

INTRODUCTION

Surrey Libraries recognizes that our work takes place on the ancestral, traditional, and unceded territories of the SEMYOME (Semiahmoo), q̓íçəy̓ (Katzie), kʷikʷəłəm (Kwikwetlem), q̓ʷa:n̓łəñ (Kwantlen), q̓iqéyt (Qayqayt), xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) First Nations, and on the ancestral and traditional territory of the s̓c̓əwaθən məsteyəxʷ (Tsawwassen) First Nation.

Surrey is a geographically large municipality that is characterized by rapid growth. Population estimates for 2019 show Surrey with over 583,510 residents, representing the second largest municipal population in BC. Surrey has had an average annual growth rate of 2% over the last 10 years. Its population is projected to increase by over 262,000 in the next three decades, or almost 9000 people per year. Estimates are based on a combination of Surrey's building permit data and BC Assessment Information. ([Source: City of Surrey Planning & Development](#))

The six communities of Surrey are City Centre, Cloverdale, Fleetwood, Newton, Guildford, South Surrey and Whalley. There is a library in each community, with two libraries in South Surrey and two libraries in Newton. City Centre is the region's "second downtown" after Vancouver. As the second metropolitan centre for the region, Surrey City Centre is transforming into the economic, social and cultural hub of the city. What was once a suburban town centre is developing into a walkable, transit-oriented downtown core. City Centre is already home to such landmarks as City Hall, City Centre Library, Simon Fraser University, Kwantlen Polytechnic University and Holland Park. Over the next decade, careful planning will establish a downtown core where people want to live, work and play.

Surrey currently has eight business parks. Growth in other areas of the city continues to escalate, notably Clayton. The City of Surrey is building a new Clayton Community Centre and Library that integrates arts, library, recreation, and outdoor spaces into a single facility. It will be a place where the community can connect with their neighbours to play, read and make. It is set to open in the summer of 2020.

Surrey Libraries is a key partner in many City initiatives including the City of Surrey Public Engagement Strategy. Surrey Libraries collaborates with more than 75 community partners each year to provide programming and services that make a difference to the lives and learning opportunities of residents. In 2019, Surrey Libraries delivered 6151 programs throughout our communities to enrich learning and literacy. We are proud to have connected with the 199,075

children, youth and adults that participated in our programs. Over 2.6 million people visited our branches and nearly 4 million books and materials were borrowed.

Surrey Libraries Strategic Plan 2019-2023

VISION: A literate, inclusive, thriving city

MISSION: We connect people, spark curiosity and inspire learning

VALUES: community-focus, intellectual freedom, service excellence, equitable access, creativity and collaboration

THEMES: literacy and learning, connections, welcoming and inclusive spaces

Strategic Objectives

- Promote and nurture literacy and learning
- Position the Library as the heart of the community
- Strengthen strategic community engagement
- Increase satisfaction with our services
- Improve access to Library services
- Align resources to changing community needs
- Explore opportunities to diversify and grow revenue
- Enhance responsible spending and accountability
- Refine processes to improve services and create capacity
- Broaden awareness of Library services
- Encourage innovation and collaboration
- Foster a culture of service excellence
- Cultivate a safe, engaged and diverse workplace
- Develop and empower staff

PROVINCIAL PRIORITIES

The strategies referenced in this document are the four strategies identified by the Provincial Strategic Plan in [*Inspiring Libraries, CONNECTING Communities*](#). These strategies collectively support the vision for public library services in British Columbia.

PRIORITY 1 – IMPROVING ACCESS

Library goal that support the priority:

In our Strategic Plan, one of our Strategic Objectives is to “Improve access to Library services”.

Programs and/or Services that aligns with the priority: Storytimes for the Developmentally Disabled

This weekly program is for adults with developmental disabilities and it is held at two Surrey Libraries branches: City Centre branch and the Guildford branch.

Program objectives:

- To provide literacy activity for individuals with Developmental Disabilities
- To model literacy activities to caregivers
- To introduce caregivers to library materials
- To promote and encourage library usage
- To develop a positive relationship with library staff

Partnerships that support the priority: Community Living Society, local group homes

Outcomes:

of sessions = 61

of participants = 3438

The City Centre library surveyed the caregivers who brought their clients to DD Storytime, using a PLA Project Outcome-designed survey:

1. You learned something that is helpful: 62.5% strongly agree, 37.5% agree
2. You feel more confident about what you just learned: 37.5% strongly agree, 62.5% agree
3. You intend to apply what you just learned: 37.5% strongly agree, 37.5% agree, 25% neither
4. You are more aware of resources and services provided by the library: 50% strongly agree, 37.5% agree, 12.5% not applicable

Sample of responses for question 5: What did you like most about the program?

- Interactive content, fun
- [Staff] is best person as a storyteller. I like her way of how she presents all new things for individuals. She is a very nice person
- [Staff] is so good and the best story facilitator. She is funny and smiles a lot. We like the coordination of everything: music, story and dancing
- Sign language

Sample of responses for question 6: What could the library do to better assist you in learning more?

- Have a disability resource section
- More space because the space was full
- More sign language
- We are satisfied with the program the way it is

Sample of responses for question 7: How have you used what you've learned in this program?

Please provide one or two specific examples.

- It has assisted my client to write a story for her peers and I've learned some sign language which has been very useful
- I use what I learn at this program every day at work with my clients
- I now use eBooks from the library
- I've shared ideas from this program with other people and at other programs
- I've used what I've learned to help build relationships
- I've used what I've learned in this program in situations that come up at the program

Sample of responses for question 8: Describe the impact this program has had on you and your clients. Please provide one or two specific examples.

- My clients are very happy to go and they get very excited, they have a great time when they are there, they also see friends there that they enjoy seeing and socializing with
- This program has been a lifesaver for my client, she is on her second book because of it, she looks forward to hearing her stories read aloud
- They enjoy it very much, gets them out in the community and on transit, great program
- They feel happy and cheerful, looking forward to come every week
- My client is moving his hands and head during the music which he doesn't do at home, only in the program, reaction of client's face is so happy with other clients in the storytime

This program improves access to library services for adults with a wide range of developmental disabilities. Due to its success in providing access to a marginalized group, the library plans to offer this program at a third branch in 2020.

PRIORITY 2 – DEVELOPING SKILLS

Library goals that support the priority:

In our Strategic Plan, one of our Strategic Objectives is: "Promote and nurture literacy and learning".

Programs and/or Services that aligns with the priority: Reading Buddies

This program is held at seven branches, every spring and fall: it pairs elementary school children (Grades 2-4) with teen volunteers (aged 14-18) for six sessions of reading. The goal is to help the younger children improve their reading skills. The teens benefit from accumulating volunteer hours toward their secondary school graduation requirements.

Partnerships that support the priority: originally funded by Coast Capital (2012-2017), it is now fully funded by Surrey Libraries. It is promoted to Surrey Schools, assisted in part by access to the City of Surrey's volunteer database, no formal partnerships in 2019.

Outcomes:

An estimated 243 children and teens participated in the 2019 Reading Buddies program.

A PLA Project Outcome-designed survey was given to the parents of the children participating in the program, in English, Korean and Punjabi:

1. My child maintained or increased their reading level: 35% strongly agree, 65% agree
2. My child is a more confident reader: 28% strongly agree, 65% agree, 7% neither
3. My child reads more often: 21% strongly agree, 58% agree, 2% disagree, 19% neither
4. My child uses the library more often: 32.5% strongly agree, 53.5% agree, 5% disagree, 7% neither, 2% not applicable

Sample of responses for question 5: What did your child like most about the program/service?

- The fact that he can read faster he was very excited when he showed me he read 3 books instead of 2
- My daughter is a reluctant reader but she is excited to come to reading club! She likes how friendly her buddy is and how much fun she has
- Reading and discussing with his buddy about what he read
- She like working with her buddy on pronouncing words correctly
- The thing that my child liked the most is about reading books that he wanted to read

Sample of responses for question 6: What could the library do to help your child continue to learn more?

- More sessions, more than once per week, offer series more frequently, offer more spaces
- We are looking for the same program for writing skills too. Like discussing any topic with others (example talking about stars). You have many story programs. I recommend start discussing simple topics with kids

Sample of responses for question 7: Please tell us how this program has affected your family.

- We went to the library more.

- The children read books more
- My kids' reading skill is improved
- My child started to enjoy reading books after attending to "Reading Buddy Program"
- My child became positive about going to high school after building good relationships with the big buddy
- We became familiar with library overall
- It was a good effected. My whole family liked this program. My son enjoyed so much. He wants more reading. Thank you for this program
- We have become more aware of how important reading is - especially for leisure
- Both of my kids went through. I credit this program with taking my son from being a reluctant reader to someone who reads multiple books per week
- This program relieves us from the burden of forcing her to read soon after arriving from school
- My daughter has improved in her reading skills and vocabulary and we are happy about it

Sample of responses for question 8: As a result of this program, did anyone in your family apply for a library card?

- All of my family members have a library card
- Both of my kids had cards but they use them much more frequently now
- Yeah her brother apply for card

Sample of responses for question 9: As a result of this program, do you feel that your child will be more successful in school?

- Yes I think so
- The child became more confident
- I hope so
- I'm not sure
- Yes. It helped both kids see reading as fun and doable.
- Absolutely
- Yes definitely

This program is focused on developing literacy skills for children and developing teaching/mentoring skills for teens.

PRIORITY 3 – COLLABORATING ON SHARED GOALS

Library goal that supports the priority:

In our Strategic Plan, one of our Strategic Objectives is “Strengthen strategic community engagement”.

Programs and/or Services that aligns with the priority: Let’s Talk Reconciliation film series

This two-part film series was the result of an in-depth consultation process and partnership with the Surrey Urban Indigenous Leaderships Council:

- January 24, 2019 at City Centre branch: the film shown was “Forgotten Warriors”, about Indigenous soldiers in World War I and how poorly they were treated when they returned from the war. The post-film discussion was facilitated by Dr. Lyn Daniels, Director of Instruction, Aboriginal Learning from Surrey Schools. 24 participants
- February 20, 2019 at Newton branch: the film shown was “How the Fiddle Flows”, about a group of Métis settlers as they made their journey by canoe across Canada. While they travelled, they discovered the fiddle (brought to Canada by Scottish settlers), they fell in love with it and since then, fiddle music and dance have become part of Métis heritage. The post-film discussion was facilitated by Keenan McCarthy from Nova Métis. 13 participants

Partnerships that support the priority: Library staff in partnership with the Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Council (SUILC) and Surrey Schools, with films provided by the National Film Board (NFB).

Outcomes:

At the Newton event, participants were asked to complete a brief paper survey and staff spoke to some of the participants at both screenings.

Sample of responses to the question, “What did you like about this program? What did you learn?”

- I liked the program itself, the people who attended, and the movie was very good
- I enjoyed the discussion after the movie
- I’m interested in the community so I want to learn more about it
- Good film discussion
- Learning more about Metis culture and how it fits withing Canada’s history, the film length was good and the discussion was good
- I appreciated the special guests and their expertise
- An opportunity for the community to come together and discuss these important issues
- Learned that I know a lot of Metis history, also Indigenous history but good to leaning more about cultural/social aspects
- Knowledgeable presenter and good conversation

Some of the comments from staff:

It was an incredible event – and what is most striking and clear in my mind is that the process used to develop the event was just right – a partnership with Indigenous community. This event would not have been what it was without that.

Dr. Lyn Daniels as a partner and facilitator was essential. She has seen pretty much all the NFB Indigenous films in her role; she selected the film; she did the opening; she facilitated the conversation with community, she even sang at the end. Her rich personal and professional and owned knowledge informed her response to community conversation. When tricky and potentially derailing questions came up, she provided space and shape and context to the conversation – that were honoring the lived experiences of Indigenous and non-Indigenous community.

There was a man in the audience who had created a large poster and brought a small press book about another Indigenous soldier whose experiences were similar to the ones portrayed in the film. Indigenous soldiers protecting fear of land being taken away, only to find that their land was taken away when they returned. Lyn gave this man a chance to stand and talk about this story, as a way for the community to hear and learn.

There was bannock that was enjoyed by the participants. There was a lovely Indigenous gift provided to Lyn (important protocol). There was a beautiful display of Indigenous library materials and take-aways.

There was a young woman who had come because her professor told her she would get extra credit for seeing this Canadian film. Most poignant for me ...a family of 3 participated. A mother, father and teenage son. They were active in the discussion. Lyn spoke about these events and conversations being important because they are a way of “talking back to history” ... a history that is inaccurate. I spoke to the group about the upcoming NFB film about Metis fiddle ... and that the NFB film helps speak back to history because it allows authentic voice of Indigenous people to be heard. This resonated with the family in the audience. Afterwards, the mother introduced herself to me, as a leader in the Metis community. She says there is limited information available to Metis people in her municipality and that her son doesn’t get any information in school. She is always looking for events like this to take her son to and was pleased to see this event.

Majority of the questions were about Métis culture, identity, history. One of the questions asked was what reconciliation means to in general to Métis people. Deni said: “Recognition for their achievements and culture.” Deni mentioned that a lot of the great explorers were married to Métis women, who guided them on their journey through Canada, but this is often not mentioned.

Both SUILC and Surrey Libraries are interested in collaborating on shared goals and providing opportunities, like this film series, to bring various communities in Surrey together to promote better understanding and improve relationships. Building on the success of this program, we have started the collaborating process for offering this program again in 2020/2021.

PRIORITY 4 – ENHANCING GOVERNANCE

Library Goal that supports the priority:

In our Strategic Plan, one of our Strategic Objectives is “Refine process to improve services and create capacity”.

1. Programs and/or Services that aligns with the priority: Launched our 2019-2023 Strategic Plan

By the end of 2018, Surrey Libraries was ready to launch its new 2019-2023 Strategic Plan, based on the Balanced Scorecard model as used by the City of Surrey. We spent the first part of 2019 launching the plan to staff and other stakeholders. This particular Strategic Plan had a different approach than previous iterations, with specific measures tied to objectives. It has been a learning process and required us to change the way we approached achieving our goals and demonstrating our impact.

2. Programs and/or Services that aligns with the priority: Policy Manual Review

Starting in early 2019, a plan to thoroughly review and update the Library’s Policy Manual was undertaken. Sections were assigned to various managers and proposed revisions scheduled to be presented to the Board for consideration throughout the year. It was an opportunity to take a closer look at library policies, to clarify “hot button” issues that have arisen in other local public libraries, to empower staff dealing with particular situations in the library, and also align our policies with the new Strategic Plan – in clear and plain language.

Outcomes:

Strong and renewed strategic planning and effective and updated policy have enhanced the governance of Surrey Libraries for the Board, for management, for library staff and for the Surrey community.

SUMMARY

One thing that significantly impacted our service in 2019 was the planned closure of the Cloverdale branch for renovations from July – December. Limited programming was delivered at the pop-up library at the Cloverdale Recreation Centre, impacting our overall usage by the community.

Surrey Libraries looks forward to improving the quality of life for our residents by helping advance their social and economic opportunities. We will strive to align our resources to deliver service

where needed most and work towards our mission to 'connect people, spark curiosity and inspire learning.'

In summary, Surrey Libraries would like to thank the Ministry of Education for the generous grants that support the improvement, extension and promotion of our Library services.

This report was prepared by Jenny Fry, Manager of Learning, Programs and Partnerships