# 2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR) GREATER VICTORIA 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 text boxes will expand as you type, so if needed, you can provide more detail. Click on a linked title in the list below to jump to that section of the document.

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.

The Greater Victoria Public Library (GVPL) delivers library services through 12 branch locations and GVPL's virtual branch, gvpl.ca. Our library branches are located on the traditional, ancestral and unceded lands of the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ Peoples, whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. GVPL's service area includes a combined population of approximately 352,000 residents encompassing ten of the thirteen municipalities and five of the ten Indigenous communities in the Capital Regional District. As reported in the Victoria Foundation's 2021 Vital Signs Report to the community, the following priorities continue to be identified as key to improving overall quality of life in Greater Victoria: affordable housing, social issues, public safety, cost of living and sustainable development. The pandemic has been a time of great challenges for all sectors and has exacerbated profound disparities among communities, particularly impacting newcomers who struggle with employment, housing, health and well-being. Despite these issues, Greater Victoria is highly valued by residents for its natural environment, walkability, locally grown food and recreation opportunities.

In 2021 GVPL prioritized key resources to support our community through another year of living with COVID-19. The provision of services for social wellness, community health, learning, and leisure has remained at the core of what we do and GVPL's commitment to excellent customer service supported citizens efforts to adjust and adapt to a new normal in 2021. Restoration of library services continued to be a priority throughout the year. Building on our own experience and the expertise of colleagues and professional experts, along with input from community partners, GVPL developed and implemented a scalable service delivery model to access collections, branches and resources system wide. Locations were prioritized for restoration regionally, incorporating the latest PHO Health and safety information with the intent of ensuring that our open spaces would remain viable and sustainable regardless of potential future impacts of the pandemic and evolving safety requirements. Social spacing, cleaning protocols, furniture & equipment placement and staffing were all carefully considered with the goal of being able to expand progressively. As a result, GVPL progressively and effectively restored access to in-person library services, supporting community renewal and individual growth by offering a welcoming environment in both our physical and virtual spaces.

#### GVPL provides Library Services to:

- The District of Central Saanich
- The City of Colwood
- The Township of Esquimalt
- The Esquimalt Nation
- The District of the Highlands
- The City of Langford
- The District of Metchosin
- The District of Oak Bay
- The District of Saanich
- The Scia'new First Nation (Beecher Bay)
- The Songhees Nation
- The Tsartlip First Nation
- The Tsawout First Nation
- The City of Victoria
- The Town of View Royal

### 2. MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

Please any new or major ongoing projects/programs the library has delivered in the past year. To report on multiple projects/programs, copy and paste the blank table. Use one table per project/program.

### Major 2021 GVPL Projects

GVPL's 2021-2023 Strategic Bridging Plan	2
Greater Victoria Public Library Regional Service Delivery Plan	5
,	
215+ Social Media Campaign	/
"Bring the Library Home" Take and Make Bags/Ideas to Go(Virtual)/Scavenger hunts	q

### # 1 Project/Program Name

### GVPL'S 2021-2023 STRATEGIC BRIDGING PLAN

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

With less than a full year into the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a great deal of uncertainty at the start of 2021 not just for the future but also for short and medium-term impacts. Rather than embark on a full strategic planning process during the pandemic, the Library Board determined that an interim or bridging plan would best support GVPL's successful evolution into a post-pandemic world. By reducing our planning horizon to a relatively short duration, GVPL's 2021- 2023 Strategic Bridge Plan commits to a specific, limited and measurable set of goals.

The GVPL board's innovative strategic planning roadmap was comprised of the following elements:

a plan duration of 24 months, rather than a traditional 3-to-5-year timeframe.
 Rationale: Traditional plans relied on projections and assumptions that are, for the foreseeable future, in flux; a shorter planning horizon is highly compatible and adaptable to changes in the current operating environment.

- a process timeline that began in February 2021 and concluded with Board approval in June 2021.

  Rationale: A two-year plan can be developed expediently, with the emphasis on a limited set of specific, measurable goals to guide operational priorities.
- an engagement process that included market research to measure the perceived value of GVPL, structured interviews with community members and GVPL partners to listen and learn from diverse and perspectives, and a short community survey to capture the needs and expectations of library service delivery in 2021/22. A parallel engagement process for GVPL staff provided valuable insight and information for the Board's consideration.
   Rationale: this process provides essential internal and external feedback to inform the Board's
- a measurement tool to track the progress of the approved strategic plan.
   <u>Rationale</u>: reporting progress, in defined intervals, provides transparency, clarity and accountability of the Board's strategic plan to the community.

GVPL's 2021-2023 Strategic Bridging Plan was launched to the public in October 2021.



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

Building on GVPL's vision: "Your Place to connect, discover and imagine"; Mission: "We build community and support literacy and lifelong learning by providing free access to information, space, tools and expertise" and Values: "Collaboration, Inclusiveness, Service Excellence, Innovation, Intellectual Freedom, Public Accountability and Sustainability" the 2021-2023 Strategic Bridging Plan literally builds a bridge to the future – focusing GVPL's collective efforts to repair and renew our infrastructures.

Four key priorities are addressed in the plan:

- Digital Literacy and Access
- Focused Community Building

strategic priorities and goals.

- Making a Difference, Showing our Impact
- Making Space for Everyone to be Safe, Respected and Valued

The plan supports community-inspired services for community renewal, individuals' growth and public outcomes. It recognizes the need to rebuild, renew and refresh so that GVPL will have the capabilities to arrive in 2023 as champions closing the digital divide and opening the magic of learning, literacies, equity, accessibility, and respect for all.

How does this project/program support the <u>B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</u> ?				
Ple	Please list as many goals as needed?			
1.	Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	The goals of the 2021-2023 Strategic Bridging Plan are focused on improving access by replacing barriers with bridges to actively living our values of equity, diversity, and inclusiveness; by building resiliency into our infrastructure; by deepening our community understanding and by initiating a community mindset of continuous improvement that will sustain our vision of the library as a place to connect, discover and imagine. Transforming GVPL's digital infrastructure to deliver essential services will ensure the capacity for sustainability and continuous innovation.		
2.	<b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	Improvement of our technology infrastructure will build staff capacity for the changing nature of library service delivery and the working environment, change readiness and enhance staff productivity.		
3.	Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	Meaningful collaboration informs the development of both successful services and spaces and helps ensure equitable access to resources. The plan prioritizes focused community building to deepen our understanding of what communities need as they rebuild and restore their resiliency so that GVPL can address new and evolving needs with community-inspired services.		
4.	Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	Strategic planning meetings and workshops provided trustees with opportunities to engage in facilitated discussions designed to inform and stimulate proactive strategic planning.		

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

Building on the key components of plan approved in February 2021:

- a plan duration of 24 months, rather than a traditional 3-to-5-year timeframe;
- a process timeline that began in February 2021 and concluded with Board approval in June 2021;
- an engagement process, running in parallel, for GVPL staff and community members; and
- a measurement tool to track the progress of the approved strategic plan.

This proactive strategy focused on factors within our control – largely internal to the organization - so that we could prepare to meet the collective needs of a community in crises. We decided to invest 24 months of concentrated effort to build our internal strength and capacity. What does success look like? GVPL will be in a strong position to be flexible, seize opportunities and demonstrate our relevancy in powerful ways for the public good. The short, medium, and long-term outcomes will be measured through quarterly reports.

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

Community partnerships will strengthen the delivery of this plan and we look forward to reporting on related community engagement activities that will be implemented in 2022.

### **#2 Project/Program Name**

#### GREATER VICTORIA PUBLIC LIBRARY REGIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN

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

A Regional Service Delivery Plan for GVPL was released to the public in July 2021, after receiving approval in principle by the Library Board in June 2021. The Regional Service Delivery Plan was developed to serve as a roadmap for the GVPL Board of Trustees to guide service delivery options and opportunities. Building on the recommendations of the consultants' report that was commissioned in 2019 and completed in 2020, one month before the pandemic, the scope of work was defined by the following parameters:

- Emphasis on library service delivery in all its forms digital, physical, and in partnership with third parties rather than limiting the focus to bricks and mortar locations
- A timeline of 15 years to develop recommendations for short and medium-term investments
- The operating assumption that the Central Branch will remain within the municipal boundaries of the City of Victoria
- The Consideration of Capital planning would be beyond the scope of work for this report.

In June 2021, a workshop was convened for the Board to review the report recommendations and discuss future implications of the report methodology. Trustees engaged in a structured conversation which resulted in the drafting of a motion for the June 22, 2021, board meeting to approve in principle the Regional Service Delivery Plan, with three caveats as noted in the introduction of the report upon its release to the public in July 2021:

- Calculations of population growth in Greater Victoria must reflet the latest Census data. This will be an ongoing, annual requirement to maintain the integrity of the report. Current population statistics and projections are subject to change; BC Stats will be the point of reference for current statistics and official projections.
- The GVPL Board of Trustees established Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility as a strategic priority for the Strategic Bridging Plan 2021-2023; continued investment with respect to this priority and continuing focus on Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples is required when the Regional Service Delivery plan is operationalized.
- The Regional Service Delivery Plan will inform the business planning priorities for GVPL staff in July and August 2021; it will be shared with Council and staff of each of the 10 GVPL municipal partners and it will be shared eternally as a public document on the GVPL website.

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

"Focused Community Building" and "Making Space for Everyone to be Safe, Respected, and Valued" are key goals of GVPL's 2021-2023 Strategic Bridging Plan. The Regional Service Delivery Plan identifies solutions that create people-focused spaces and provide places for community gathering, learning and relaxation at all GVPL branches. It optimizes social, economic, and environmental strategies – creating sustainable spaces that are responsible to public financing, allow staff to flourish, reduce green house gases, and provide a welcoming environment for all. The Service Plan includes spaces and places where everyone can access information and learn how to live, work and play in our digital world. Through the creation of flexible gathering spaces, community partnerships and collaboration can be fostered. Public libraries are increasingly important as community hubs and social centres: public rooms to welcome, connect and support diversity. The service delivery plan creates alignment of spaces and services with GVPL's strategic priorities.

## How does this project/program support the <u>B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</u>? Please list as many goals as needed.

 Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services) Access to lifelong learning includes a variety of media from oral history, print, and digital to performance. The Regional Service Delivery Plan includes spaces and places where everyone can access information and learn how to live, work and play in our digital world. Through the creation of open, welcoming and accessible spaces, people will fully utilize library facilities to increase lifelong learning.

Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)

The Service delivery plan will set new space standards that will enhance our capacity to respond to changing needs.

As our libraries transform from places of consumption to places of engagement and creation, it is essential that they demonstrate inclusivity and the right of freedom of expression. Libraries support the free exchange of ideas through a variety of public spaces.

4. **Enhancing Governance** of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)

The Service Delivery Plan will serve as a roadmap for board trustees, enhancing their understanding and awareness of service delivery priorities. It will continue to inform our municipal partners as we work together to build and enhance our shared community spaces.

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

The Regional Service Delivery Plan provides a defined order of short, medium, and long-term outcomes to guide service delivery options and opportunities. Outcomes include a Central Branch replacement and enhancement of service delivery system-wide with operational efficiencies to benefit each municipal partner.

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

Our 10 municipal funders are key partners in the implementation of this plan. In 2021, planning and preparation for the relocation of the Esquimalt Branch to a new facility was an ongoing project for GVPL, working in close collaboration with our municipal colleagues in Esquimalt to complete the work required to decommission the existing branch and open a new Esquimalt branch in early 2022. The City of Victoria approved a feasibility study for a business case for a new Central Branch in July 2021 and consultations with GVPL were initiated in 2021 and will continue through 2022.

### # 3 Project/Program Name

#### 215+ SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

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

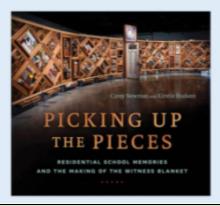
On June 1, 2021, GVPL began a social media campaign to share resources about the history of residential schools in Canada and Reconciliation in response to the discovery of 215 children's remains in unmarked graves at the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School by theTk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation. Developed to support learning, unlearning, and relearning about the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples today and throughout Canada's history, resources comprising of poetry, books for children, teens and adults, websites, videos, podcasts and events were shared over the course of 215 consecutive days through GVPL social media channels. The shared resources included both GVPL materials and resources from other organizations. The daily resources were purposely diverse, recognizing that people learn differently, and that different formats and different types of stories resonate with different audiences. The intent of the campaign was three-fold: education, creating spaces for dialogue and celebrating Indigenous ancestral knowledge, and celebrating the diverse contributions of Indigenous Peoples' ability to tell stories an all media platforms.

The campaign received local media attention and inspired a similar campaign at the Bibliothèque publique de Fredericton Public Library in New Brunswick. The resources shared as part of the social media campaign have been preserved and will continue to be promoted by GVPL through in-branch promotion and outreach initiatives as part of efforts to reach patrons who do not use social media.



Today we offer the first of 215 days of resources shared to support learning, unlearning, and relearning in response to the discovery of 215 children's remains in unmarked graves at the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School by the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation.

There is more we can and must do and we acknowledge the ongoing need for a national reckoning about residential schools in Canada. We are committed to listening, learning, and growing with our c... See More



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

The GVPL Board established Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility as a strategic priority. Continued investment with respect to this priority and continuing GVPL's focus on Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples is an ongoing priority.

### How does this project/program support the <u>B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</u>? Please list as many goals as needed.

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Improving Access for Bri     (e.g., connectivity, digita     shared services)		A commitment to improved access and awareness was key to the development of this initiative. The daily reinforcement of the importance of 'learning, unlearning and relearning' was an inspired initiative by members of GVPL's Truth and Reconciliation Working Group.
<ol><li>Building Capacity for libr directors (e.g., training a development)</li></ol>	-	This was a significant source of professional development for GVPL staff.
<ol> <li>Advancing Citizen Engage helping people access go services/resources, fostet knowledge-sharing, and reconciliation)</li> </ol>	vernment ring community	This campaign supported citizen engagement and dialogue in understanding.
4. Enhancing Governance of system (e.g., board/trust developing best practices planning)	ee training,	

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

A deepened understanding and increased awareness were the outcomes of this initiative.

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

### # 4 Project/Program Name

"BRING THE LIBRARY HOME" TAKE AND MAKE BAGS/IDEAS TO GO (VIRTUAL)/
COMMUNITY SCAVENGER HUNTS

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

With the ongoing hiatus of GVPL's in person programs in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as part of GVPL's efforts to reformat services in response to the situation library staff continued to devise flexible 'do-it-yourself' programming for all ages.

A new giveaway (take home) program of Do It Yourself (DIY)activity bags for patrons was created. 'Take and Make' bags were launched in February 2021.

'Take and Make' Bags were designed to:

- Provide an engaging alternative to in person programs
- Provide a variety of enjoyable, DIY experiences for patrons
- Leverage the creativity of GVPL Librarians and Library Assistants
- Demonstrate the relevance of GVPL to the community
- Add content to Niche Academy and social media
- Leverage GVPL's partnerships by promoting the program bags within the school districts that GVPL serves.

Instructions and supplies for a range of do-it-yourself activities were produced throughout 2021. The first bag topic was a 'No Sew' mask. The bag included a handout, fabric and elastics for patrons to make their own COVID-friendly facemask. 'Take and Make' themes were wide ranging and other examples of the over 20 takeaway bags created over the year included an origami bag for Asian Heritage Month a Chalk Art bag for Free Comic Book Day and Time Capsules. A series of DIY bags were also created to support the BC Summer Reading Club program. These DIY activities were very well received by patrons and staff. Promotion opportunities were leveraged through social media, website promotion, in-house poster, support of draft letter to schools and other partner organizations.



### MAKE YOUR OWN TIME CAPSULE

Preserve Memories for Your Future Self

One bag per person, please. Bags are available on a first-come, first-served basis.





Related to the goal of 'bringing the library home' was the continuation of the 'Ideas to Go' virtual programs which were launched in late 2020. The aim of the series was to spark enthusiasm for learning a new skill or discovering a hobby and connect our librarians to patrons virtually. Ten episodes were produced by the end of 2021 with topics that ranged from virtual reality to romance planning for the first day of kindergarten. All the resources highlighted in the videos are available on gvpl.ca.





### ÍHINGS TO LOOK FOR

This a wonderful day. I've neve this one before." Maya Angelou eating fruit, remember the

Arabic - .aa1.sa Portuguese - Obrigado Chinese - 谢谢 Punjabi - ਤਹਾਡਾ ਧੰਨਵਾਦ

SENĆOŦEN - HÍSWKE Dutch - Bedankt French - Merci German - Danke

Japanese - ありがとうございました Korean - 감사합니다 Lekwungen - Hav'sxw'ga si'en



#### BOOKS & MORE

Look for these resources at gvpl.ca Find LinkedIn Learning videos and courses at gypl.ca/digital. Search 'gratitude' for everything from journaling to courses on compassion. We are Gratefut: Otsaliheliga by Traci Sorell (kids)

A Year of Living Kindly: The Choices That Will Change Your Life and the World Around You by Donna Cameron (adults)

qvpl.ca

Community Scavenger Hunts were another vehicle developed by GVPL librarians to extend the library's reach and meet patron demand for COVID-friendly, DIY, library-based activities. Monthly one-page themed scavenger hunts were developed to encourage family literacy and promote GVPL's collections. The flexible format activity sheets were distributed through print, links to print on demand and digital copies for community partners. Library Services Librarians worked with GVPL partners to enhance some of the scavenger hunts. This was an opportunity to enhance GVPL's partnerships with municipal parks and CRD parks.

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

These initiatives succeeded in fulfilling GVPL's role as the community's "place to connect, discover and imagine" by providing library programming literally 'outside the box' in support of the strategic goal of "Focused Community Building".

How does this project/program support the <u>B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</u>? Please list as many goals as needed.

	, e	
1.	Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	The 'Bring the Library Home' initiatives served to connect community members with a variety of library and community resources in safe and accessible ways when indoor library programming was not possible.
2.	<b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	The DIY initiatives provided library staff with the opportunity to build new services and leverage their creative and professional expertise.
3.	Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	Activities developed provided citizens of all ages to engage in lifelong learning and increased their appreciation of the library and community resources available to them.
4.	Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic	

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

Outcomes were to maintain relevance of library services in new and accessible ways to reconnect with current users and cultivate new ones.

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

Staff worked with community partners to promote and extend the reach of the 'Take and Make' bags and Scavenger Hunt activity sheets.

### 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 and provide a description of how the library addressed them. Leave any other listed topics blank if they did not significantly impact the library.

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. Including examples or stories (optional) may also illustrate how service changes helped addressed this challenge. Please specify if any provincial funding was used (e.g., annual library funding, the technology grant, other provincial grants, or local grants).
COVID-19 (e.g., safety protocols, proof of vaccination)	Service restoration required significant efforts to adapt our public and staff spaces to meet COVID-19 safety protocols. The redesign of branch spaces to meet social distancing requirements and new ways of delivering services required significant investment of furnishings and equipment to allow for maximum flexibility.
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	Pro active social media campaigns to promote GVPL branches as sanctuaries from the extreme temperatures of summer heat (Heat dome – come into the cool) and winter cold (unprecedented snow and cold) accelerated the imperative to increase public seating to provide needed refuge from the elements which presented challenges in managing safety requirements for social distancing at branches with limited space flexibility.
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	Evolving priorities and continued demand for digital services while balancing the increasing popularity of physical collections placed continued pressure on our capacity.
Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health and wellness)	Staffing fluctuations impacted our capacity to extend open hours and in order to provide certainty, the expansion of branch open hours in certain locations was adjusted temporarily at year end.
Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	Many local service providers closed during the day due to lack of resources, thus reducing options for community access to public washrooms and public computers as well as in-person adult learning classes that were previously accessible. GVPL's online learning resources were in high demand as a result of the significant reduction of traditional community-based programming.
Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)	The unprecedented pressures on IT resources due to high demand for digital services combined with the 'new normal' of remote work required extraordinary IT support and acceleration of efforts to renew aging IT infrastructures and systems. The situation was further exacerbated by supply chain limitations.
Aging/damaged facilities (e.g., need for repairs, renovations, upgrades/expansions)	Bolted down Canyon type shelving from an earlier era limited our ability to adjust spaces in a nimble manner. Older branch locations required significant investment and effort to procure flexible shelving and furnishings to allow for appropriate spacing to meet health and safety requirements.
Community access to the library (e.g., geographic isolation, lack of local public transit, building accessibility)	

Vulnerable communities (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental health crisis)	Increased social isolation of vulnerable individuals due to reduced community support resources and proliferation of misinformation which caused increase anxiety among those already at risk.
Other (please specify)	

### 4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.

Library Director Signature: _	Maux. JSan	Date: May 31, 2022
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Board Chair Signature:	lehely	Date: May 31, 2022