



Vaughan
Public Libraries

2020 Annual Report

Next



Table of Contents

Click on the VPL



to navigate and interact with this document

Page 3

Welcome to our Annual Report

A New Look at VPL

Meet Ollie, our Friendly Mascot

Page 4

Safer Libraries During the
Pandemic

Curbside Pickup

Page 5

Creating More Accessible Libraries

Dynamic Programming for All

Page 6

Enhanced Communication

More Ways to Interact with Staff

Page 7

VPL in the Community

VPL by the Numbers

Page 8

Strengthening your Digital Library

Page 9

Building More Branches for You!

Page 10

Recognized for Accessibility

Looking to the Future

Page 11

Stay connected with us



Welcome to Our Annual Report



A New Look at VPL

In February 2020, we debuted our new brand to staff and customers. Our colourful logo reflects the vibrancy of Vaughan Public Libraries and fits perfectly with our vision of what a forward-looking, welcoming library should be. Whether you are visiting us online or in person, look out for our new brand. Next time you visit your local branch, ask how you can get your new and complementary VPL Library card.



**Vaughan
Public Libraries**



Meet Ollie, our Friendly Mascot

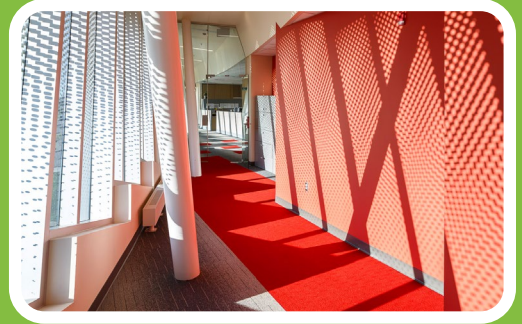
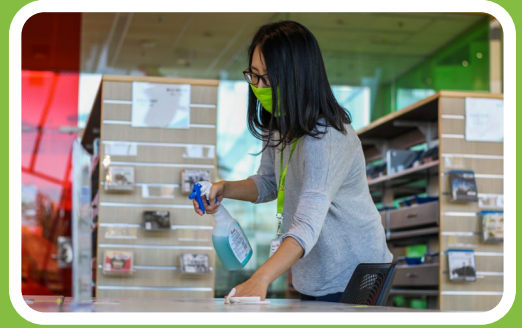
Meet Ollie, our larger than life mascot, who now calls VPL their nest. Ollie is the friendly, feathery face of the library for our youngest customers and attended a number of events before lending a wing as our operations changed.





Safer Libraries During the Pandemic

On March 15, 2020 all of our libraries had to close to customers, but the following 9 months were a remarkable story of innovation and resilience, as we created a full-service digital library by growing our collection, augmenting it with virtual programming for all ages and collecting everything in one easy to access spot. We also worked diligently to apply rigorous safety procedures to ensure we could resume services when restrictions allowed. We had to close and re-open a number of times as per provincial directives, but our commitment to your safety has never waived.



Curbside Pickup



Our doors may have been closed for large parts of the year, but we've revolutionized our approach to make our physical collection available to you. VPL was the first library in Ontario to begin offering this service on May 20. By introducing curbside pickup, you could safely request and pick up items from the library of your choice. In fact, since mid-March 2020 almost 700,000 items were borrowed via curbside from Resource Libraries while they were open.



Place holds or request recommendations



Wait for your items to be prepared



Visit us for a contact-free pick up

[Back](#)

[Table of](#)

[Contents](#)

[Next](#)



\$ Creating More Accessible Libraries

It's critically important that everyone can access the library collection, which is why we eliminated late fees in 2020. Fines can act as a significant deterrent to use, and our research found that a large number of families had borrowing access completely blocked because their fines had reached the limit allowed. By excusing these amounts and eliminating late fees we're opening our doors to more customers of all ages so that they can enjoy the full scope of everything that VPL has to offer. We do still have a rigorous reminder process in place, and any accounts with items not returned within 30 days of the due date will be charged the full replacement cost.



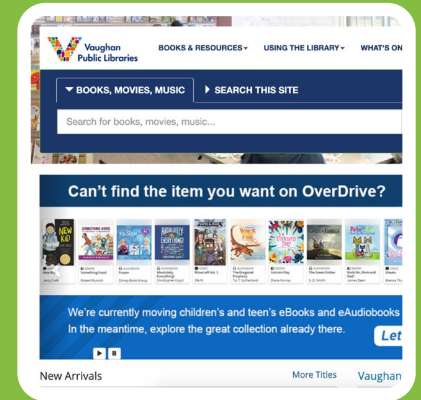
Dynamic Programming for All

Customers have always embraced VPL programming and 2020 began strongly with in-person storytimes and events, with the highlight being an extremely well-attended Harry Potter Night at Bathurst Clark Resource Library. VPL also continued to offer STEAM Camps on PA Days and during School Closures. When libraries closed in March, all in-person events were cancelled until further notice, and programming moved online, which was a first for us. Customers could attend livestreamed storytimes on Instagram, seminars on Zoom or attend one of our popular Family Nights. VPL is committed to providing high levels of service to everyone in the community, and the move to online programming in April provided customers with an outlet to entertain themselves during the Pandemic, as well as providing an opportunity to connect with others.

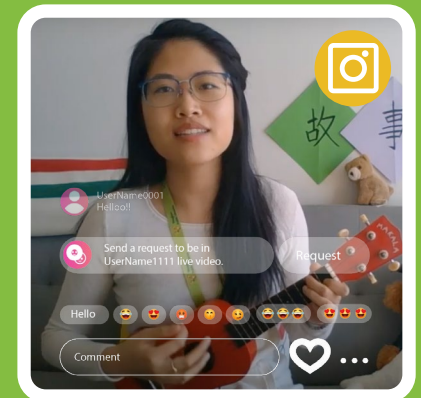


Enhanced Communication

If there was any doubt that we live in an increasingly digital world, the pandemic has dispelled that! The ability to deliver programs and services online has allowed us to continue in our mission, while virtual communication has been a lifeline for all of us. That's why in 2020 we increased the frequency of our eNewsletter to once per week, and why we switched to a monthly digital version of our What's On magazine. We also understand how important communication and internet access is for you, which is why we extended free wifi access to the parking lots of all Resource Libraries, and why we received a grant from the Government of Ontario to distribute portable mifi devices to retirement homes throughout the City.



**1,570,315 visits
to VPL's website**



**90,614 people attended
1,594 programs**



? More Ways to Interact with Staff

One of the key roles of our staff is to help answer your questions and enable you to find answers, and we won't let a pandemic get in the way of that duty. In 2020, staff created the Ask Us virtual reference desk to help you with your needs. This service quickly expanded to encompass online access, live chat, text messaging, social media and phone, meaning that staff were only a click or call away.



**Staff answered 306,508
customer questions**

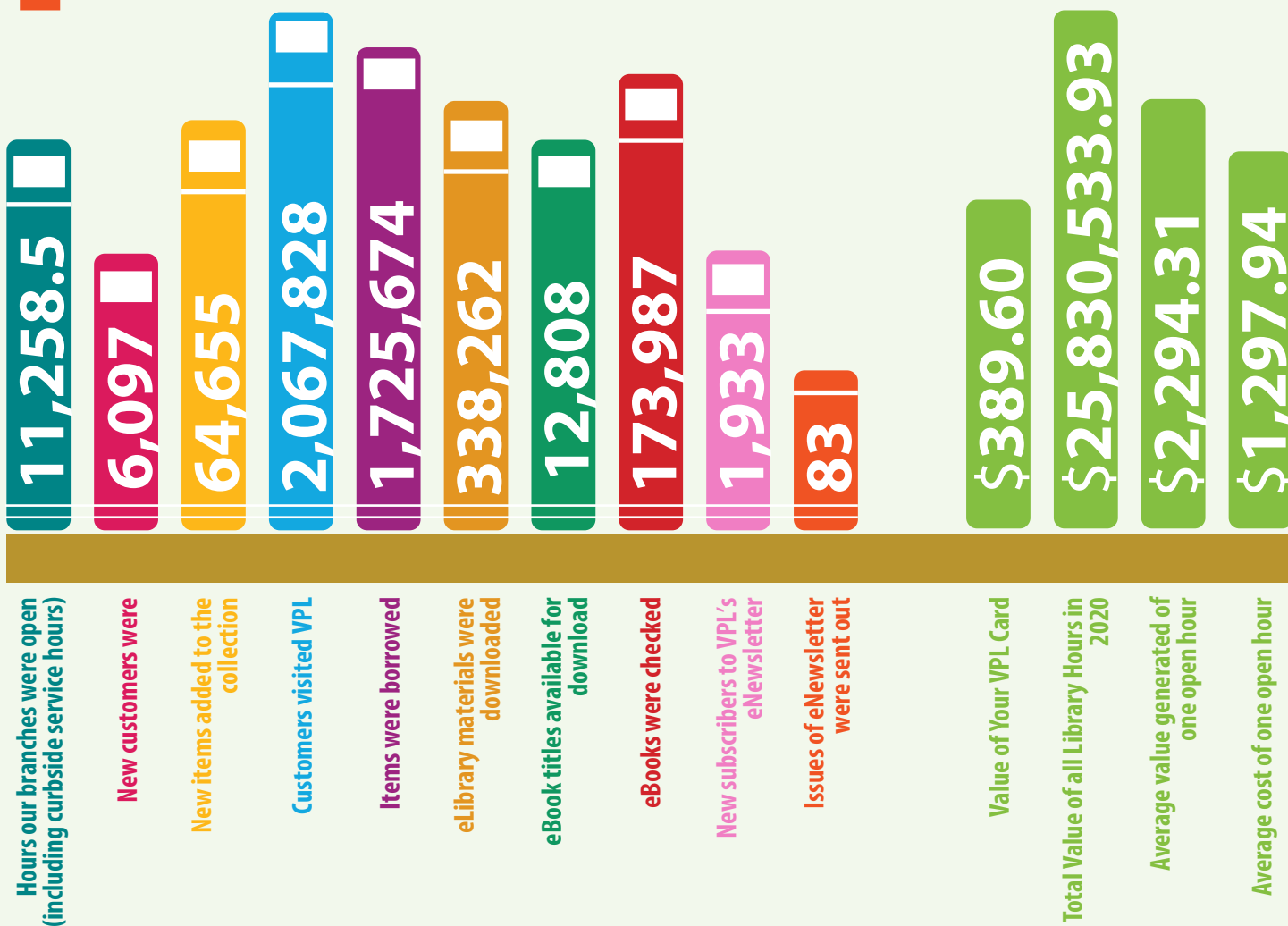


VPL in the Community

Throughout the pandemic, VPL has continued to be an active member of the community and has engaged its partners to nurture relationships and drive awareness of the resources available. We contacted all of our partners to see how we can support the needs of their members and we've been active in introducing school classes to library resources via Zoom. We also look after the needs of individual customers. A personal customer care program was created to provide updates to over 6,000 customers with active hold requests and to promote knowledge of online resources. Staff demonstrated great compassion through the 1,524 telephone calls made to regular customers and vulnerable members of the community, and these calls provided people with reassurance, advice on services available, as well as social and mental support.



VPL By the Numbers

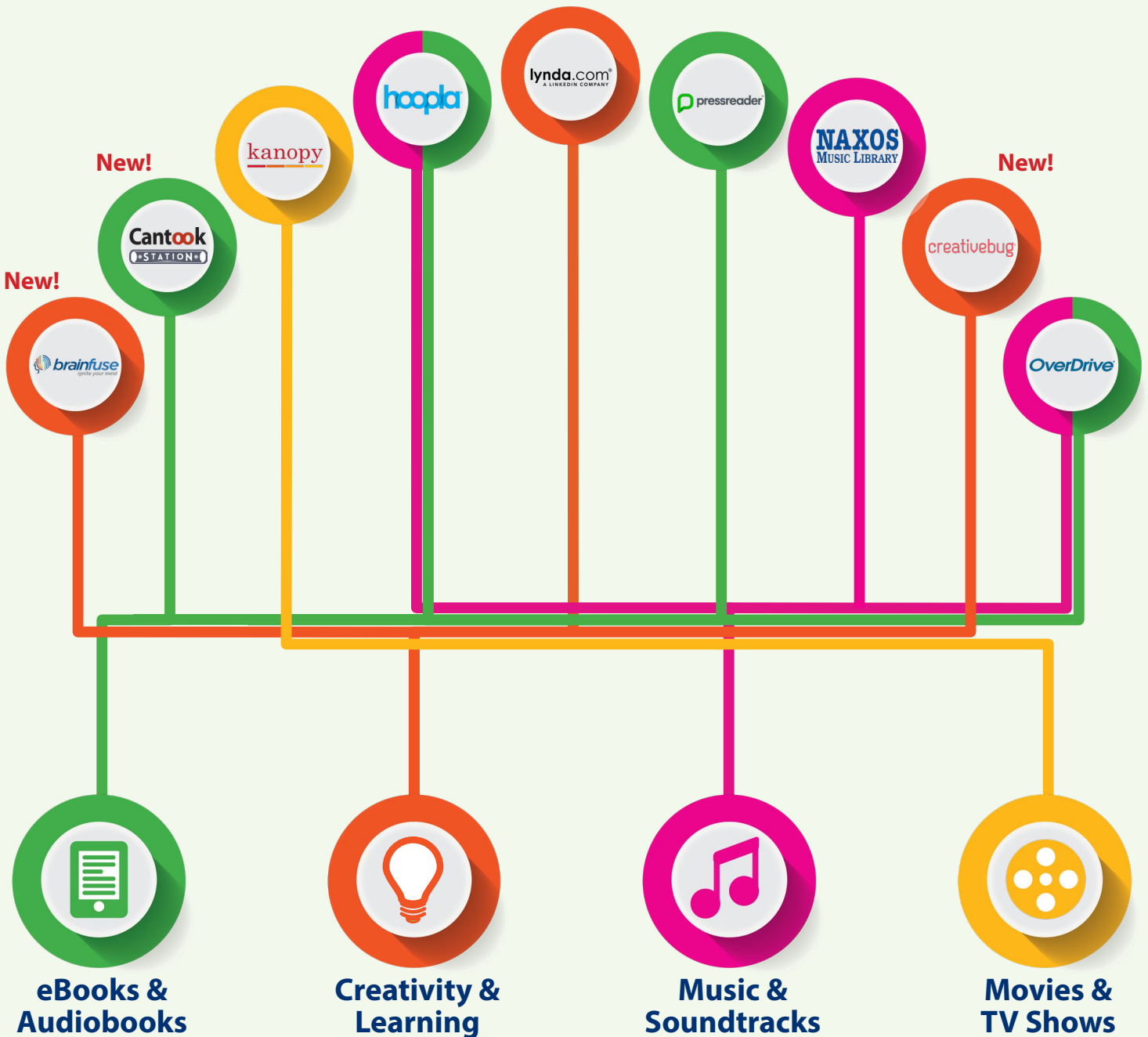




Strengthening your Digital Library

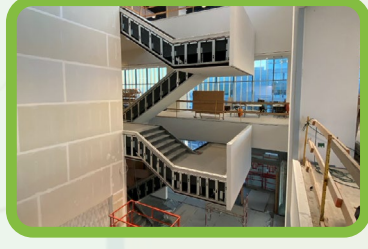
Your digital library got bigger and better in 2020, which helped provide access to top-quality titles and resources throughout the year, keeping you entertained and informed. Downloads of digital books rose 78% and we expanded the collection by 39% to provide a larger selection. Over the course of the year almost 340,00 digital library items were downloaded.

Click on any of the icons below to visit the associated website.



Building More Branches for You!

While the timelines may have been revised due to the impact of the pandemic, great construction progress was made on our three new libraries. Our new location at the Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital will provide invaluable resources to the local community, as well as staff, caregivers and patients. It will have a specialized focus on health literacy, along with staff trained in the field. The VMC Library will bring great collection access and programming to Vaughan’s new downtown, and will also have access to a community kitchen where we will showcase culinary literacy. This location will also be complemented by the VMC Express, a self-serve destination stocking our most popular titles. This innovative format will provide quick access to customers on the go, and is located mere steps away from Vaughan’s major transit hub. Anticipated opening of the new library facilities is being targeted for Fall 2021.



★ Recognized for Accessibility



Rick Hansen Foundation
Accessibility Certification



🕒 Looking to the Future

Vaughan Public Libraries will continue to evolve to suit your needs and respond to the changing conditions that we find ourselves living in. As Covid case numbers decrease more of our services and locations will return to normal and we are excited to welcome more customers through our doors. We have learned some valuable lessons throughout 2020 and achieve much that will act as a legacy for years to come. These twelve months have shown us the power of our staff to innovate and constantly excel at service delivery. Our successes have created a more adaptable, resilient and inclusive library system that will continue to grow. We encourage you to read our new **Strategic Plan** to discover our vision for the future and the steps we will take to serve you better.



Stay Connected With Us

Vaughan Public Libraries welcomed a new Library Board for 2019-2022



Front Row (from L): Palma Pallante, Rose Savage (Chair), Gino Rosati, Loreta Pavese, Margie Singleton (CEO), Antonella Nicaso, Ralph Cinelli, Gary Thompson (Vice-Chair), Laurie Hewitt, Back Row (from L): Gail Blackman, Denise Da Ros-Presutti, Richard Wu, Bruno Riga (2019-2020), Marilyn lafrate, Mario Ferri, Hameed Malik, Sandra Yeung Racco, Donald Lazar, Manjit Kaur



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Back

Table of

Contents