

## 2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

### LIBRARY NAME

Fernie Heritage Library

### CHECKLIST

- ☐ 1. INTRODUCTION - LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY PROFILE
- ☐ 2. MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS
- ☐ 3. KEY CHALLENGES
- ☐ 4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

### 1. INTRODUCTION - LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

**Provide a brief description of the community and library, focusing on what has changed in the past year.**

Fernie is a rapidly growing vibrant little city located in the southeastern corner of the Province of British Columbia. The main industries in Fernie are tourism and mining. The 2021 Census showed a population growth rate of 17%, making us one of the fastest growing communities in the Province. Like other communities in BC, our community is struggling with labour shortages and high housing prices.

The Fernie Heritage Library is located in a gorgeous heritage building located one block off main street across the street from the post office and City Hall. We have a large garden that gives us the opportunity to expand our programming and services to the outdoors. We have three floors, our basement which is home to our programming space and our maker space, the main floor which houses our fiction collection and circulation desk, and the reference floor which houses our non-fiction collection, public seating, and computer workstations.

The vision of the Fernie Heritage Library is to be a *welcoming place for discovery, inspiration, and recreation*. Our mission is *enriching lives and community* and we strive to be accessible, professional, responsive, innovative, and collaborative, in everything we do.

We pride ourselves on our programming and we have continued to offer programming, both virtual and in person, throughout the pandemic.

In 2021, we upgraded our network system and our venting system. We also expanded our outdoor programming space by installing large tents, additional seating, and some games. We also worked to further Truth and Reconciliation in our community.

### 2. MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

Please describe any new or major ongoing projects/programs the library has delivered in the past year.

#### Project/Program Name

Fernie Heritage Library Outdoor Community Space

**Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.**

Two large tents were installed in the library garden to provide a safe place to offer programming and services.

Strong wifi (free 24 hour wifi) was installed in the garden

New seating was installed.

Large outdoor games were purchased for use by the community.

**How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?**

This project supported our strategic goal of building community and be a welcoming place for discovery, inspiration, and recreation.

**How does this project/program support the B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.**

1. <b>Improving Access for British Columbians</b>	We provided a safe space for the community to gather and access information. Digital connectivity was improved.
2. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b>	Citizen engagement was advanced as we were able to help community members access government services and resources.

**What are the key outcomes of this project/program?**

Community members were able to attend programs, and access information on services and resources.

36 programs were offered and over 300 people attending programs over the period.

The outdoor space was a positive community place that brought the community together.

**Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery?)**

This program was a partnership with the Fernie Youth Action Network, the Library Branch, the Federal Government (CEBA), and the Library. The Youth Action Network helped to promote the program, and also provides some funding for the program. The Libraries Branch provided funds to support the enhanced wifi in the garden. CEBA provided \$5000 to support the cost of the tents.

Project/Program Name	
Fernie Heritage Library Truth and Reconciliation	
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.	
<p>As part of working to Truth and Reconciliation in our community, the Fernie Heritage Library focussed on furthering the goals of Truth and Reconciliation in 2021.</p> <p>In 2021, we added to our indigenous books collection.</p> <p>In June we used our windows to create a display, that changed daily, to highlight indigenous books in our collection. We also hosted a National Indigenous Day Celebration on June 21<sup>st</sup>.</p> <p>On July 1st, library team members participated in a Truth and Reconciliation walk with the City of Fernie Council and members of the Ktunaxa Nation Council.</p> <p>On the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, the library gave away 75 books by Canadian Indigenous authors.</p>	
How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?	
<p>The Fernie Heritage Library strives to be a welcoming inclusive place in the community. As part of this, and to represent our community, we need to work with our local indigenous peoples. As part of Education for Reconciliation in the Truth and Reconciliation Calls for Action, the library is committed to growing our indigenous collection to further understanding in our community.</p>	
How does this project/program support the B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.	
3. Advancing Citizen Engagement	With our work to further Truth and Reconciliation, the library supports reconciliation and knowledge-sharing. This leads to enhanced citizen engagement.
What are the key outcomes of this project/program?	

The goals of Truth and Reconciliation were furthered.

My strengthening our collection, the community was able to access more resources, improving their knowledge and understanding.

By distributing 75 free books to the community, we were able to increase community capacity for understanding.

By highlighting our indigenous collection in displays and virtually, we were able to build community and improve understanding.

**Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery?)**

Our work to further Truth and Reconciliation was supported by the Provincial Government (funding), Law Matters (funding), the City of Fernie (funding), the Ktunaxa Nation (outreach), the Fernie Metis Society (outreach), and the Friends of the FHL (funding).

### 3. KEY CHALLENGES

Challenge	Briefly describe how this challenge has impacted the library/community, and what steps the library took to address it in 2021
COVID-19	Every aspect of our operations were affected by Covid-19. We had to operate with changed safety protocols. Proof of vaccination was required to attend programs. We did not do outreach to local senior's facilities and schools. The number of people visiting the library decreased. Programming was moved to either virtual or hybrid methods of delivery. We printed over 1200 POV cards in 2021.
Financial pressure	Our opportunities to fundraise decreased. Our municipality did not increase our funding. We faced rising janitorial costs and direct Covid-19 related costs. Staff used their banked sick time. Most of our costs increased. We used library reserves to balance our budget.
Staffing	Staffing was the largest challenge in 2021. We lost several staff members and recruitment and retention became our focus. Mental health and wellness of staff decreased. Staffing remains our most pressing challenge.
Disappearing services in the community	Government services shrank and the library worked hard to help citizens access the services they needed.
Connectivity	We improved our connectivity as a result of support provided by the Provincial Government.
Community access to the library	Community access to our building changed as we had to implement Covid-19 safety protocols. We offered a continuum of service and programs to ensure community access to the library. When we needed to, depending on the Covid-19 situation in the community, and dependent on staffing levels, we moved to a curbside-only model.

Vulnerable	We worked hard to provide service and programs to our vulnerable community members. We assisted them with accessing Covid-19 supports and we provided a safe, welcoming, consistent, space to our community.
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#### 4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

*Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.*

Library Director Signature: 

Date: May 12, 2022

Board Chair Signature: 

Date: May 13, 2022