

Prince Rupert Library
2019 Provincial Grants Report
February 26, 2020

Introduction

The Prince Rupert Library is grateful for the financial support it receives from the Province of British Columbia. These grants of \$85,000 represent almost 10% of our revenue and allow us to strengthen our collections and services, increase our outreach capacities and improve our relations with community partners. Much of the material in this report has been reported before because we are doing similar activities to previous years as the needs are still present.

The Public Library is an important community hub for the residents of Prince Rupert and surrounding area. People of all ages gather here to access information for varied purposes such as pursuing employment, continuing education, and recreation. Public internet access (work stations and Wi-Fi), printing and fax services, children's programming, author readings and our public meeting area are all well-used.

We have a wide array of families living in our community from various cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. We have many First Nations families in our community: 38% identify as Aboriginal, and 47% of children aged 14 and under also identify as Aboriginal. (Statistics Canada). We have several Asian and south Asian communities that continue to grow with the arrival of new immigrant families. These patrons are among the many that will benefit from literacy-based programming for their children, and our specialized ESL collection. We are looking forward to sharing the wealth of the First Nations' culture with those that are new to our community, as well as those that have lived here for many years. We have a considerable population who have economic barriers and often have no other access than the Library to information and skills development. As other government agencies close their public offices, the library increasingly provides the necessary online access for purchasing commercial fishing licences, pension applications and the like.

We have been using statistics from Dr. Clyde Hertzman's Human Early Learning Partnership at UBC (2014-2016) which show us that 27% of the Kindergarten students in our community during those years were considered 'vulnerable' in their 'Communications Skills and General Knowledge,' twice the provincial rate and the worst in the province. It also shows us that 27% of the students were vulnerable in their 'Language and Cognitive Development', which is three times the provincial rate according to <http://earlylearning.ubc.ca>. Overall, 51% of the students, who are now in Grades One and Two, were diagnosed as 'vulnerable' in at least one of the five scales of measurement. Prince Rupert was designated as having the second highest rate of 'vulnerable' kindergarten students in the province of B.C. We have not found any newer statistics since that time. In 2018 the Prince Rupert Library Board established four Board Committees: Strategic Planning Cmte., Grant/ Fundraising Cmte., City Relationship Cmte., and Library Director/Board Review Cmte., but most of the various committees' work has been done in 2019. Presently we use our mission statement to guide us, our services and our collections and it will be incorporated into our strategic plan.

Prince Rupert Public Library Mission Statement

- **Assemble, preserve and administer**, in organized collections, books and related educational and recreational material, in order to promote, through guidance and stimulation in the communication of ideas, an enlightened citizenship and enriched personal lives.
- **Serve** the community as a centre of reliable information
- **Support** the educational, civic, and cultural activities of community groups
- **Provide** opportunity and enrichment for children, young people, men and women to educate themselves continuously.
- **Seek** continually to identify community needs, to provide programs of service and access to meet such needs, and to cooperate with other organizations, agencies and institutions which can provide programs and services to meet community needs

Provincial Priorities

Fostering Connected Communities

Library Goals that support this priority

- **Provide** opportunity and enrichment for children, young people, men and women to educate themselves continuously.
- **Seek** continually to identify community needs, to provide programs of service and access to meet such needs, and to cooperate with other organizations, agencies and institutions which can provide programs and services to meet community needs.

Programs and/or services that align with this priority

- This is an important priority for us. We have a significant population of people in poverty who have no other affordable access to information or entertainment than the Library. Our goal of Seeking to provide opportunities for **all** people to educate themselves continuously supports this provincial priority. The following items, services and programs are funded in whole or in part by the Provincial grant we receive.
- Our Useful stations (also known as our public internet computer stations) have allowed our residents over 10,000 sessions in 2019 including users of our free Wi-Fi for our patrons. We are finding that our WiFi users are increasing while the usage of the computer stations are declining slightly, especially since our introduction of our 'print from your phone' service in March 2019. These services help bridge the digital divide that exists here in Prince Rupert.
- Our 2019 total of adult programs (participants 1422) has increased (12%) over 2018 (1271) . These community-group meetings are increasing in number and in comparison to other library activities. Reasonably affordable and safe meeting places are few in Prince Rupert and in 2019 we have had the highest number of group meetings in our history. We had 278 meetings of 35

different groups in our Library in 2019.

- A vital part of our Library is our **Sitka Evergreen ILS**. This allows us to provide our core services of circulation, cataloguing and item discovery.
- Our problem of too much success. While at first glance, too much success would not seem to be a problem. But in the case of our Interlibrary Loan program, (AKA Interlibrary Connect) we had seen significant growth in lending requests to our library while our borrowing from other libraries has stayed level over the past 4 years. These extra requests have increased the labour demands on our ILL staff person and other staff without an specific increase in provincial funding for this program.

Partnerships that support this priority

- Our relationship with NorthCoast Literacy Network keeps us connected to various grassroots local organizations and what is happening now. The end of provincial funding of Successby6 in Prince Rupert in 2018 has severed our connections with other groups to some degree.

Outcomes that were identified

- In 2016 the NWLF agreed to increase the emphasis on the shared First Nations priorities all of our libraries have and there were two immediate outcomes: one of own staff-members worked with our Federation coordinator to build a shared First Nations Resource list for all of the NWLF libraries to use. The second outcome is that our member libraries began to share more with each other, including policy examples, or best practises. We continued this throughout 2019. In June of 2019 we had a month long display and promotion of Indigenous books with our "Read Indigenous" book club which culminated in a public meeting/discussion/door prize event. The promotion and event had coverage on social media as well as in the local newspaper.
- Specific to the above ILL issue: Our lending from 2013 to 2017 increased by over 111%. This is not sustainable and therefore in 2018, I directed our ILL staff person to decrease our lending by saying "no" more frequently. This was done. In 2018 we decreased our lending by 19% of 2017 lending numbers. We tried to minimize our lending again in 2019, but changes in processes and using slightly more labour time/staff actually led to a slightly higher 2019 lending number than 2018 (3437 vs 3383). This demonstrates that any increase the provincial funding to Libraries would be appreciated and more BC residents would benefit.

Building Capacity

Library goals that support this priority

- **Support** the educational, civic, and cultural activities of community groups
- **Provide** opportunity and enrichment for children, young people, men and women to educate themselves continuously.

Programs and/or services that align with this priority

- Another partnership we worked on in 2019 was with CALP (Community Adult Literacy

Program). We hosted approximately 100 CALP sessions with an average of 4 students per session.

- Part of the Provincial Grant was used for staffing and for supplies. We have 2 regular pre-school programs – **Tales for Twos** and **Story Hour**, wherein children are introduced to books, reading and the Library.
- We provided a **Summer Reading Club** for the community through support from Literacy and Libraries as well as a federal grant from Young Canada Works, through Heritage Canada.
- We also support the **Books for Babies** program by assembling Book/CD/brochures Packages then distributing them to the Prince Rupert Health Unit. This project was funded by our revenues (as grants from Successby6 were no longer available).
- NWLF (North West Library Federation) programs: Leif the Magician brought in 78 students from local elementary schools. Another very popular event at our Library as well as across our NWLF was the Ivan Coyote author reading which attracted over 75 people of all ages.
- We first saw an increase in invigilation requests from the public in 2017, and it grew in 2018. There was a further increase in 2019. The growth of requests more than doubled from 2016 to 2018, and in 2019 we saw even greater growth. We believe that this is a result of two things: one is that our library provides a good environment, low fees and good service while the second is that there is not many other organizations doing this in Prince Rupert and those that are doing it are considerably more expensive. The Grant/Fundraising Cmte. altered our proctoring policy to establish standardized hours and charges due to the increased demand. 2019 saw 68 invigilation events vs 28 in 2018.

Partnerships that support this priority

- the **Books for Babies** program works with the Prince Rupert Health Unit which helps by distributing the items during child inoculations.
- We held programs for preschoolers outside of our Library, for example, at the **Friendship House** (an inclusive organization that exists to provide programs and services to the community at large; doing this with an emphasis on the needs of the First Nations People in the areas of education, culture, health and recreation) on International Childrens day.

Outcomes that were identified

- We have developed a good collection of materials regarding resume and cover-letter writing and interview skills.
- We had an increase in Adult programs in both number of programs (278) and number of attendees(1472 vs 1271). This has resulted in a increase in new groups coming to the library that had formerly not used the library.
- The Ivan Coyote event prompted several individuals to comment to Library staff that it was good to see all individuals are equally represented in public readings.

Sustaining our Success

We, the Library Board, Director and staff started working on a multi-year strategic plan in late 2018. We are also looking at our relationship with the City of Prince Rupert and asking what works best for the Library and the City. The Board has also started a Grant/Fundraising committee and Library Director/Board Review committee. We continued this work in 2019 and it's still ongoing as I

write this in February 2020.

Library Goals that support this priority

- **Seek** continually to identify community needs, to provide programs of service and access to meet such needs.

Programs and/or services that align with this priority

- Our Grant/Fundraising cmte. will explore what local, regional and national opportunities exist to enhance library services and service plan development. As well we will be reviewing present library services, fees and fines to see if they are still adequate. This committee will investigate private and public sector funding opportunities, presenting unique collections-supported fundraising opportunities for patrons and maintaining grant writing activity. In 2019 we started using the software service Grant Advance towards the completion of our online newspaper repository "Turning the Pages".

Partnerships that support this priority

- The scope of the Strategic Planning Cmte. includes increasing our promotional efforts to educate non-library users. We, through the City Relationship Cmte. will be working directly with City staff and Council towards a better joint understanding and shared goals; the Board started looking into what is best for the library, ensuring adherence to the Library Act while maintaining good relations with the City of Prince Rupert.

Outcomes that were identified

- We did suffer one significant loss in 2019. After our annual Book sale in which we sell thousands of books, we contacted our regional Recycling centre to take the remaining thousands of books only to find out that they would no longer take our books. This was difficult for us for two reasons. The first being that we would have to take the remaining thousands of books to the dump, costing us around \$300, which came from the Book sale revenue. Secondly, we were forced to cease taking any patron donations of books because we could not continue paying for the community's book disposal. Our Friends of the Library wrote to City Council and found out that recycling was a regional district/provincial jurisdiction and that present legislation allows BC recycling centres to refuse to take books for recycling. This legislation hinders Library work.
- 2019 saw two new policy creations to sustain our success: a new invigilation policy and a revised Multipurpose Room (MP room) fee schedule. This schedule was necessary to address the increasing demand of room rentals. The committee work continues into 2020 and the major foci are the multi-year Strategic Plan and our 'Relationship with City' plan.

Working Together

Library Goals that support this priority

- **Seek** continually to identify community needs, to provide programs of service and access to meet such needs, and to cooperate with other organizations, agencies and institutions which can provide programs and services to meet community needs

Programs and/or services that align with this priority

- Different public meetings held in the Library to support local First Nations activities: Haida Nation community meetings, Gitwilgyoots tribal meetings, Gitmaxmak'ay Nisga'a meetings and Cedar Road Aboriginal Head Start (childcare group) tours.
- We support many of the activities of our library federation, the NWLF, which consists of seven public libraries from Prince Rupert to Houston, BC.
- A long time practice of giving library tours to school children and Welcome to Kindergarten sessions has also opened another opportunity working with SD52. In 2019 we hosted a few classes from the Middle School (Prince Rupert Middle School). We had 9 classes (from elementary and preschools) over the year, which gave approx. 200 students the opportunity to understand what the Public Library had to offer them.

Partnerships that support this priority

- We partnered with our Literacy partners **Decoda** and the **North Coast Literacy Network** in our annual Literacy Fair at our local mall. We had hundreds of our residents come by our table and learn that we had much more than books.

Outcomes that were identified

- Our staff-member who sat on the Early Years table has increased library awareness in our community and was responsible (partially at least) for an increase in some of the other Early Years partners in using our multi-purpose room for meetings. As well, our staff-member has been on this table from the beginning and provides historical context for the new members. We were saddened by the program's termination in 2018.
- Our community connections include regular tours for children from the Aboriginal Head Start program. Of course, this opens literacy doors for the children, but an important outcome from these tours is that with each trip, a parent(s) or grandparent(s) gets a tour of the library for the first time and many of these parents/grandparents learn the connection of literacy and parenting.

2019 was a busy year and we did our best to make good use of the provincial grant we gratefully received. This money allowed us to better serve our patrons. Our collections, infrastructure service (i.e. ILS, Public Access computing network and support) and staffing have been well-supported by these grants, as well as our 2019 focus on increasing awareness of the Library's role in Prince Rupert.

Thank you on behalf of the staff and trustees of the Prince Rupert Public Library.

Joe Zelwietro

Chief Librarian
Prince Rupert Library