

## 2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

### LIBRARY NAME

Burnaby Public Library

### CHECKLIST

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

- ☐ [1. INTRODUCTION - LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY PROFILE](#)
- ☐ [2. MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS](#)
- ☐ [3. KEY CHALLENGES](#)
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### 1. INTRODUCTION - LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

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

Burnaby is located on the ancestral and unceded homelands of the Skwxwú7mesh and hə́nqəmíñəm speaking people. Burnaby is a racially diverse community within a rapidly growing metropolitan area: Burnaby's population increased by 7% from 2016 to 2021, and 249,125 people now call Burnaby home.

- From 2011 to 2016, Burnaby's senior population grew by 19%;
- Burnaby's Indigenous population grew by 27% in the same time-period.

More Burnaby residents are immigrants than are non-immigrants:

- In 2016, just over 50% of Burnaby residents were immigrants;
- 14.1% of Burnaby's population immigrated to Canada during the previous 10 years;
- A majority of Burnaby residents (56.4%) have a mother tongue other than English, and 34.6% most often spoke a language other than English or French at home.

Burnaby Public Library empowers the community to engage with and share stories, ideas and information. Our dream is a welcoming community where all people can explore, learn and connect. Our four library branches offer books, magazines, DVDs, audiobooks and other materials in a dozen different languages. Through [www.bpl.bc.ca](http://www.bpl.bc.ca), Burnaby residents can download free e-books and audiobooks, stream independent films and music, and access online magazines and newspapers. BPL's branches are important public spaces, meeting places and centres for discovery and dialogue. We provide access to computers and Wi-Fi, and our expert staff help people access the information that they need for work and study, and to navigate essential services online. Library staff work outside our branches too. The Home Library and Accessible Service Department provides personalized service and an exclusive collection of library materials to patrons who are unable to come to our branches due to health reasons or a physical disability; we visit private residences, care facilities, assisted living spaces and other institutions, and through services such as NNELS offer materials in alternative formats to clients who are print-disabled.

BPL engaged consultants in 2021 to conduct an Anti-Racism Climate Audit of the library. The library has developed anti-racism commitments arising from this work, and this work will be a major priority in 2022. BPL is a key partner at various community tables, including the Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table, the Burnaby Interagency Council, and the Burnaby Primary Care Network.

Over the past few years, the City and BPL have been building relationships with local First Nations and urban Indigenous peoples, and the Burnaby Village Museum produced an award-winning [Indigenous History in Burnaby Resource Guide](#).

## 2. MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

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

Project/Program Name
<b>Removing Barriers through Community Work</b>
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.
In 2021, BPL shifted staffing and other resources from in-branch service to community work. BPL created a new position of Manager, Community Development and added three new community librarian positions. The mandate of this team is to deliver service through an equity lens to community members that face barriers to library services. While this work was planned before the COVID-19 pandemic, lessons learned and connections made during COVID strengthened the work. Removing barriers also happens in library locations. Staff have developed principles and training that reduces ID requirements for getting a library card, with particular emphasis on getting trans patrons and Indigenous names right, and in 2020 the BPL Board removed late fines.
How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?
The first goal in BPL's Strategic Plan is Connect with Community. Through this goal, the library aims to discover and understand our communities' needs and aspirations, and remove barriers to library services. BPL's four community librarians include Indigenous staff, racialized staff, and staff who speak languages other than English. This enables BPL to connect with people in more meaningful ways.
How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a> ? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.

1. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	The work of staff in the community includes helping community members get online, and providing access to resources. In 2021, BPL also lent WiFi hotspots, which was made possible through provincial digital funding. BPL staff also continue to offer train-the-trainer sessions for community providers who wish to deliver services online.
2. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	BPL's community work involved extensive staff training in community-led work. BPL used the expertise of two of our staff who teach Community-Led Libraries at the UBC iSchool to deliver a 13-week Community Development Institute for community, children's and teen librarians. Adult public service librarians also received a modified version of this training.
3. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	BPL staff provided information on COVID in places like food banks, including health information, information on government benefits and services, and help with accessing and printing vaccination cards.
4. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	
<b>What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for examples of how to write short, medium, and long-term outcomes.</b>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community members have increased access to resources such as computers and WiFi hotspots, and expert staff help, outside of regular library branches and in places they already frequent. One patron who borrowed a WiFi hotspot told the librarian, “I can’t believe that the library is giving me the Internet!”</li> <li>• Community members receive more service in languages other than English, and the library is able to develop services and programs that better meet the needs of Burnaby’s diverse community</li> <li>• Through relationships built with community members, BPL staff are able to identify and remove barriers to library service, in particular removing deadnames from records and including patron’s Indigenous names on library records</li> </ul>
<b>Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner’s role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?</b>
Multiple partnerships, including umbrella organizations like the Burnaby Primary Care Network, Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table and Burnaby Interagency Council. Partnerships with City departments, particularly IT and Planning, and with community groups such as Burnaby Neighbourhood House, MOSAIC, and the Society to End Homelessness in Burnaby

<b>Project/Program Name</b>
<b>Anti-Racism Climate Audit</b>
<b>Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.</b>
<p>In 2021, BPL engaged with consultants to conduct an anti-racism climate audit of our organization. This included interviews with individual staff, facilitated focus groups, and a survey. Through the work, staff shared experiences about racism at BPL and ideas about what we need to do to become an anti-racist organization.</p> <p>BPL also created a staff Anti-Racism working group, which is led by and comprised of non-supervisory frontline staff. This group acts as a learning hub for its members, who also take on projects such as training, resource sharing and facilitation.</p>
<b>How does this project/program support the library’s strategic goals and/or community?</b>
<p>The fourth goal in BPL’s Strategic Plan is Invigorate People and Culture. As part of this goal, the Library Board aims to support staff to reach their full potential. Through the Anti-Racism Climate Audit, staff told us that some staff who are Indigenous, Black or people of colour do not feel supported, and do not feel that BPL supports their needs equitably.</p> <p>While much of the work coming out of the anti-racism climate audit is internally-focused, there is work being done to build anti-racism into our daily work. This includes looking at how we resource and promote services and materials in languages other than English.</p>
<b>How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.’s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a>? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.</b>

1. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	
2. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	The anti-racism commitments that came from the audit include extensive training for BPL staff and trustees in anti-racism principles, debiasing the hiring process, and addressing incidents of racial harm.
3. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	
4. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	The anti-racism climate audit included participation from the Library Board, and robust discussions of board make-up. Conversations about the lack of racial diversity at the librarian level led the Board to change the terms of its <a href="#">Picard Trust Awards</a> given to library school students. The award is now restricted to students who identify as Indigenous, Black or a person of colour, and the award amount was increased to fund two awards of \$2500 each
<b>What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for examples of how to write short, medium, and long-term outcomes.</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff have a shared understanding of racism and anti-racism</li> <li>• Staff, in particular racialized staff, feel supported when incidents of racism happen</li> </ul>	
<b>Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?</b>	

n/a

<b>Project/Program Name</b>	
<b>Birding Backpacks</b>	
<b>Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.</b>	
In 2021, BPL launched Birding Backpacks. Through this project, library users can borrow a birding backpack that comes equipped with binoculars and guides to birds, plants and butterflies.	
<b>How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?</b>	
The second goal in BPL's Strategic Plan is Encourage Curiosity and Exploration. The Birding Backpack is part of BPL's Curiosity Collection and supports STEAM learning through observation of the natural world.	
<b>How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a>? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.</b>	
1. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	Burnaby residents use the backpacks to increase their knowledge of the natural world, and get access to equipment that they may not have at home. During a pandemic that made indoor interactions less desirable, the backpacks encouraged families to get outside and explore nature.
2. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	

<b>3. Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	
<b>4. Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	
<b>What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for examples of how to write short, medium, and long-term outcomes.</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patrons increase knowledge of STEAM learning through observation of the natural world</li> <li>• Patrons encouraged to explore outside during a time when inside gathering was restricted</li> </ul>	
<b>Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?</b>	
n/a	

### 3. KEY CHALLENGES

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

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

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

Challenge	Briefly describe how this challenge has impacted the library/community, and what steps the library took to address it in 2021. Please specify if any provincial funding was used, e.g., annual library funding, the technology grant, other non-PLB provincial grants (up to 250 words per topic).
COVID-19 (e.g., safety protocols, proof of vaccination)	COVID-19 has significantly impacted Burnaby, in particular the most marginalized citizens. As information moved quickly online, community members without access to technology and connectivity were left behind. The provincial digital grant enabled BPL to lend WiFi hotspots and laptops, and staff working in the community were able to share technology expertise. Safety protocols have increased expenses for staffing and supplies, such as plexiglass and cleaning.
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	BPL's response included opening cooling shelters in the extreme heat, and sharing information about warming centres and other services for citizens during extreme cold. BPL also relaxed COVID-related occupancy and time limits to make sure that vulnerable citizens were able to access safe indoor spaces.
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	
Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health and wellness)	The pandemic has had a significant impact on staff mental health, particularly for staff who work directly with the public. BPL has been participating in the Canadian Mental Health Association's Not Myself Today program, and frontline staff ambassadors are effective and accessible champions in eliminating the stigma around mental health and by building skills that support a safe, supportive and mentally healthy work culture.
Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	
Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)	
Aging/damaged facilities (e.g., need for repairs, renovations, upgrades/expansions)	



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)	According to figures from the Homeless Count and data from the Society to End Homelessness in Burnaby, there are many more unhoused people in Burnaby since the pandemic started. Services for homeless people have been reduced, and can be inaccessible to people relying on public transport. BPL librarians regularly visit places where homeless people gather, in particular food banks and pop-up resource centres.
Other (please specify)	

#### 4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

*Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.*



Library Director Signature:

Date: March 18, 2022

Board Chair Signature: Sarah Bartnik Date: March 18, 2022