

2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

LIBRARY NAME

SPARWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY

CHECKLIST

For the PLGR to be considered complete, please ensure you have provided information for each of the following sections. Suggested word counts have been included for each question, but feel free to include more or less text as needed – text boxes will expand as you type. Click on a title in the list below to jump to that section of the document.

- ☐ [1. INTRODUCTION - LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY PROFILE](#)
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1. INTRODUCTION - LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

Provide a brief description of the community and library, focusing on what has changed in the past year (up to 500 words).

Sparwood is a coal mining community in the extreme southeast corner of British Columbia, the southern gateway to the province. As with other communities, the Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on all sectors of society. Due to the coal mines the local economy has been stable. The Sparwood Library adapted to the restrictions imposed by various mandates by offering curbside pick up from the very first day. As mandates evolved, I am pleased to report that we did not have any incidents of hostility to mask wearing and others restrictions. The Library did become a hub for locals to obtain the Covid-19 “passports.” The silver lining of this was some people came to the library for the very first time. Virtual storytime has been a success as are the “craft grab bags” for pre-schoolers.

2. MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

Please describe any new or major ongoing projects/programs the library has delivered in the past year. To report on multiple projects/programs, “copy” the blank table below and insert additional tables as needed using the “paste” function. Use one table per project/program.

Project/Program Name

Library technology Grant

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

With a grant from Public Libraries Branch, the Sparwood Library was able to expand service to those who are print disabled, and upgrade our internet connection. We purchased two Victor readers to loan to any who need access to material, through NNELS and CELA.

The internet area of the library is being renovated. It has not been completed at this time, due to supply chain issues with new internet kiosks and carpet replacement. Two new computers have been added offering more choice and features.

How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project is to improve general internet access in the library and to give service to those who may have print disability. The purchase of the two Victor readers, will offer under served patrons access to library material beyond the commercial audio products on the market. The library has been a part of NNELS and has now joined CELA. 	
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. Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A major part of the project was to improve our connectivity for our patrons. Certain areas of the community have poor connectivity and our increased bandwidth is appreciated by those who have limited home access. The purchase of two Victor readers has enabled us to reach patrons who other wise might be very isolated in terms of material.
2. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff, including myself have had to learn about material for those who can not handle regular print material. Some training will continue throughout this year from CELA. Two staff members took some private book repair lessons from a bookbinder who moved into our area. I myself took a refresher course on basic cataloguing and classification. Staff members have taken advantage of LinkedIn Learning courses on Excel and Adobe Acrobat. I myself have completed the Indigenous Awareness course offered by the Kootenay Library Federation.
3. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of the main services that we have been able to provide are access to government services, from citizenship applications to applying for Employment Insurance. A major service in 2021 was helping people apply for their provincial and federal Covid-19 Proof of Vaccination cards.
4. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Sparwood Public Library Board continues to work on strategic planning and policy development. A number of members are currently taking courses offered by Ken Haycock on Board governance. Policy development continues.

What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for examples of how to write short, medium, and long-term outcomes.

The Library Technology Grant has helped fund the Sparwood Public Library's purchase two Victor Readers and join CELA to expand access to under served patrons who have print disabilities.

- Those with print disabilities can borrow one of the Victor readers and can download or request titles in Daisy format for free. Although we do have a number of commercially produced "audiobooks" for all patrons, the Victor readers have special features to make listening easier, and opens up a much larger collection of material for those who have print disabilities.
- Improved internet connection at the library makes downloading material quicker for our patrons.
- The ability to access titles from NNELS and CELA from home gives patrons the freedom to access materials at their convenience.
- This project has made library staff aware that many citizens may not have the ability to visit the library and that we must be aware of the needs of all patrons and seek to serve all. This project in a small way helps to achieve the provincial strategic goal of improving access for British Columbians.

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

Due to Covid our partnerships were limited in 2021. No major fund raising events occurred. We did maintain three "free" libraries in the community: one outside the library itself, one at our local Mall and one maintained by the local Youth Action Group at our recreation centre.

3. KEY CHALLENGES

The following topics have been identified as recurring themes in previous years' PLGRs. The intent of this section is to collect detailed information in a structured, consistent format.

Please select the most significant challenges that the library has faced in the past year that you wish to comment on. Leave any other listed topics blank.

Use the 'Other' row to include any ongoing or past challenges that are not included in this list. If you have more than one 'Other' item to add, please insert additional rows into the table.

Challenge	Briefly describe how this challenge has impacted the library/community, and what steps the library took to address it in 2021. Please specify if any provincial funding was used, e.g., annual library funding, the technology grant, other non-PLB provincial grants (up to 250 words per topic).
COVID-19 (e.g., safety protocols, proof of vaccination)	We maintained all safety protocols as mandated by the Provincial Health Office and WorkSafe BC. Our cleaning staff were very thorough. We offered people without masks, free masks as needed. Some supplies did cost us extra.
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	Fortunately, we did not have any emergencies in our immediate area. During the "heat dome" of the summer of 2021, many people appreciated the library's air conditioning.
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	Fortunately, our finances have been stable from the District of Sparwood, the Regional District of East Kootenay and the Province of British Columbia.
Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health and wellness)	Staffing was not impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic. One staff member did contract Covid-19 and was off for one week and some stress did impact mental wellness.


Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	We are fortunate that we have not lost services in the last few years. The loss of our hospital about 20 years ago still is on going sore point among many.
Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)	Certain areas and buildings have very low bandwidth, and there have been complaints that some homes have had dropped connections, which is frustrating.
Aging/damaged facilities (e.g., need for repairs, renovations, upgrades/expansions)	The Library Technology grant has helped us to upgrade our public access computers and allowed us to improve internet connection. Due to supply chain issues the renovations to the Internet area are not complete. The hardware has been purchased and electrical work is completed. We await the new furnishings for the project to be complete
Community access to the library (e.g., geographic isolation, lack of local public transit, building accessibility)	Sparwood is spread out and certain areas do not have easy access to the library unless they have a vehicle. Public transit is focused on medical access to Fernie and Cranbrook. Fortunately, the library is close to the centre of town and can be accessed easily if one is in the downtown area. The library is not totally mobility accessible. The board has been working on renovating the front door access for a few years, but getting contractors to help us has been an issue.
Vulnerable communities (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental health crisis)	Sparwood has a small number of vulnerable persons, which "stand out" due to our small population. We have a few regular patrons with issues mentioned, and we try to serve them as best we can: sometimes allowing them to have some shelter and access to internet communication.
Other (please specify)	

4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.

Library Director Signature: 

Date: 18 March 2022

Board Chair Signature: 

Date: 18 March 2022