



# Open for Exploration

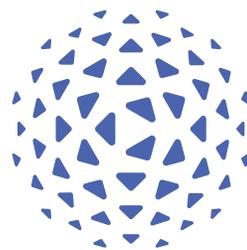
*San Mateo County Libraries are igniting growth in the community*

**A**t San Mateo County Libraries, one simple tagline embodies everything they do—Open for Exploration. It speaks to their role in enriching the community, supporting unparalleled access to information and ideas, celebrating open-mindedness and life-long learning, and providing a welcoming atmosphere for all.

If you step foot inside one of their 12 community libraries, you might see and hear something that surprises you: perhaps the gentle buzz of a 3D printer; an “ooh and aah” from a senior looking through a Virtual Reality headset for the first time; or a eureka from an entrepreneur eagerly planning the next big startup.

San Mateo County Libraries are a four-star library system that ranks sixth in the state of California, according to the Library Journal. More than 67 percent of their service area has a library card and nearly 2.1 million people visit them annually.

The library system is a springboard for opportunity, particularly for the business community. The libraries offer physical workspaces and meeting rooms for small businesses, provide numerous free online resources, and inspire innovation and creativity in future generations of entrepreneurs. The libraries also help connect businesses with hireable employees. Their partnership with an online degree program gives residents a chance to earn a diploma and a career portfolio.



**San Mateo  
County  
Libraries**

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*To explore with San Mateo  
County Libraries, visit [smcl.org](http://smcl.org)*

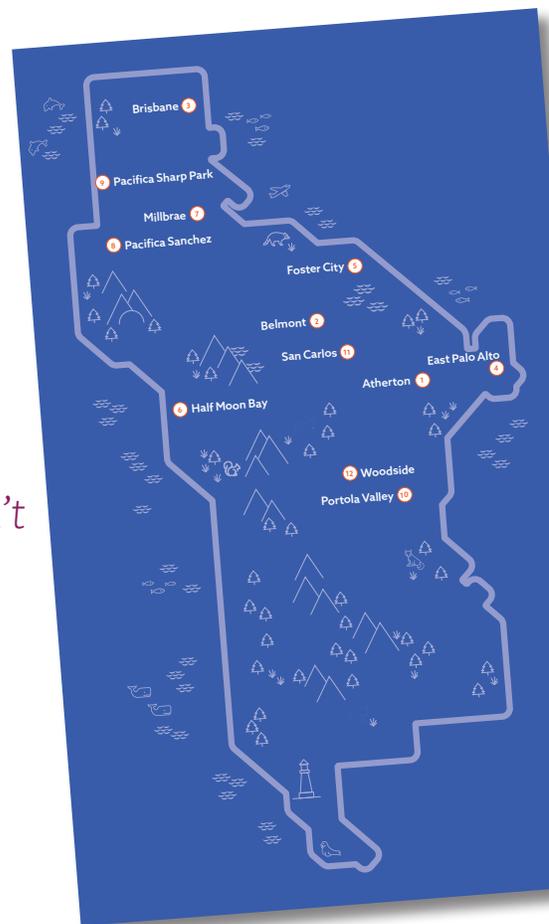
## San Mateo County Libraries are more than just books. They're...

- **Supporting small businesses.** Free online resources include access to invaluable tools, such as: thousands of top business journals; courses and programs for business skills training and career development; and databases ideal for sales leads and market research. With a full range of free design software applications, the libraries' digital media stations are popular among small businesses and freelance workers.
- **Unique, free programs and events.** Last year, the libraries hosted more than 12,000 dynamic programs and events, including marketing classes for teens and adults, and financial planning courses made possible through local partnerships. Library visitors can also create at social painting and sewing events, jam out with friends at music clubs, add to their reading list at book clubs, or tinker at Maker programs with laser printers and robots—there's something for every age and activity.
- **3.7 million items circulated.** The libraries have a broad collection of items consisting of books, eBooks, audio books, movies, music and more. Their collection is constantly growing to stay fresh and is available in up to seven languages. To help bridge the digital divide, they offer free Wi-Fi hotspots and laptops available for checkout. Keep an eye out for special inventory you'd never expect at a library, like a ukulele or GoPro.
- **Invaluable community resources.** Your library card unlocks a world of free resources. Students can access homework coaching and free educational databases. Professionals can grow with free professional development training. Other resources include language-learning software, veterans services, coding classes and more.



*“An elderly patron came to a virtual reality program and asked to view his hometown in China. As I helped him into the VR headset, he gasped in surprise and quickly began pointing out landmarks to his granddaughter. It wasn't until after he took off the headset that we realized he had been crying tears of joy. I'm proud to work for a library that provides technologies like this that not only bridge generations but make connections to personal histories.”*

Library Staff Member



San Mateo County Libraries are located in Atherton, Belmont, Brisbane, East Palo Alto, Foster City, Half Moon Bay, Millbrae, Pacifica, Portola Valley, San Carlos and Woodside, and their service area includes unincorporated areas of the County. Their outreach services, including a full-service library on wheels called the Bookmobile, allow them to deliver essential library programs and services throughout the district.

## Fine-free libraries!

San Mateo County Libraries made a transformative announcement in 2019; their libraries are now fine-free! So, go ahead and pick up that best-seller or take full advantage of any library resource without the fear of fines holding you back.

