

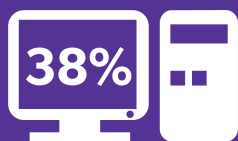


The Library was innovative and fast-acting in 2020.

We opened Jensen Lakes Library in January and then pivoted quickly to new service delivery modes like Curbside and digital when the pandemic hit. We were leaders in safety and in access – among the first libraries to move programs online, and to open up safe browsing and study spaces, among many other innovations.



30-40%
INCREASE IN
eBooks



38%
INCREASE IN
DIGITAL USE
OVERALL



172,911
DIGITAL LOANS



3,322 USES OF
CRC RESOURCES



eLearning
USAGE
INCREASED BY
28% IN 2020

The Library remained a community gathering space.

eLibrary use soared in 2020, but it didn't replace patrons' need for physical library materials, public computer access, in-person services, and community connections. Despite limited hours, occupancy restrictions, and several facility closures, in 2020 we saw 133,710 in-person visits and 8,308 uses of public computers in addition to more than 571,000 online visits.



In 2020, the library offered **570 programs**,
attended by **23,153 people**.



Outreach offered **154 programs**
with **1,841 attendees**.



Looking ahead to recovery in 2021.

We share the City's focus on community recovery – the Library delivers these supports through early literacy, digital literacy, support for teachers, learners and parents, job and career supports, and social and community connections for St. Albertans of all demographics.

"The library is a huge part of our family's life and we love visiting. We have seen how hard you are all working to keep us all safe while visiting - and always with such kindness. We are so sad to hear that the library will once again have to close. I want to thank you for the email we received today already detailing how things will work during this shutdown. Please know how much we APPRECIATE every single one of you."

EY report and how SAPL stacks up among peer Alberta libraries

The Library is a vital municipal service.

We work closely with the City to deliver valuable services to thousands of St Albertans each year. That value has become more apparent than ever as we work together to recover from the social and economic impacts of the pandemic. The Library looks forward to continuing our collaborative work with The City to both maintain critical services and explore new opportunities to achieve shared strategic goals to the benefit of St Albertans.

We are disappointed in the EY recommendations on the Library and believe they were based on faulty assumptions. It is clear EY did not compare SAPL to similar, peer libraries of mid-sized communities. Like the City, the Library continually benchmarks against peer libraries in similar Alberta municipalities: Lethbridge, Red Deer, Airdrie, Grande Prairie, Medicine Hat, Sherwood Park (Strathcona County) and Fort McMurray (Wood Buffalo).

How does SAPL stack up against our peer libraries?

#1
circulation
per capita

Largest
collection
per capita

#2
program
attendance

Second lowest
cost
per circulation
\$5.33

More
in-person
visits
than the average of
our peer libraries

2022 Library budget

St. Albert Public Library shares the City of St. Albert's immediate goals to manage the financial impact of COVID. As part of the City team, we reduced our budget allocation in 2020 by 7% and maintained that reduction in 2021. We are prepared to continue the zero increase into 2022.

In 2021, the 7% reduction to the Library budget request came from these areas:

1. Service level reduction – 20% reduction in opening hours and the resulting salary savings;
2. Permanent elimination of 2 positions that equal 1 FTE;
3. Cuts to materials budget and other non-personnel areas;
4. Use of library reserves to fund some operating costs.

Looking forward to 2022:

- Our strategic plan focuses on supporting recovery and economic growth through: online learning; small business support; employment supports through the Career Resource Centre; supporting quality of life for all St. Albertans through programs, collections, services, eLibrary.
- The community wants us to resume normal operations: open Sundays and evenings and at Jensen Lakes Library. If Council wishes the Library to return to normal service levels, including Sunday and evening openings and more hours at Jensen Lakes Library, further funding reductions would make that impossible.

Despite the challenges of 2020, the Library remained a place for St. Albertans to be together, whether virtually on a screen or safely distanced and masked inside. This pandemic will end, and we look forward to St. Albertans gathering together, in-person, face to face, shoulder to shoulder at their public library.

Here for you. Here for all.