



2020

Community Report

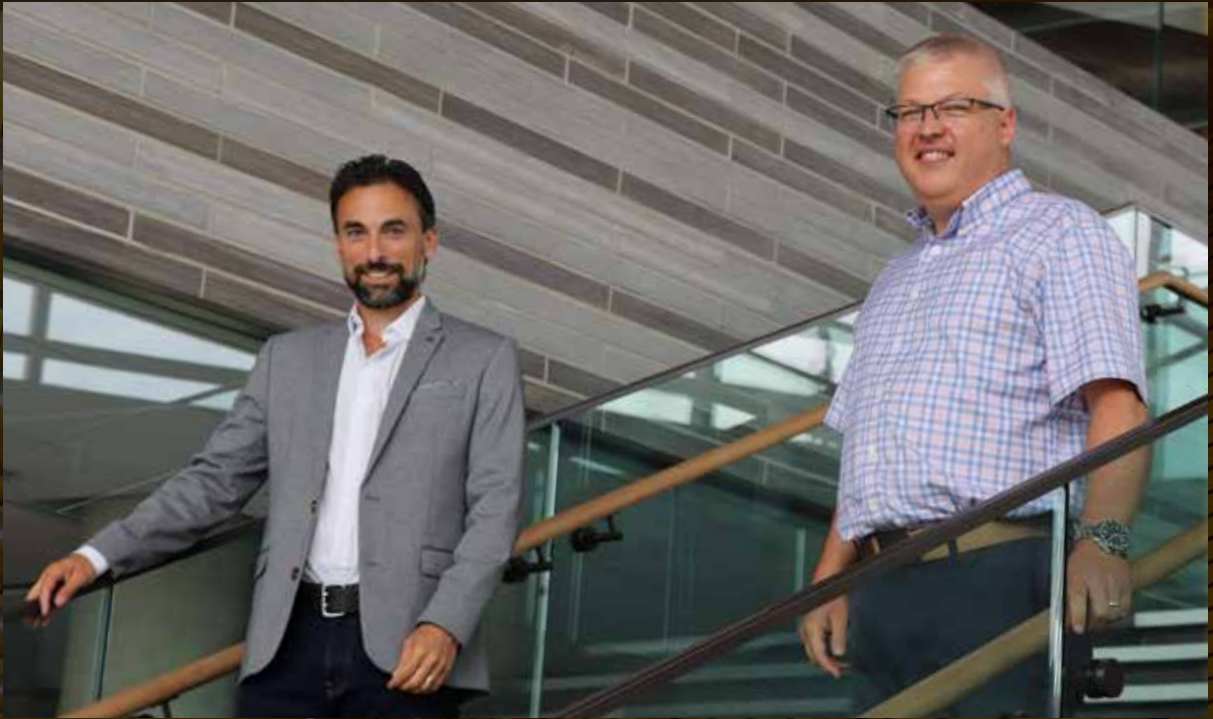


We are proud to be your library.

Now more than ever, we're here for you. When you need to solve a problem, make a decision, learn, read, enjoy or explore an issue, we integrate the sources with the expertise to help you to build your life and build your community.



MESSAGE FROM THE **Board Chair & CEO**



2020 was not an easy year for any of us. As the realities of COVID-19 set in, we all had to innovate and adapt in almost every part of our lives. Richmond Hill Public Library was no different. The pandemic prevented us from engaging with our community in the ways we were used to, and forced us to find new ways to support our old friends and our new ones.

Almost everything we did shifted to digital. People who used to browse through our stacks turned to our online catalogue and eResources; we launched online reservations for convenient curbside pickups; our expert librarians launched a Virtual Reference Desk; and our programming team created a wide variety of live and on-demand video programs, including children's storytimes, chess classes, coding lessons, and small business consulting. We also kept evolving and growing our value to the community. Among other things, we created take-home learning and STEAM Kits, launched our first video game collection and expanded our digital resources to keep up with new demand.

The world has changed and our collective experiences this year will have a lasting impact. Our amazing team at RHPL deserves a special shout out for going above and beyond to ensure our community's needs were met. As a critical and central pillar of our community, we promise to continue to evolve with you, and to continually reimagine the best customer experience possible for you.

On behalf of the RHPL Board and entire staff team, we'd like to thank you for continuing to use Richmond Hill Public Library. Your support and feedback fuels our motivation to create and deliver innovative and relevant services every day.

Stay safe and see you soon.

Greg Beros, RHPL Board Chair
Darren Solomon, RHPL Chief Executive Officer



SHIFTING TO digital.

IN THIS PHOTO: Leah, Community Services Librarian, uses our Virtual Reference Desk to show Meghan, age 7, how to program a Blue-Bot.

On March 14, COVID-19 forced our branches to close for five months. We recognized the needs of our community and quickly pivoted our focus to digital, expanding and adjusting our online collection and offering a variety of new virtual programs and services.

- We launched our first-ever digital library card in March, welcoming over 2,000 digital cardholders for the 2020 year.
- Despite being closed for a large part of the year, our combined circulation fell only 24% when compared to 2019. We saw eBook usage skyrocket with a 72% increase in downloads.
- We held virtual board meetings, launched a digital version of our TD Summer Reading Club for kids and created an Adult Summer Reading Club.
- We launched our Virtual Reference Desk that allowed people to connect directly with our librarians through video for book recommendations, research, and other library needs.
- On average, we answered over 200 customer inquiries per month through email and video alone.

stats on digital use

OUR MOST USED DIGITAL RESOURCES

	2019	2020
CHECKOUTS		
eBooks	147,314	254,280
eAudioBooks	35,139	45,119
ePeriodicals	67,938	124,267
VIDEO VIEWS		
Lynda.com	47,432	64,671
USAGE/SESSIONS		
Bookflix	973	7,592
Trueflix	423	4,293
Scienceflix	857	2,043

REDEFINING **branch** SERVICES.



IN THIS PHOTO: Mackenzie, Interim Manager, Oak Ridges Library, safely provides a customer with their holds through curbside pickup at Central Library.

Our team launched new ways to provide valued services for our community while also prioritizing the safety of both our staff and customers. We continue to be a welcoming community space that allows you the opportunity to think, grow and engage.

we're social.

With our doors closed, staff found creative new ways to connect with our community. This included the use of affordable Facebook, Instagram and Google Ads, regular updates on our social media pages, and various email marketing campaigns.

Our total social media interactions (reach, likes, shares, gcomments), increased from 679,955 in 2019 to 810,949 in 2020.

- In February, we celebrated our highly anticipated, brand new Oak Ridges Library with a grand opening celebration attended by over 900 community members.
- We reached out. We called over 13,300 customers while York Region was under lockdown, letting them know we were there for them and how we can help. Through these calls, we were able to welcome back 4,133 lapsed members.
- In July, we launched our first-ever curbside pickup service at Central Library, with 13,427 items checked out and 2,942 customers served.
- As a courtesy to our cardholders, we automatically renewed all expiring cards until the end of 2021, allowing our customers to continue using our services from the safety of their homes.
- We waived fines on overdue items to reduce financial burden on our community in economically trying times.

INNOVATIVE programs.

From book clubs to craft tutorials, staff transformed an array of in-person programs into virtual formats that could be enjoyed in homes, daycares and classrooms.

- We provided hands-on learning opportunities through lendable STEAM Kits, which explored topics like coding, robotics and math.
- We held over 550 online programs through Zoom (282), Facebook Live (53) and pre-recorded videos on YouTube (221).
- We handed out over 40 summer reading outreach kits to the Richmond Hill Food Bank and our local Salvation Army, and donated seven boxes of Young Adult books to 360° Kids York Region.
- We loaned our 3D printers to The STEAM Project, who used them to print PPE for frontline workers.
- Our librarians continued to support research through virtual visits to high school and elementary classrooms.

your favourite programs

ZOOM (LIVE)

1. Eaton Hall
2. Creative Writing
3. Code a Digital Art Masterpiece
4. Game On! Code a Classic Game
5. Culture Days: Taiwanese Puppets

PRE-RECORDED

1. Build a Bridge to Save a Gingerbread Man
2. Watercolour Workout
3. Musical Storytime
4. Celebrate Canada Day
5. Spooktacular Crafts



IN THIS PHOTO: Lights, camera, action! Sharon, Library Assistant, provides our littlest customers with a pre-recorded Family Storytime program that they can access from home.



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