January

March

2020

July

December

CRANBROOK PUBLIC LIBRARY
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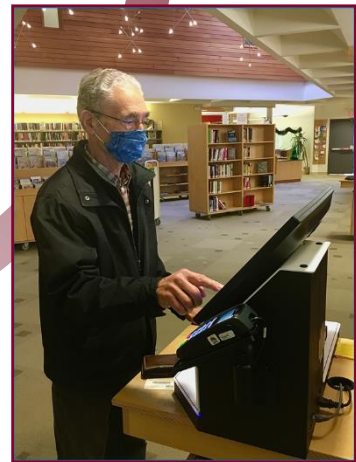
Overview

Provincial funding, along with funding from local and regional governments, and special grants from other organizations, enabled the Cranbrook Public Library to continue to adapt and enhance its collections, programs and services to meet the changing needs of those we serve in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically impacted how the Library provided services.

This report highlights activities that supported the provincial government's strategic priorities for public libraries in British Columbia, and the Library's strategic plan, even while adapting to the changes brought on by the pandemic.

Community Overview

Cranbrook is the largest community in the Kootenays, with a population of just over 20,000 in the city and approximately 6,000 in the surrounding Regional District of East Kootenay Area C. It serves as the commercial, educational, health care, service and transportation hub in the southeast corner of BC.

There is little ethnic, or linguistic diversity in the region.[1]   Most residents are of European or Canadian ancestry and speak English. Immigrants account for 1.8% of the population, largely come from the US and Europe. The Ktunaxa Nation's ʔaq'am community, located north of Cranbrook, represents 3.4% of the local population.

Ethnic Origin

Europe	83.9%
Aboriginal	9.4%
Asia & Oceania	4.9%
Latin & South America	1.1%
Africa	0.7%

At around 77.5%, high school completion rates hover at 6.1% below the provincial average. At 16%, the individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher come in well under the provincial average of 30%.

Housing is more affordable than in nearby communities. The median value of a house in Cranbrook was $307,000 in 2020, compared to $551,000 in Fernie. However, with 27% of the labour force engaged in the retail & service sectors, where wages tend to be lower, many still find it difficult to enter the housing market. In 2021, the median value will increase another 6%, further exacerbating the situation. Affordable rental housing is a related challenge. 42% of renters spend over 30% of their income on housing, and the vacancy rate hovers at 1%. Several rental and affordable housing developments currently under construction will partially address this situation.

The City of Cranbrook and RDEK's Area C face a number of challenges, including:

- An aging municipal infrastructure that requires significant capital investment;
- The lack of a significant industrial tax-base;
- Unemployment rates that remain above the provincial average;
- An aging, stable population. Projected population growth over the next 20 years is only 3%.

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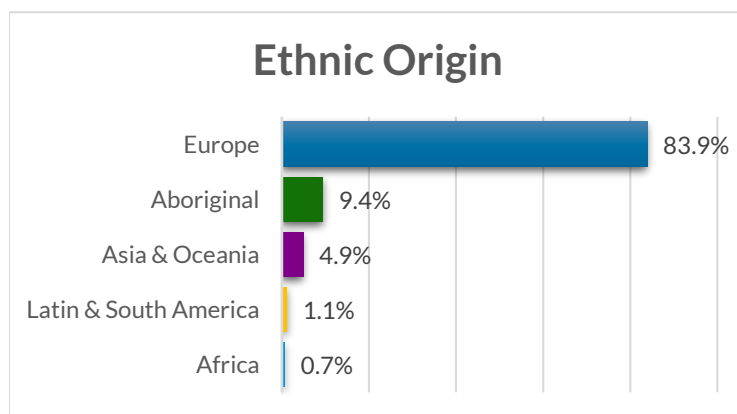
[1] Source of Statistics: *2018 Community Profile Report—Cranbrook*, prepared by the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute; http://www.cbrdi.ca/sites/default/files/Documents/PDF/2018%20Community%20Profiles/Cranbrook%202018%20Community%20Profile%20Report.pdf

Library's Strategic Position

The Cranbrook Public Library has served Cranbrook and the surrounding area since 4 July 1925. Its facility, open 7 days a week, provides users with access to nearly 70,000 physical items, an array of digital resources accessible on public workstations and through free wireless access on mobile devices in the Library, or anywhere in the world with internet access, and with places to study, read and meet with others. Hundreds of programs for different ages and interests draw thousands of participants each year.

STRATEGIC PLAN

A Library's current 5-year strategic plan came into effect in January 2019. Its four goals are to:

VISION

The Cranbrook Public Library is the dynamic centre of our community.

It welcomes everyone, inspires creativity, and enhances quality of life.

- ◆ Seek out innovative approaches for people to access information, learn and share their ideas with the world;
- ◆ Meet our community's diverse needs through collaboration to develop informative and relevant programs and services;
- ◆ Create a welcoming, comfortable and safe environment that will be the first place people think of coming to when they want to explore ideas, socialize or relax;
- ◆ Build strong relationships by telling the Library and community's stories.

In addition, the Library made a commitment to build a strong foundation by making investments in staff and trustee professional development activities, current technology and facility infrastructure, and active communication and meaningful engagement with our community.

ALIGNMENT WITH PROVINCIAL PRIORITIES

Provincial Funding

Provincial funding accounts for approximately 10% of the Cranbrook Public Library's annual operating budget and is primarily used:

1. To acquire collections material, physical and digital, that the public can borrow or access;
2. For literacy-related programs for all ages, including teaching individuals technological literacy skills;
3. To participate in the province-wide interlibrary loan network.

The additional one-time provincial technology grant made it possible for the Library to undertake needed IT infrastructure upgrades and acquire additional digital resources just as demand for these services increased dramatically due to the pandemic.

Provincial Strategic Plan for Public Library Services

There is a close alignment between the Library's strategic plan and the BC Strategic Plan for Public Library Services, particularly the goals of improving access for British Columbians and building capacity, which relate directly to the projects the Library undertook to upgrade its IT infrastructure to provide better internet connectivity, acquiring new digital resources to support learning at home, and delivering programs virtually.
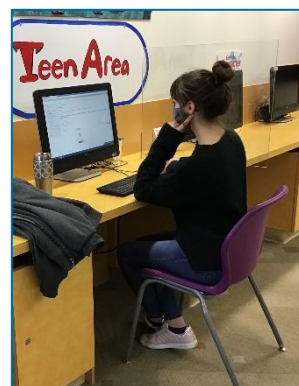
Enhancing Governance: While not detailed in this report, the Library used remote communications platforms to ensure that the Library Board could continue to effectively govern even when they could not meet in person. At the same time, the BC Library Trustees Association, the Association of BC Public Library Directors, and for our library, the Kootenay Library Federation, swiftly pivoted to provide professional development and information sharing opportunities that made it possible for libraries to develop strategies to safely reopen our physical locations to the public.

Advancing Citizen Engagement: The addition of chat to the Library's website provided us with another way in which to talk to people in our community. The Library compiled accurate, reliable information about COVID-19 and prominently displayed it on our website.

Government's Commitment to British Columbians

The pandemic brought into sharp relief how directly public libraries support the government's commitment to British Columbians.

Making Life More Affordable

With a free library membership, individuals got access to thousands of dollars worth of subscription-based digital learning resources, digital children's books, e-books and digital audio books even while the Library's physical facility was closed. Through Library Takeout and regular opening hours, they had access to a collection of about 70,000 books, films, documentaries and television series, music CDs, and magazines in the library, and millions of additional items from other libraries in BC through the interlibrary loan program.

Services People Count On

Open 7 days a week, the Library strives to provide access to its in-house services to people when it fits into their schedule. Even when it had to close due to the pandemic, the Library rapidly adjusted to deliver as many of its services as possible remotely: extending wireless connectivity into the parking lot, offering virtual programs, acquiring more ebooks, answering questions online and over the phone. During the pandemic, people sought out the Library's services more than ever, and the Library was there to serve them. When it could safely do so, the Library launched a curbside pickup service so people could borrow physical material again, and subsequently opened its doors to the public again.

Building a Strong and Sustainable Economy that Works for Everyone +

Securing Our Resources & Supporting Workers & Communities in Transition

The Library makes resources freely available to support people at all stages in their lives. People have access to computers for job searching, supported by staff to provide knowledgeable help. Online learning resources provide people with the opportunity to upgrade skills that may help them enter the job market or transition to a new career. The Idea Lab, set to launch in 2021, will give people access to technological tools they would otherwise not have access to so they can explore potential entrepreneurial endeavours and career paths.

Impact of COVID-19

When the World Health Organization declared the pandemic on 11 March 2020, it immediately impacted every aspect of library operations. Everything that happened at the Cranbrook Public Library in 2020, including projects that were in progress long before the pandemic, was influenced by COVID-19. Yet even as it caused massive disruptions to regular operations and services, the pandemic created a number of opportunities for the launch of new services and innovative programs, detailed in the next section.

Despite the constraints imposed by the pandemic, the Library remained committed to providing people with access to the services and programs they expected. The Library enhanced its digital resources and collections, upgraded its wireless network infrastructure, offered virtual programs, and connected with people online. It reopened its facility once the safety plan, procedures and physical barriers were in place to ensure that the Library would be a safe and welcoming place for visitors.

IMPACT ON PUBLIC

The pandemic brought into stark relief how much people depended on all the different services offered in the Library. The greatest impact for the public was at the beginning of the pandemic when the Library closed its facility to the public late in the afternoon on 16 March in tandem with the municipality shutting its recreational facilities to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Patrons expressed their dismay at the situation as they had hoped to stock up on books and videos before heading home due to the lockdown. Almost as many called because they needed computer access. This need increased once pandemic relief benefits such as CERB were announced because people needed to get online to apply. The Library responded as best it could, directing patrons to the digital collections and increasing the range and bandwidth of our wireless network so people could access it from the vehicles. When industry-specific research indicated items could be safely loaned, the Library began offering Library Takeout, a curbside pickup service.

Listening to the expressed needs of the public, the Library committed itself to putting in place safety protocols and procedures that would make it possible for people to safely access the full range of in-house services right from the day they could enter again, albeit in a limited capacity. The Library opened its doors again on 6 July for five days a week so people could browse the shelves, borrow material, use the computers and wireless network, sit and read or study for a limited amount of time. 7-day operations resumed at the beginning of October along with an expansion of services.

IMPACT ON STAFF

|Strategic Objective: Ensure staff have the knowledge, skills, resources and time to support people's information needs, learning goals and creative endeavours. |

Staff took a team-based collaborative approach to rapidly adapt to the new reality imposed by the pandemic. Initially, staff were split into two cohorts that worked from home for part of the week so that their in-library shifts did not overlap. They took advantage of professional development opportunities to upgrade skills or learn new ones. Public service staff switched from providing

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in-person services to connecting with people virtually and over the phone. Other staff worked on projects that had long been needed, but for which there was never time during normal operations.

As a team, staff developed detailed COVID-19 safety protocols that addressed every aspect of operations and services, and a phased service restoration plan that made it possible for the Library to safely reopen to the public. This process was helped immeasurably by the support provided by organizations such as the Association of BC Public Library Directors, the BC Library Trustees Association, and the Kootenay Library Federation, as well as the guidance given by the Ministry's Public Library Branch staff.

PANDEMIC RESPONSE PROJECTS

Several projects were already underway prior to the pandemic. These, and a report on the projects made possible by the one-time technological infrastructure grant, are detailed in the next section. This section details projects that where implemented as a direct response to the pandemic. Although these initiatives were not part of the original plan for 2020, they were designed to align with the Library's strategic objectives and vision for the future. Rather than simply being used as a temporary response to address an emergency situation, these initiatives are being viewed as pilot projects that may become a permanent part of full suite of services offered by the Library.

Library Takeout

| Strategic Value: We support free and equitable access to information, along with an individual's right to privacy and freedom of choice. |

Even as the Library expanded its digital resources – ebooks, digital audio books, digital magazines, online learning resources – to meet the surging demand during the closure of the building to the public, staff recognized that people wanted access to physical material – books, videos, music, magazines. Once scientifically rigorous studies confirmed that library material could be safely lent, staff launched a curbside pick-up lending service, Library Takeout, in mid-May. It was modeled on similar services implemented by other BC public libraries.

Demand for Library Takeout was immediate and overwhelming. People were very excited and happy to finally borrow library material again. Many also said that it was good to see the staff's familiar faces, a feeling reciprocated by the staff.

The Library continued to offer this service even after patrons could come into the building to accommodate people who did not want to come into the Library. After implementing procedures to protect patrons' privacy, a Library Takeout shelf was set up beside the Welcome Desk. Now people can pick up items they ordered online without having to stop at a self-checkout kiosk or the Welcome Desk. Patron's absolutely love this service. Not a day goes by without someone saying how much they love its convenience.

Based on this response, the Library has decided to make Library Takeout a permanent service.

OUTPUTS

81% - increase in the number of requests placed

10% - of all items borrowed in 2020 were through Library Takeout

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Going Fine-Free

|*Strategic Objective: Encourage [people] to use the library more by identifying and eliminating potential barriers*|

For a number of years, the Library had been exploring the possibility of reducing or eliminating late fees. Taking into consideration the economic hardship and uncertainty created by the pandemic, the Library decided to eliminate late fees for the duration of the pandemic. The Board and staff felt that access to information and recreational reading material was more important than ever for people's mental well-being, as was freedom from anxiety that late fees create.

Patron response to this initiative has been extremely positive, and there has been a dramatic reduction in the number of negative interactions at the Welcome Desk as a result. Statistics also show that the amount of overdue material has not increased.

Virtual Programs

|*Strategic Objective: Promote digital library services to encourage people to connect anywhere, anytime.*|

1 February 2020 marked a milestone in programming at the Library, for the first time ever a presenter connected via Zoom to lead a program. Children participating in the STEAM program, Shark Angels, first learned about sharks from Dr. McCarron, a marine biologist at the US non-profit Shark Angels, and then built their own shark robots.

Little did the Library know that only 6 weeks later virtual programs would be the only type of programming it would offer for the rest of 2020, because of the pandemic. Yet, staff pivoted rapidly to ensure our patrons continued to have access to programs. Four days after the Library had to close its doors, we posted our first Virtual Storytime, despite have never having delivered a program entirely online before.
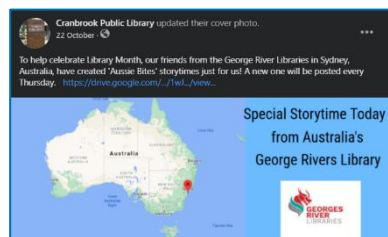
We soon discovered new opportunities presented by virtual programs. Some programs featured guest authors and storytellers from around the world, from Australia to Spain and beyond. Others were held in partnership with other KLF libraries.

Virtual programs for all ages have proven so popular that the Library is committed to continuing this type of programming even after in-person programs resume.

OUTCOMES OF PANDEMIC-RESPONSE INITIATIVES

Although the pandemic-response activities were not planned, they have led to dramatic changes in how the Library operates that have garnered an overwhelmingly positive response.

- **Working collaboratively works** – The pandemic made uncertainty the norm. No one having any answers made it easier for staff to come together to chart our way forward. We embraced an ethos of openness to ideas, embraced a willingness to try things out to see if they worked, and developed a culture of seeing mistakes and missteps as learning opportunities.
- **It is possible to be safe and welcoming** – The day after mask-wearing became mandatory, a patron said, "You know, the

OUTPUTS

74 – in-person programs prior to pandemic

536 – attendees of in-person programs

337 –virtual programs held

8,087 – views of virtual programs

Library is the only place in town where I would feel comfortable not wearing a mask because I know you take my safety seriously. I look forward to coming here." This sentiment validates all the work the staff and Board did to ensure the Library could open its doors to the public again.

◆ **Responsive and adaptive services** – The pandemic motivated the Library to reassess all aspects of its operations and modify processes to make it easier to respond to changing circumstances while still offering as great a range of services as usual. This resulted in increased patron satisfaction as barriers to service, such as late fees and long lines at service desks, got eliminated, and the levels of personalized service increased through a commitment to fully staff both service desks and have a greeter welcome and assist each visitor.

Planned Projects

SELF-CHECKOUT KIOSKS

| *Strategic Objective: Incorporate accessibility tools and adaptive technology into the design of the Library.* |

In 2018, the Library launched a major project to convert its entire collection to an RFID-based system to support a self-checkout system that would be truly easy to use. In mid-March 2020 the Library was within 2 weeks of launching this service when it had to close in response to the pandemic. Thus it was launched when the facility reopened at the beginning of July.

The system offers two options for self-checkout:

◆ Two dedicated kiosks where people can checkout or renew items, manage their account, and pay any outstanding amounts.

◆ A mobile app that allows patrons to checkout items by scanning their barcodes with their mobile devices camera anywhere in the Library.

Staff had done a lot of work to prepare for the launch of the self-checkout kiosks and app, with a big focus on messaging that would encourage patrons to use these options rather than having staff check out material for them. It transpired that the pandemic almost entirely eliminated this need because patrons desired and appreciated the ability of checking out material by themselves because it minimized the need for staff to handle material.

The system's ease of use was soon validated by patrons. A common comment after the first use was, "What that's it? Is it really that simple?"

Outcomes

◆ Patron response to the self-checkout kiosks has been overwhelmingly positive. They appreciate its ease of use and that it is contactless.

◆ The majority of check-out transactions now occur at the self-checkout kiosks or through the mobile app.

◆ Congestion at the Welcome Desk has decreased because one of the kiosks is located amongst the stacks. This makes it easier for patrons to maintain physical distance protocols and reduces the amount of time people have to spend in the Library.

OUTPUTS

80% - of check outs occur either at a kiosk or with the mobile app

60% - increase in staff time available for one-on-one assistance for patrons

- Uptake of the mobile app has been slower than that of the kiosks, but those who do use it appreciate being able to checkout material simply by scanning an item's barcode with their mobile device. Patrons also like that they can store their library card on their device, link family cards, track items, retain a reading history, and manage their loans.
- Staff are able to dedicate more time to providing one-on-one assistance to patrons, which was one of the original objectives of the project. It also enabled the allocation of staff time towards the implementation of enhanced cleaning protocols for returned material as part of the pandemic response.

IDEA LAB & READING ROOM CONSTRUCTION

| *Strategic Objectives: Create an Idea Lab filled with technological tools, supported by knowledgeable staff and resources, so people can develop and share content. | Complete the construction of the quiet study room. |*

Construction of the Reading Room and Idea Lab was already scheduled for spring 2020. The logistics were in the process of being worked out when the Library closed to the public. The closure made it easier to complete the project because the entire area could be turned into a construction zone without having to maintain public access to the resources normally located there.

Idea Lab

In 2019, the Library secured a grant for the creation of the Idea Lab, a maker space where people will be able to create projects using a variety of technological tools. The construction of the space was slated for early 2020 with programming starting in the summer. The installation of the Idea Lab equipment has been pushed back to 2021 because an integral part of the roll-out is in-person programming to teach people how to use the equipment.

However, the new layout provided benefits because it made easier to adapt the space to meet COVID-19 safety protocols so that more public access computers could be made available to the public. Previously, two rows of six public access computers used to be on either side of the same desk; computer users faced each other when using the workstations. Now users sit back-to-back, half facing the wall and the other half facing a wooden screen that separates the computers from the stacks. As a result, six public access computers are available for public use instead of the three that would have been possible with the old layout. Moveable barriers between each workstation make it possible to safely increase the number of available workstations should the need arise.

Related to both the pandemic and the phased implementation of the Idea Lab, staffing resources have been reallocated so that the Information Desk, co-located with the Idea Lab, is fully staff at all times when the Library is open to the public as patrons need to now make a reservation to use a workstation. This was

implemented to ensure staff could sanitize workstations between each use.
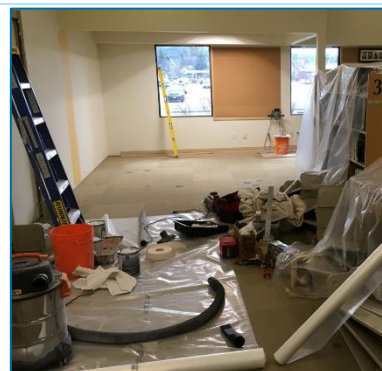
Mobile Printing

The continued increase in the number of people accessing the Library's wireless network with their mobile devices resulted in a concurrent increase in demand for offering wireless printing services. In February, the Library acquired a wireless printing service that integrated into its

existing print management system. People can now submit their print jobs in either black & white or colour via email or an app to the Library and come in during the following three days to print their document.

While an extension of the Library's existing public computing services rather than a component of the nascent Idea Lab, mobile printing is another step towards fulfilling the strategic objective of 'build[ing] a robust technological infrastructure to support the increasingly complex requirements' of our community.

Reading Room

For years there has been a need for a separate quiet space for people to study or read. While the room remains closed for general use because of the pandemic, it is being used for two purposes:

1. **Exam Invigilation** – Invigilation services launched in October to meet demand from people taking online programs. Since the room is separated from the rest of the Library, the student can safely take their test without coming in contact with other patrons.
2. **Idea Lab Configuration** – The external IT contractor is able to use the Reading Room to configure the Idea Lab equipment in-house while remaining apart from both staff and patrons.

Outcome

More people are able to access public computers to do access online resources and communicate because of the reconfiguration of the Idea Lab space. They also feel more comfortable requesting assistance at the Information Desk and tend to be more willing to request assistance than they did prior to the pandemic and reconfiguration of the space. Thus they are finding it easier to access online resources and services, whether it is checking email, studying, applying for jobs, accessing government services, or for general use.

OUTPUTS

6 – public access computers

44 – exams invigilated

14,854 – wireless sessions

4,279 – public computer sessions

10,000+ – pages printed

One-Time Technology Grant – Final Report

Grant Amount - $18,054

EXTENDED WIRELESS RANGE

Completed – $3,264

Two existing routers were replaced and one new unit installed. One of the existing routers was moved to the meeting room to increase signal strength there and to the north side of the building.

Statistics indicate that the number of wireless connections decreased slightly after mid-March, when the library closed, but that they have stayed at approximately the same level since the library reopened to the public, an average of 47 connections per day.

These statistics indicate that people relied on external wireless access while the library's physical location was closed. They reflect what staff observed: people sitting outside the library, or in their cars, almost continuously throughout the day, using their mobile devices.

Outcome

People access the technological infrastructure they need to work and interact with others online.

GREATER BANDWIDTH

Completed – $1,283

The library increased its bandwidth from 100 Mbps to 300 Mbps. The bandwidth has been structured so that a fixed portion of this bandwidth is allocated to the staff network to conduct mission-critical work while the bulk of the bandwidth is shared by the public computers and wireless network.

The number of user complaints about slow Internet connections has decreased dramatically since increasing the bandwidth.

Outcome

People have access to adequate bandwidth to use online telecommunication tools, audio and video streaming services, as well as general Internet access.

ADDITIONAL DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

Completed – $1,050

The Library, as part of a province-wide initiative, contributed funds for the acquisition of additional e-book and digital audiobook titles to address the rapid increase in demand for digital collections due to the pandemic. Due to the high licensing costs for this material, it was only by pooling our resources that public libraries were able to even partially meet our patrons' need.

Outcome

There is a greater availability and range of digital collections material for patrons unable to access physical library collections

DIGITAL PROGRAMMING

Completed – $1,051

A portion of the grant was used to fund a pilot project focused on increasing public awareness of the Library's services and programs through the use of an electronic newsletter. The Library acquired a digital newsletter creation tool designed for use by libraries, and the first digital newsletter was published in September 2020.

If the pilot project is successful, the Library will incorporate the subscription fee for this service into its annual operating budget.

Outcome

Library users connect and learn about what is happening at the library and in the province via a digital newsletter that does not require them to use social media platforms.

IDEA LAB EQUIPMENT & PROGRAMS

In Progress – $6,805 for equipment, $4,600 for programming

The renovations needed to create the physical space for the Idea Lab were undertaken between April and June 2020. The majority of the equipment was purchased in late 2020 and configured in early 2021:

- Audio and video recording and editing equipment and software
- Digital illustration and 3-D printing equipment and software
- Digitization equipment and software

The Idea Lab is currently slated to open in mid-2021, dependent on the pandemic situation. The Idea Lab will become a permanent service funded from the library's annual operating budget.

The programming associated with this grant will focus on 'train the trainer' sessions so staff can learn the basics of how the equipment and software works, identifying local experts who can deliver a series of workshops that introduce the public to the equipment, and developing a resource guide for self-directed learning resources available online.

> **OUTPUTS**
>
> *24% - increase in ebooks and digital audiobooks downloaded*
>
> *140% - increase in use of online learning resources*
>
> *3% - increase in wireless access sessions*
>
> 3 – electronic newsletters released

Outcome

When complete, people will be able to access an array of technological tools so they can digitize physical material and create their own multi-media content to share.

Through programs specifically designed for the Idea Lab, people have the opportunity to learn how to use a wide array of technological tools to make their own digital projects and share them with others.

Conclusion

2020 was a year of innovation and change at the Cranbrook Public Library. The pandemic disrupted all aspects of the Library's operation. Through their unwavering commitment to offer exceptional library services to our community, the Cranbrook Public Library's Board and staff met these challenges with a positive attitude and willingness to move forward. They identified opportunities to adapt existing services and implement new ones to effectively address the new reality in a manner that aligned with the Library's strategic plan's vision, values and goals for the future:

- Library Takeout
- Self-checkout options to make borrowing material safer and easier
- Redesigned and upgraded wireless and public computer access
- Virtual programs for all ages
- Robust safety protocols that make it possible to offer more services, in-person and online
- Greater access to digital collections and online learning resources
- Going fine-free for the duration of the pandemic

Organizations such as the Association of BC Public Library Directors, the BC Library Trustee's Association, the BC Library Association, the Kootenay Library Federation, the BC Libraries Cooperative, and of course the Public Libraries Branch, provided invaluable support to help the Library navigate through these challenging times. So too, at the local level, did the City of Cranbrook and Regional District of East Kootenay. The pandemic highlighted just how much stronger and more resilient we can be by sharing knowledge and experiences, by working together to as we move forward.

As a result of all this work, the Library was able to continue to do its part to support the province's strategic goals for public library service, as well as the government's commitment to support all British Columbians by ensuring they had uninterrupted access to services they count on, affordable access to material to meet their needs, and access to resource that support them in a time of transition.

Looking Forward to 2021

While 2021 promises to be another year of uncertainty, the Library plans to focus on several initiatives that support its strategic plan and, by extension, the provincial priorities for public library service.

- **Launch the Idea Lab**: Give people access to technological equipment so they can develop their digital literacy and technical skills, and create and share their ideas with others.
- **Restore Services**: Gradually phase in services and programs as the situation allows.
- **Increase Outreach**: Seek out ways to increase access to library services in outlying communities.
- **Exterior Revitalization**: Work with the City of Cranbrook to create a plan to make the Library's exterior entrance more accessible and welcoming.

Original signed by _____

David Clark, Chair

Overview

In April, the Ministry of Education has given the Cranbrook Public Library a one-time grant of $18,054 'to be used for planning, developing and improving your library's digital resources and services, and technical infrastructure.'

RATIONALE

Library staff conducted a review of potential projects that considered the following:

- Stated requirements of the grant
- The provincial strategic priorities for public libraries, and library's own strategic plan priorities
- Current technological and network infrastructure upgrade needs
- Ongoing technology-related initiatives underway at the library
- Capacity of staff to undertake new technological projects given the limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic
- Direct and immediate benefit for the public

Based on this review, the Board decided to allocate the grants to the following projects:

PROJECTS: IMMEDIATE NEEDS

Wireless Routers – The library needs to invest in a more robust wireless network as the number of people seeking to connect with mobile devices continues to increase, even outside of the library's hours of operation. This project replaces existing wireless equipment and adds one new router to increase range and strength of the signal.

Internet Bandwidth – Concurrent with the increased demand for wireless service is a need to offer more bandwidth; especially during the pandemic as more people are going online to work, communicate and access government and health services. This project will triple the bandwidth available to the public and staff networks.

Digital Collections Material – During the closure of the library's physical space between March and June 2020, patrons could only access its digital collections. The library contributed towards the acquisition of additional digital content, e-books and e-audiobooks to the shared Library2Go collection.

PROJECTS: STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Digital Communication Tool – There are digital communications tools designed specifically for libraries to promote collections, programs and other library services. This is a two-year pilot project to determine the efficacy of using such a tool to reach out to the community. A portion of the grant will be used to fund the second year's subscription.

Idea Lab Creation – The library received a substantial grant from the Columbia Basin Trust to build a maker space that will give community members free access to technological equipment and software to create their own digital projects, either for personal interest or as an exploration of potential career paths. A portion of the grant will be used to purchase some of the equipment that will go into the Idea Lab.

Idea Lab Programming – People will need training and support on how to use the equipment and software in the Idea Lab. A portion of the grant will be used to increase the amount of programming and support material provided by staff.

2020 LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY GRANT REPORTING FORM: CRANBROOK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Total Technology Grant Amount: 18,054

Area of Need	Outcome	Metrics	Strategic Links	Actions	Collaborative Links	Timeframe	Project Budget	In-Kind / Leveraged funds	Comments
Connectivity (internet speed, connection capacity, etc.) **Replace 2 wireless routers and install 1 new one**	People access the technological infrastructure they need to work and interact with others online.	Enhanced range and strength of the wireless signal throughout the building, and into the parking lot and street parking areas, so that people can connect even when the library is closed.	**Provincial:** Improving access for British Columbians. Advancing citizen engagement. **Library:** Build a robust technological infrastructure to support increasingly complex requirements.	Replace existing routers, and install a new one, spaced around the building to maximize coverage throughout the entire facility and the surrounding area.	**BC Libraries Cooperative** Staff used information gathered and shared by the BCLC to inform the type of equipment acquired, its deployment and configuration.	Completed 4 May 2020	$ 3,264	$ 0	Two existing routers were replaced and one new unit installed. One of the existing routers was moved to the meeting room to increase signal strength there and to the north side of the building. Statistics indicate that the number of wireless connections decreased slightly after mid-March, when the library closed, but that they have stayed at approximately the same level since the library reopened to the public, an average of 47 connections per day. These statistics indicate that people relied on external wireless access while the library's physical location was closed. They reflect what staff observed: people sitting outside the library, or in their cars, almost continuously throughout the day, using their mobile devices.
Connectivity (internet speed, connection capacity, etc.) **Increase Internet bandwidth**	People have access to adequate bandwidth to use online telecommunication tools, audio and video streaming services, as well as general Internet access.	Increased bandwidth on the public and staff networks.	**Provincial:** Improving access for British Columbians. **Library:** Build a robust technological infrastructure to support increasingly complex requirements.	Negotiate a 3-year contract with the library's primary internet service provider to, at a minimum, double the available bandwidth.	**BC Libraries Cooperative** Staff used information gathered and shared by the BCLC to inform the type of equipment acquired, its deployment and configuration.	Completed 30 June 2020	$ 1,283	Library Budget – $ 4,500	The library increased its bandwidth from 100 Mbps to 300 Mbps. The bandwidth has been structured so that a fixed portion of this bandwidth is allocated to the staff network to conduct mission-critical work while the bulk of the bandwidth is shared by the public computers and wireless network. The number of user complaints about slow Internet connections has decreased dramatically since increasing the bandwidth.

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Electronic collections (licensing) **Purchase additional digital collections material**	There is a greater availability and range of digital collections material for patrons unable to access physical library collections.	Increased number of digital collections titles available in Library2Go.	**Provincial**: Improving access for British Columbians. Building capacity. **Library**: Increase the diversity of information resources to meet people's learning needs.	Make a contribution to the BC Libraries Cooperative, so that they could purchase additional digital collections material.	**BC Libraries Cooperative** The library participates in the Library2Go shared digital collection administered by the BCLC.	Completed 10 June 2020	$1,050	Library Budget - $7,152	The library, as part of a province-wide initiative, contributed funds for the acquisition of additional e-book and e-audiobook titles to address the increased demand for digital collections due to the pandemic.
Digital programming **Digital communication tool**	Library users connect and learn about what is happening at the library and in the province via a digital newsletter that does not require them to use social media platforms.	Subscription to a digital newsletter creation tool and publish newsletters online focused on library collections, services, programs and events.	**Provincial**: Advancing citizen engagement. **Library**: Promote digital library services to encourage people to connect anywhere, anytime. Capture peoples' attention though the imaginative use of an array of communication tools.	Acquire a digital newsletter creation tool designed for use by libraries. Create, publish and promote newsletters.	**Kootenay Library Federation** The KLF negotiated a federation-wide license, and contributed to the total cost, to reduce the overall cost to member libraries who chose to subscribe to this service.	March 2020 to February 2022 Launch September 2020	$1,051	Kootenay Library Federation - $526 (contribution to licensing cost) Library Budget - $1,051	The first digital newsletter was published in September 2020. If the pilot project is successful, the Library will incorporate the subscription fee for this service into its annual operating budget.
Patron hardware upgrades (public computers, printers, etc.) **Construct a space and acquire equipment for an Idea Lab**	People can access an array of technological tools so they can digitize physical material and create their own multi-media content to share.	A space built within the library to house the Idea Lab. Audio and video recording, digitization, digital illustration and 3-D printing equipment, and the software required to edit and create a finished product is made available to the public.	**Provincial**: Improving access for British Columbians. Building capacity. **Library**: Create an Idea Lab filled with technological tools, supported by knowledgeable staff and resources, so people can develop and share content.	Construct the Idea Lab space. Acquire equipment (audio and video recording, digitization, digital illustration, 3-D printing) and software. Deploy equipment. Create user guides for the equipment. Develop procedures and guidelines for public booking equipment.	**Columbia Basin Trust** The CBT, through its Community Technology Initiative, helped the library write the project proposal, provided a grant to cover the majority of related costs and offers ongoing support. The majority of equipment will be purchased from local businesses, who provided guidance in its selection, and will provide maintenance. **City Public Works** The department renovated a section of the library to create the Idea Lab space. **Friends of the Library** The Friends donated funds to purchase furnishings.	April 2020 to January 2021	$6,805	Library Reserves – $655 Friends of the Library – $200 City of Cranbrook – $5,050 (in-kind) CBT – $56,101	The renovations needed to create the physical space for the Idea Lab were undertaken between April and June 2020. The library is in the process of purchasing the equipment. The Idea Lab will become a permanent service funded from the library's annual operating budget.

Area of Need	Outcome	Metrics	Strategic Links	Actions	Collaborative Links	Timeframe	Project Budget	In-Kind / Leveraged funds	Comments
Digital programming **Idea Lab workshops, classes and user guides**	People have the opportunity to learn how to use a wide array of technological tools to make their own digital projects and share them with others.	A series of hands-on workshops and classes held, led by local experts, where participants learn how to create their own projects using the Idea Lab's resources. A series of print user guides and video tutorials created that support self-guided learning on Idea Lab equipment.	**Provincial**: Improving access for British Columbians. Building capacity. **Library**: Create an Idea Lab filled with technological tools, supported by knowledgeable staff and resources, so people can develop and share content.	Hold "Train the Trainer" sessions so staff can learn how to use the Idea Lab equipment. Write user guides that detail the basic operation of each piece of equipment and include a listing of further self-directed learning resources. Identify local experts and work with them to develop a series of workshops on how to create projects using Idea Lab equipment.	**Columbia Basin Trust** The CBT, through its Community Technology Initiative, helped the library write the project proposal, provided a grant to cover the majority of related costs and offers ongoing support during the implementation of the project. **Local Businesses** These will provide the workshop instructors who will show people how to use different pieces of technological equipment. **Friends of the Library** The Friends donated funds for acquiring program supplies.	January 2021 – July 2022	$4,600	Library Reserves – $22,222 Friends of the Library – $2,900 CBT – $13,900	Work on this project will begin in early 2021 after the equipment arrives. The plan is to permanently allocate staff resources to providing technology-related workshops to the public once the project term ends.