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New Self-Check Machines Installed at City Libraries to Improve Customer Service

TECHNOLOGY UPGRADE IN ALL 36 LIBRARIES IS NOW COMPLETE

SAN DIEGO – A year-long project to upgrade the self-check machines at City of San Diego libraries is complete and patrons are embracing the new technology. The new self-check machines are now available at all 36 libraries Citywide.

Self-check systems allow for enhanced privacy and shorter waiting times, as patrons are able to check out their books without assistance from staff. Patrons can select from 27 languages on the digital screens. This month, a credit card payment feature is being added to allow patrons to pay overdue fines directly at the machines.

On average, libraries have reported a higher than 80 percent patron usage rate with the new self-check system.

“Our main objective is to enhance our customer service,” said Misty Jones, Library Director. “The self-check machines are simple to use and allow our staff to focus more time on helping patrons with library materials or developing new, innovative programs to serve our diverse communities.”

While the new self-check procedure improves efficiency, no library staff positions have been eliminated as a result of this project, which began in December 2016 and was completed on July 14, 2017.

In order to accommodate the technology upgrade, libraries across the city were closed for two weeks at a time on a rotating schedule. Staff tagged approximately 2.6 million circulating library materials with new radio frequency identification microchips, replacing the use of barcodes previously used to catalog and track items.

Enhanced security gates were also installed in several libraries. The project was made possible through a California State Library grant and donations to the San Diego Public Library’s Matching Equipment Fund.

The San Diego Public Library welcomed nearly seven million people in the past year, an increase of more than 20 percent in five years. According to a recent Pew Research Center [report](#), millennials are more likely to use public libraries, a trend directly linked to an increase in computer and internet usage in libraries, the availability of advanced technologies like 3D printers, and free library courses in complex subjects including computer coding and virtual reality.

To learn more about supporting library programs, contact the San Diego Public Library Foundation at 619-238-6695 and www.SupportMyLibrary.org.

About the San Diego Public Library

With a vision of being the place for opportunity, discovery and inspiration, the San Diego Public Library is a hub for knowledge and lifelong learning. As the largest library system in the region, it serves a population of more than 1.3 million people. Learn about events at the San Diego Central Library @ Joan A Irwin Jacobs Common and 35 community branch libraries, find links to programs and resources or search for materials in the online catalog at www.sandiegolibrary.org.

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