCE

We provide excellent, responsive service.

## CREATIVITY

We continuously explore and pursue new ideas to improve services. We learn from our efforts, remain flexible, adapt, and innovate.

## EQUITABLE ACCESS

We strive to reduce barriers to service, and meet the community where they are. We uphold the principles of social justice.

## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND CHIEF LIBRARIAN

*In response to the global pandemic, Surrey Libraries had to reinvent many of its services in 2020. Staff showed great flexibility in meeting changing demands throughout the year. At the onset of the health crisis, as a trusted community resource, Surrey Libraries worked to share credible information about the pandemic as well as provide a one-stop source of community support information.*



**Neelam Sahota,**  
Board Chair

To help stop the spread of COVID-19, Surrey Libraries' branches were closed to the public from March 16 to September 8. In that time, efforts shifted to move programming online and to develop processes for contactless Takeout Service which commenced in June. Additionally, resources were realigned to increase the availability of eBooks and eAudio for patrons and new online resources were added such as the New York Times, The Globe and Mail, and SUMMA: Canadian educational videos for children and adults with Indigenous voices.

During the closure, a *Resuming Library Services* survey was launched to gather feedback from patrons and community members on their level of comfort in accessing library services during the pandemic. At the same time, a similar survey was also launched to gather feedback from staff. To provide access to **online library resources**, the Library began to offer online card registration.

As the year progressed, more was learned about the novel coronavirus and preventing its spread. Using this information, the Library developed a robust safety plan and reopened branches to the public on September 9 with limited hours and services. The Library's safety plan kept staff and the public safe as there were no outbreaks or known transmissions of COVID-19 at Surrey Libraries.

Despite the pandemic, staff were able to advance many **important projects** in 2020. Work continued to prepare for the opening of the Library's tenth branch in the



**Surinder Bhogal,**  
Chief Librarian

Clayton Community Centre. Over two-thirds of Library staff completed the Science of Service customer service training. An outreach services manual was drafted, and staff continued with in-person and virtual outreach to the community. The Library partnered with many community organizations to deliver online programming. Cloverdale branch reopened after a major structural renovation.

We sincerely appreciate the hard work and dedication of Surrey Libraries staff in the past year, as well as their diligence in following all COVID-19 safety protocols. The changes the Library and the community faced throughout 2020 exemplified the resilience of Library staff and that of our community. The Library worked to prioritize technological solutions to continue offering library services and support its mission to **connect people, spark curiosity and inspire learning**.

We want to extend our thanks to the City of Surrey and the Province of British Columbia for recognizing the value of libraries in our communities. Thank you also to the many volunteers, donors, community partners, and patrons who support our libraries. We extend a heartfelt thanks to the Board and staff of Surrey Libraries for their ongoing dedication, enthusiasm, and commitment to building a better community. And finally, we extend our appreciation to our community for their patience as we worked to pivot and provide library services during an unprecedented pandemic.





**Doug McCallum**  
Mayor

## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

In an unprecedented and challenging year, the staff of Surrey Libraries worked diligently to ensure the needs of our diverse and growing community were met in this time of pandemic. When library branches closed mid-March last year to help curb the spread of COVID-19, library staff quickly pivoted to ensure the community was still able to access library services. While checking out physical materials was curtailed, staff worked hard to enhance eBook and eAudio collections, and offer online programming.

When Surrey Libraries was able to safely reopen its branches to the community in September, a **robust safety plan** was developed to help keep staff and the public safe, which included the introduction of contactless takeout service.

The pandemic has had a marked impact on the way people access library resources. For instance, **use of eBooks and eAudio rose 43%** over the previous year. Throughout this turbulent time, the Library continued to nurture people's curiosity, provide a variety of online programs, learn new skills using online resources, and find information and resources to help them throughout the pandemic.

The Library continues to support the economic and social well-being of all our citizens. Our libraries offer a lifetime of continual learning, creativity, and leisure, while helping to strengthen our city. Library membership provides residents with free access to books, magazines, music, videos, programs as well as numerous online and digital resources such as streaming video, learning platforms, and career building resources.

On behalf of City Council, I would like to thank the staff of Surrey Libraries for ensuring this vital service remained available to our residents despite the challenges that COVID-19 presented. There is truly something for everyone to discover at the Library. I encourage everyone to visit your local branch or visit online at [surreylibraries.ca](http://surreylibraries.ca) and start exploring all that Surrey Libraries has to offer.

**Doug McCallum**  
Mayor

*I've been using the Surrey Public Library for 26 years and have never had any complaints. The online system is fairly easy to use, and I can usually find any book I'm looking for. Thanks for making the library work during the pandemic. Take care, stay safe.*

~Pamela A. M.

## PIVOTING FOR A PANDEMIC

*A year like no other, the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic meant that Surrey Libraries had to pivot to offer more library programming and services online.*



Provided reliable, **trustworthy COVID-19** related information to the community on our website.



Launched a *Book of the Week* program on OverDrive offering a different title each week to patrons with **no holds or waiting**. The program featured books from a variety of genres aimed at varying audiences.



Initiated a *Chromebook lending project* in partnership with community agencies to enable people to **connect with technology** for job searches as well as to connect seniors with technology.



**2,855** ONLINE LIBRARY  
CARDS ISSUED



MORE THAN  
**30,000** NEW  
DIGITAL BOOKS  
ADDED TO  
THE ONLINE  
COLLECTION



**648,714**  
IN-PERSON VISITS

*During the pandemic, children's, youth, and adult programs moved online.*







“My seven year old and I ordered ten books for take out service today and we were excited to be called within hours for pick up. What an amazing surprise to see all the additional books that had been carefully added to our order!! We are going to have so much fun making Lego creations and drawing. Some of our pandemic days have been really long and it's overwhelming at times to find new things to do. This mama is really tired and receiving this order gave me a cry. Thank you so much.

Also, I had asked that Ava the Monster Slayer be purchased. When my Ava saw it, she said “Was this book made just for me!?” She started wearing glasses last year and it's awesome for her to see characters in stories that look like her. Representation matters!”

~ Dawn J.

## LITERACY & LEARNING

*As a public library, literacy and learning is a cornerstone of Surrey Libraries' work.*

From support of English language learners to storytimes for children to one-on-one technology support, the Library's programs support life-long learning and a range of literacies for young and old. Our commitment to literacy and learning was not deterred by the pandemic as many programs were shifted for online delivery and funding resources were shifted to eBooks and eAudio books.

### SHARE YOUR STORY

Submit your story at [surreylibraries.ca/share-your-story](https://surreylibraries.ca/share-your-story)



*The Surrey online Library has been of particular importance and pleasure to me. Reading has always been a necessary, pleasurable portion of my life. Having access to a vast library resource in my pocket, whether I'm home, enjoying some relaxation on a cruise ship or standing in line at Costco is simply wonderful. Anywhere there is internet contact, I can borrow, reserve and return books. Just recently, I also discovered through my library card I can learn more about my photography hobby with online courses at no extra cost to me. You just keep getting better. Thank you.*

~ Grant Crawford



**11,441** NEW LIBRARY  
CARDS ISSUED



OVER **1.5 MILLION**  
VISITS TO  
WEBSITE & CATALOGUE



OVER **1.2 MILLION**  
PHYSICAL ITEMS  
CIRCULATED

HELD **79** IN-BRANCH STEM  
PROGRAMS HOSTING **865**  
PARTICIPANTS AND MOVED  
STEM PROGRAMMING TO **13**  
ONLINE VIDEOS GARNERING  
**2,698** VIEWS.

**6,070** adults participated in  
Library programs like *book clubs* and *English*  
*conversation circles*

**43%** increase in eBooks and eAudio  
circulation over 2019

**31,394** youth participated in  
Library programs like *Summer Reading Club*,  
*STEM programs*, and *virtual coding workshops*





Envision Financial Reading Buddies program



Geering Up program



## TRACKING OUR PROGRESS



**Use of online learning resources** such as Lynda.com, Learning Express, Gale Courses, Rosetta Stone, Mango Languages, My Canada, Road to IELTS, and Niche Academy **saw a large surge of use** over the previous year due to the pandemic.

The Library leveraged relationships with over **75** community agencies to enhance online programs and presentations.



**27%**  
OF PROGRAMS DELIVERED  
THROUGH PARTNERSHIP IN **2020**

**VS**



**9%**  
OF PROGRAMS DELIVERED  
THROUGH PARTNERSHIP IN **2019**

## CONNECTIONS

*The Library connects Surrey residents with resources and services that help enrich their lives and also connects people to others with similar interests.*

Our commitment to connection also means supporting efforts of reconciliation with Indigenous communities, as well as enhancing community partnerships to advance shared priorities and leverage resources for greater community benefit.

Connecting staff to our mission, we prioritized professional development and supported educational opportunities through courses, workshops and conferences. Training was a key focus for staff during the branch closure and over two-thirds of staff completed the *Science of Service* customer service training workshops.



*Baby welcoming events transitioned to very popular New Parent Meet-ups online*



**7,350**

KIDS JOINED THE  
SUMMER READING CLUB



**19**

BOOKS & FILMS IN **19**  
WORLD LANGUAGES



**160,286**

REFERENCE  
QUESTIONS ANSWERED

### GAYLE HARRIS MEMORIAL EDUCATION FUND AWARD

Mara Dickie was the first recipient of the Gayle Harris Memorial Education fund award. This education fund was established by Barbara E. Harris in memory of Gayle Harris, a beloved children's librarian at Surrey Libraries.

The award is provided to staff who are studying to obtain their Master of Library and Information Science degree or Library Technician diploma.



*Mara Dickie, Gayle Harris Memorial Education Fund Award Recipient*





Connecting our community to library resources became a primary focus during the year due to the pandemic. **Contactless Takeout Service** was one way we helped people access library materials.



## TRACKING OUR PROGRESS



**163**

STAFF VISITS IN  
THE COMMUNITY IN **2020**

**VS**



**708**

STAFF VISITS IN  
THE COMMUNITY IN **2019**

Community visits declined sharply  
due to pandemic restrictions.

*The staff is going way beyond the call of duty to make the curbside take away work and I'm thankful to them.*

~ Library Patron



**19%**

PROGRAMS FOR  
NEWCOMERS IN **2020**

**VS**



**8%**

PROGRAMS FOR  
NEWCOMERS IN **2019**





# SURREY LIBRARIES EXPO

In January, the **inaugural Surrey Libraries EXPO** was launched showcasing the best of Surrey Libraries' offerings to the community.

The event was held at Guildford Town Centre as a way for us to connect with the community outside our walls.









## WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE SPACES

*While the pandemic forced changes to the Library's physical spaces, more attention was placed on ensuring the Library's virtual spaces were not only welcoming and inclusive but engaging and filled with essential content.*

For example, staff created and added **162** new videos to the Surrey Libraries YouTube channel which garnered **34,717** views and increased subscribers by **775% over 2019**. In response to growing global movements, the Library also focused efforts on anti-racism programming and collections.

### HELD THREE UNIQUE PROGRAMS:

Anti-racism storytime and anti-racism teen book talk in support of our commitment to diverse and inclusive spaces. Screening of the MIXD project which explores mixed-heritage identity through dialogue, photography and interviews.

### OFFERED BLACK LIVES MATTER COMMUNITY READ TITLES

available to read, listen, and learn without waitlists as well as the *Diverse Reads Reading Challenge*.

### POSTED SURREY LIBRARIES' RESPONSE TO RACISM STATEMENT

to the community in support of equity, diversity and inclusion.

*Libraries are an essential and fundamental part of our community. The services they provide and the funding they receive must be maintained. The innovation and creativity of library staff during these unprecedented times has been inspirational as they continue to overcome challenges and maintain equity for all.*

~ Library Patron



*Work continued on the new Clayton branch construction*







Renovated Cloverdale Branch reopened



## TRACKING OUR PROGRESS

74%

**BRANCH  
VISITS**

48%

**DIGITAL  
VISITS**



**67%**

**OF STAFF COMPLETED CUSTOMER  
SERVICE EXCELLENCE TRAINING**

Branch closures made more staff  
training possible in 2020.



## OUR COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION

*Surrey Libraries is committed to Reconciliation and is working to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.*

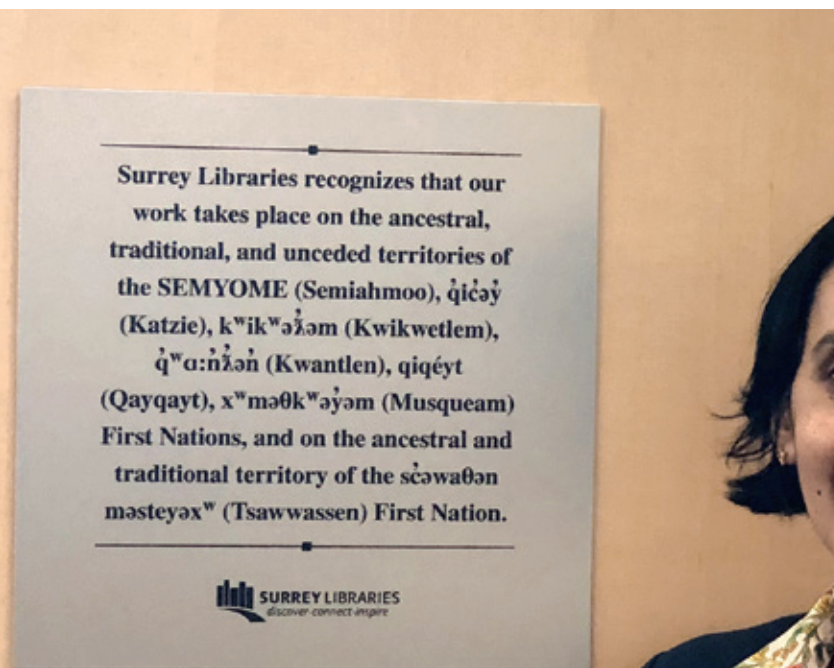
Through programming and other initiatives, the Library is working to build more meaningful connections between the Library, the Indigenous community, and the citizens of Surrey, to grow understanding of Indigenous history and showcase Indigenous culture.

New signage was created for library branches acknowledging that the work of Surrey Libraries takes place on the ancestral and unceded territories of Indigenous peoples. Land acknowledgement has also been added to the opening of each Library Board meeting.

**NATIONAL  
INDIGENOUS  
PEOPLE'S DAY  
WAS ACKNOWLEDGED  
BY FEATURING  
ONLINE INDIGENOUS  
RESOURCES AND  
INDIGENOUS READS  
ON OVERDRIVE.**



Online Author Readings for children program featured two Indigenous authors: Michael Hutchinson and Karen Pheasant-Neganigwane and were enjoyed by close to 600 participants.



*New signage for library branches*





## SHARE YOUR STORY

Submit your story at [surreylibraries.ca/share-your-story](https://surreylibraries.ca/share-your-story)

*When I first moved to Surrey, I was seven months pregnant and I wasn't working. Being a lover of books, within the first two weeks of moving I got my library card. As a kid, the library was a safe haven of endless possibilities of adventure and a place to escape from daily life. I always felt safe and at peace in the library. The love of libraries has only grown throughout my life. After my daughter was born, I was grateful for baby time at the library, and being a new resident, I didn't have any mom friends and a chance to interact with other moms was sorely needed. I was able to checkout books on advice for sleep training and baby food recipes.*

*Now that my daughter is two, and the library has reopened, Woo hoo! We go every other week to get new books. My daughter has the same love for books as I do and can spend lengthy amounts of time skimming through books. Libraries are a big part of our lives and I want my children to always value and support them.*

~ Heather Sluss

**180,730**  
ACTIVE CARDHOLDERS



**31%**  
OF POPULATION



OVER **825,000**  
eBOOKS AND  
eAUDIO BORROWED



## TRACKING OUR PROGRESS

**8%**

**ACTIVE**  
CARDHOLDERS

**60%**

**NEW**  
CARDHOLDERS





*Left to right: Dupinder Kaur Saran, Neelam Sahota (Chair), Connie Hong, Moninder Singh, Perbeen Mann, Michael Kendler, Jennifer Zhen, Stanley Chang (Vice Chair), Marilyn Herrmann, Jack Hundial (Council Representative), Kiran Dhesa, Simon Cumming, Louise Hearty*



## FINANCIAL SUMMARY FOR 2020

Full financial statements can be found at  
[surreylibraries.ca/about-us](http://surreylibraries.ca/about-us)

REVENUES	
City of Surrey Transfers	\$ 15,358,433
Provincial & Federal Grants	\$ 1,003,614
Fines & Fees	\$ 160,198
Neighbourhood Development Contributions	\$ 100,000
Donations and Other	\$ 102,882
EXPENDITURES	
Salaries and Benefits	\$ 11,433,163
Materials, Supplies & Equipment	\$ 4,104,024
Branch Operations	\$ 1,338,066
Other	\$ 336,454

LIBRARY SERVICES COST  
JUST

**\$3.21**

PER MONTH PER CITIZEN\*

\*Based on 2020 budget of \$22,362,000  
divided by Surrey's estimated 2020  
population of 580,365

## OUR GOVERNMENT AND CORPORATE SUPPORTERS

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SURREY INTERNATIONAL WRITERS' CONFERENCE  
SURREYCARES COMMUNITY FOUNDATION • UNITED WAY  
VANCOUVER KIDSBOOKS

# THANK YOU!

# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS

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LYDIA CERRANO ALBERT CHILD  
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 TAMMY WRIGHT  
 NONG YAN  
 OLINDA YOUNGS  
 SANDRA ZUCCARO



## TRACKING OUR PROGRESS



**491**

ACTIVE DONORS IN **2020**

**VS**



**284**

ACTIVE DONORS IN **2019**

OUR COMMUNITY WAS  
 GENEROUS DESPITE THE  
 PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

# VISIT US

## CITY CENTRE BRANCH

10350 University Drive  
Surrey, BC V3T 4B8  
604-598-7420

## CLAYTON BRANCH

7155 187A Street  
Surrey, BC V4N 6L9  
604-592-2727

## CLOVERDALE BRANCH

5642 176A Street  
Surrey, BC V3S 4G9  
604-598-7320

## DIGITAL BRANCH

surreylibraries.ca  
604-598-7901

## FLEETWOOD BRANCH

15996 84 Avenue  
Surrey, BC V4N 0W1  
604-598-7340

## GUILDFORD BRANCH

15105 105 Avenue  
Surrey, BC V3R 7G8  
604-598-7360

## NEWTON BRANCH

13795 70 Avenue  
Surrey, BC V3W 0E1  
604-598-7400

## OCEAN PARK BRANCH

12854 17 Avenue  
Surrey, BC V4A 1T5  
604-502-6304

## PORT KELLS BRANCH

18885 88 Avenue  
Surrey, BC V4N 5T1  
604-598-7440

## SEMAHMOO BRANCH

1815 152 Street  
Surrey, BC V4A 9Y9  
604-592-6900

## STRAWBERRY HILL BRANCH

7399 122 Street  
Surrey, BC V3W 5J2  
604-501-5836