



**DOWNTOWN LIBRARY**  
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[RAPIDCITYLIBRARY.ORG](http://RAPIDCITYLIBRARY.ORG)



Date: February 8, 2021  
To: RCPL Board of Trustees  
From: Sam Slocum, Senior Librarian  
Re: 2020 Statistics Summary

**Summary:** Due to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, safety precautions such as requiring face masks, quarantining materials, and limits to the number of people able to attend events and occupy meeting rooms were implemented. For the safety of the community, use of the drive-thru and virtual services were heavily promoted. As a consequence of these precautions and a general change in the community's behavior, many of the in-library statistics have shown late-year recovery, but have yet to rebound entirely.

In 2020 virtual patron contacts, drive-thru use, digital circulation and social networking engagement increased. There were decreases in borrowers, computer use, patron contacts, visitor entries, website visits, physical circulation, database use and events.

### Operations/Library Services

- New borrowers decreased by 55% and total borrowers decreased 5%. This amounted to 1,908 new borrowers in 2020 with 37,420 total borrowers at the end of the year
- Community members spent over 165,000 hours using library computers and Wi-Fi, a 53% decrease
- Library staff engaged with 46,536 individuals, a 46% decrease
  - Nearly 6,000 of those patrons requested reference and research services
  - **Virtual patron contacts (phone and online) increased 163% to over 12,000**
- 208,408 fewer people visited the library in person, a 56% decrease; entries have been gradually recovering since reopening the building on June 1
  - **Drive-thru use increased, with 22,441 patrons using drive-thru services**
- Website visits declined by 21%; however, the new website launching in 2021 has the opportunity to result in increased use

### Collections

- Physical checkouts of books, DVDs, audiobooks, and magazines decreased 31%
- **Digital circulation (downloadable audiobooks, ebooks, streaming content, and electronic magazines) increased by 5% with over 9,000 more uses**
- Research database use decreased by 20%

### **Public Awareness and Customer Relations**

- The number of library-hosted events decreased by 46%, which is 285 fewer programs than 2019; event attendance also decreased 48% with 18,797 fewer people attending library events
- There were over 153,000 social networking engagements via Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Pinterest for promotions and education