



FORT NELSON PUBLIC LIBRARY

2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The Northern Rockies Regional Municipality (NRRM) was incorporated on February 6, 2009. The NRRM encompasses about 10% of British Columbia's landmass and is situated in the province's northeast corner. The town of Fort Nelson is the largest community within the NRRM, and the main service sector for the northeast region, and southern Yukon and the Northwest Territories. (Fort Nelson's State of the Community Report, 2021) The Northern Rockies region's economic base is built on the natural gas, oil, forestry, tourism, and agriculture sectors. Fort Nelson has always been a diverse community.

Since the 2016 census, our community has seen a continued downward trend in population and employment, the full impact of this will be realized when the 2021 Census numbers are released. Some bright highlights in the horizon for our community's economics are that CryoPeak LNG Solutions (CryoPeak, 2021) has almost finished its project for the first micro-LNG plant in our region. This is estimated to provide 8 – 12 local direct job opportunities.

Another exciting highlight for our community is that Peak Renewables has almost finalized their project for the largest pellet plant in Canada, to be located in the Fort Nelson townsite. Logging has already been underway, bringing an end to our unutilized forest tenure, promising up to 300 direct jobs in our community. "Our state-of-the-art plant and wood pellet harvesting activities will provide 300 direct jobs and an additional 150 secondary jobs for the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality." (Peak Renewables, 2021) After years of a dormant forest industry, our community is genuinely excited about this opportunity. Our innovative First Nations communities are always hard at work, trying to diversify our economy. They are currently working through the research for a geothermal project that could provide potential heat and power for the FNFN community and agricultural ventures.

The Fort Nelson Public Library (FNPL) serves the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, the Fort Nelson First Nation, the Prophet River First Nation, and a growing number of visitors each year. FNPL operates under the mandate of being responsive to the residents and visitors of NRRM by providing access to resources and community-oriented programs and services in a welcoming and safe environment.

The Fort Nelson Public Library's 2019 - 2022 strategic plan focuses on four key areas: Programs and Services, Facility, Technology, and Sustainability. 2020 was an eventful year for Fort Nelson Public Library (FNPL) staff, board of trustees, patrons, and community members. Fort Nelson Public Library started the year focused on meeting the needs set out by our strategic plan through programming, media collection development, in-person and online services.

PROVINCIAL PRIORITIES

IMPROVING ACCESS AND ADVANCING CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

Fort Nelson Public Library's strategic plan includes sustainability, which focuses on the Library being proactive in ensuring its sustainability to continue delivering services and programs that meet the community's needs. With the implementation of online and remote learning options for undergraduate students during the Covid-19 pandemic, many undergraduate students in our community have chosen to study at home through online studies. Fort Nelson

Public Library realized the need for students to have a quiet space to learn, which offers access to the internet and students a place to work on their course loads in a warm, safe, and productive environment.

To meet our community's needs, FNPL began utilizing our Mondays, which the Library has been closed to the public during the Covid-19 pandemic, to offer students a place in the Library where they can schedule study sessions and exam invigilation. This program aligns with two of the Provincial Strategic Plan priorities, improving access for British Columbians and advancing citizen engagement by providing our local undergraduate students with opportunities to access the information and resources that fit their needs.

BUILDING CAPACITY AND ENHANSING GOVERNANCE

Staff focused on taking many training workshops online throughout the pandemic; one tool that was focused on was the Librarians' Guide to Homelessness held through the Homelessness Training Institute, which was provided to us by the NELF Federation. This training provided tools that help deal with issues related to homelessness, patron difficulties, as well as tips and trick to help deal with issues that arose directly due to the pandemic such as patrons refusing to wear masks, etc.

Fort Nelson Public Library board was able to continue their governance by moving online. Board meetings were hosted online throughout the pandemic through Zoom meetings, as well as email correspondence. Our Board Chair, Shirley Kenny, attended an online governance session sponsored by BCLTA in the Spring. In September, board members participated in a Governance Workshop with Babs Kelly through BCLTA via Zoom.

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, programming has looked a lot different. With the Library unable to safely provide in-house programming due to spacing constraints, staff have worked hard to create free at-home and online programming options, aligning with the Provincial priority building capacity. Program highlights of 2020 included our weekly Dungeons & Dragon sessions held online via Zoom, Adult Pinterest Night, Story Walk, Altered Books, Messy Play, our Summer Reading Program, Halloween Trick-or-Treat takeaways and 12 days of Christmas, which included 12 days of activities and individually wrapped surprise themed library books that patrons were able to take home.

FNPL's Summer Reading Program this year had 61 children participate between the ages of 5-13 in our seven-week Summer Reading Program that, due to Covid-19, was adapted to offer patrons the option of in-house at-home packages or through online registration. Some highlights of our take-home package contents were prizes and science experiments for our participants to do at home safely. Through programming, FNPL was able to promote lifelong learning and literacy skills.

TECHNOLOGY GRANT – FINAL REPORT

Fort Nelson Public Library (FNPL) plans to continue with the plans outlined in our Internet Grant Interim Report; however, the timeline has been delayed. FNPL still intends to develop loanable Discovery kits for circulation. The loanable kits will be S.T.E.M. focused (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), providing fun, accessible, and interactive ways to learn. FNPL also still intends to purchase loanable technology and to purchase MANGO digital licensing through B.C. Libraries Cooperative, a language learning resource. Through these educational focused purchases, FNPL will support the technology needs of the learners in our community.

While we have been delayed in our timeline, we plan to be putting our full focus on finalizing these plans by the end of 2021. We are genuinely appreciative of the 2020 Library Technology Grant funding that allows us to provide

these technology resources to our community, aligning with our strategic plan priority, technology, and supporting digital literacy within the library.

COVID-19

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Physical Materials Circulation	41,398	42,987	37,867	24,652
Public Computer Use	2,988	5,529	3,310	838
In-Person Library Visits	27,292	27,906	23,735	10,112
Items Borrowed from Other Libraries	759	955	485	539
Items Loaned to Other Libraries	1,698	2,417	2,448	1,568
E-Resource Circulation	1,991	2,947	4,412	5,454

2020 has shown a large decrease in numbers across the board. The COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak has had a significant impact on our Library and our community. Fort Nelson Public Library Board decided to close the public's doors on March 16, 2020, to help flatten the infection curve; six of our staff were furloughed. During the Library's closure, permanent staff worked hard to implement many changes to the facility to meet the safety regulations for safely reopening to the public, both for our team and our patrons. We also experienced two permanent staff changes.

Staff adapted to meet our community's needs during our closure through online engagements, frequent updates to our website, and weekly video updates shared across our social media platforms to keep our patrons informed and connected. During our closure, staff continued to work hard at maintaining the development of the Library's media collection to ensure our patrons continued to have access to new and current resources. Fort Nelson Public Library successfully implemented curbside pickup on May 29. Resources were limited to in-house items only, as inter-library loans were suspended until the end of August throughout the province. Through this program, we ensured that our community continued to have access to library resources.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, following the guidance of Public Health and WorkSafe BC, FNPL had to implement many changes and measures to make our facility as safe as possible for our staff, patrons, and community. Some of these changes included installing a plexiglass barrier at our circulation desk, removing three of our public computer spaces, and installing a curtain to act as a barrier to separate our public computer area from our bookshelves, keeping patrons and staff within social distancing measures. We closed our meeting room book sale and implemented a temporary cart outside our front doors to house some book sale materials. We implemented a 1-hour time limit for library visits, a max occupancy limit of 15, and to keep within the time limit, staff removed all public furniture throughout the Library to discourage lengthy visits.

Fort Nelson Public Library reopened to the public on June 23. Once reopened, we determined that our public computers' current area was inadequate and unable to meet social distancing measures due to Covid-19 safety

regulations. Our current location does not allow enough space between users, nor does it give patrons enough space to peruse the shelves while anyone is utilizing the computers. The decision has been made to relocate our current public computer area along the wall beside our entryway, enabling the full use of four, out of five of our current computers, instead of the two currently available due to space constraints. FNPL hopes to have this renovation complete by the end of June 2021.

The Northern Rockies Regional Municipality (NRRM) supported the Library in many ways throughout the pandemic. They awarded us a \$500 Covid-19 Business Grant that helped the Fort Nelson Public Library reopen safely to the public by helping cover the costs that arose directly due to Covid-19, include installing a plexiglass barrier at our circulation desk and creating hand sanitization stations throughout the Library. The NRRM also supported the Library during our closure by offering us a rent rebate for April and May.

The challenges of 2020 are unparalleled in the Fort Nelson Public Library's history. Staff worked diligently to meet the needs of our community. Facility and programs were adapted, sometimes daily, to provide the best service to the NRRM region.

WORKS CITED

CryoPeak. (2021, 02 08). Retrieved from Cryopeak.com: <http://cryopeak.com/cryopeak-Ing-solutions-breaks-ground-on-new-Ing-production-facility-in-fort-nelson-bc/>

Fort Nelson's State of the Community Report. (2021, 02 08). Retrieved from NorthernRockies.ca: https://www.northernrockies.ca/assets/City~Hall/Engage~Northern~Rockies/Fort%20Nelson%20State%20of%20the%20Community%20Report_FINAL%20OPT.pdf

Peak Renewables. (2021, 02 08). Retrieved from peakrenewables.ca: <https://peakrenewables.ca/our-communities/>

2020 LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY GRANT

Fort Nelson Public Library Interim Planning Report

October 13, 2020

Fort Nelson Public Library serves the residents and visitors of the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality (NRRM), located in northeastern British Columbia. Our library is located in the town of Fort Nelson, and extends beyond our physical space and offerings, to a large collection of online resources. Our mandate is to be responsive to the needs of our patrons and visitors by providing access to resources and community-oriented programs and services in a welcoming and safe environment. Our 2015-2018 Strategic Plan notes two areas of improvement for our library, programming opportunities and improvements to technology. To be more responsive to our patrons desires and needs, and to support creativity and collaboration both in the library and at home, we have come up with a few ideas to address these areas of improvement using the funds generously provided from the Library Technology Grant. Fort Nelson Public Library wants to develop loanable Discovery kits for circulation. These kits will be S.T.E.M. focused, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, providing a fun, accessible and interactive way to learn.

Fort Nelson Public Library would also portion some of the funds to be used to update and purchase some new technology to offer our Patrons. A camera, and books or any related resources will offer patrons a way to learn photography. With such a beautiful environment surrounding us, we feel it is important to provide and teach Patrons how to capture it. Fort Nelson Public Library will also put some of these funds provided from the grant towards updating and purchasing a new laptop and a few iPads which will circulate and will provide accessibility for our Patrons. The library recently was able to purchase a new Wi-Fi extender using these funds, which has allowing the entire facility to be accessible for library users and their devices to access the libraries Wi-Fi.

With the current events in our world, and so many home learners, we have noticed a huge need for accessible learning. By offering these discovery kits, and the tools to access our online databases we feel we will be more equipped to service the educational needs of our community.

We are truly appreciative of the funding provided from the 2020 Library Technology Grant that is allowing us to provide these resources to our community.

Thank you,

Danika Andrews, Library Director

5315 - 50th Ave South

PO Box 330, Municipal Square

Fort Nelson, BC, V0C 1R0

T: 250-774-6777

E: librarian@fortnelson.bclibrary.ca

2020 LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY GRANT REPORTING FORM: [FORT NELSON PUBLIC LIBRARY]

Total Technology Grant Amount: **[\$10,100]**

Area of Need	Outcome	Metrics	Strategic Links	Actions	Collaborative Links	Timeframe	Project Budget	In-Kind/Leveraged funds	Comments
Other, please specify Patron Loanable Devices (Laptop, iPad, Camera)	Loanable device(s) will help reduce barriers to digital inclusion and equity for patrons.	Increase public computing in the library as well as increase type of devices available in library.	Accessible, loanable devices support the provincial strategic priority to improve access for British Columbians.	Purchase laptops, a camera, and iPads for public to access.	None.	December 2020: Research device models and place order. January 2020: Set up new devices for public use.	\$3500	None.	None.
Digital programming Lendable Patron Discovery Kits	Loanable discovery kits that allows users the chance to explore science, math, technology, or engineering in a hands-on, fun way. The purpose of the kits is to give kids an opportunity to learn by doing and playing, and to foster interest in STEM.	6 – 8 lendable S.T.E.M kits. Providing patrons free, accessible learning kits.	Accessible, loanable kits will support the provincial strategic priority to improve access for British Columbians.	Purchase supplies to create each Discovery kit: Human Anatomy Coding Engineering Robotics Astronomy Architecture	None.	November 2020: Research and order all the parts of each discovery kit. January 2020: Put together each kit and make them available to public.	\$4000	None.	None.
Connectivity (Internet speed, connection capacity, etc.) Wi-Fi Extender	Improved connectivity throughout library facility, reducing barriers to digital inclusion and providing patrons who rely on the library for internet access.	Increased library internet connectivity to all areas in the library.	Reliable public connectivity supports the provinces strategic plan to improve access for British Columbians.	Purchased new Wi-Fi Extender.	None.	Completed	\$600	None.	None.
Electronic collections (licensing) MANGO Languages	Language learning resource.	Provide opportunity to library users to learn over 70 languages for free.	Enhancing citizen engagement.	Purchase subscription and set up MANGO Languages through BC Libraries Coop.	Working at purchasing digital licensing through BC Libraries Cooperative.	January 2020: Purchase yearly subscription and offer it to library users.	\$2000	None.	None.