

2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

LIBRARY NAME

Kaslo & District Public Library Association

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](#)
- ☐ [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 (up to 500 words).

According to the 2021 Census, the population of Kaslo & Area has increased by 200 residents for a total of 2,511. With a population increase that is higher than the BC average (8.7% compared to 7.6%), we could feel an increase in registrations and statistics confirm it. The Kaslo & District Public Library (KDPL) serves residents of the Village of Kaslo and 20 small communities of Central Kootenay Regional District Area D. While most of the population lives within a few kilometres of the library, our vast service area (5,786 sq. km) includes members who live over 50 km away.

It is important to note that the population of our service area is much higher in the summer months with non-resident property owners making up just over 30% of property owners in the region. Statistics dramatically illustrate that part-time residents enjoy library services in Kaslo. The Village of Kaslo, adjacent to beautiful Kootenay Lake and surrounded by mountains, is a popular recreation and vacation area with the majority of visits in summer. Visitors often use the library for reading, programs and access to WiFi.

2021 demographic information is not yet available. The main occupations in Kaslo according to the 2016 census data include: sales and service (23%); trades, transport & equipment operators (18%); management (18%); business finance and administration (11%); health (10%); and education (8%). Most residents are European or Asian descent and 5.3% of the population identifies as First Nations or Metis according to the 2018 Community Profile Report published by the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute. A challenge for Kaslo & Area D continues to be a lack of affordable housing and full time jobs for young families due to work that is often seasonal or part-time. The median age in Kaslo is 56 compared to 43 in BC. 30% of the population is at retirement age (65+) compared to 18% in the province contributing to a strong and skilled volunteer base. Volunteers have:

- Built and maintained the Kaslo River Trail (plus construction of 2 spectacular bridges)
- Restored the oldest intact passenger sternwheeler (S.S. Moyie c.1898),
- Sustained the Concert Society, Arena, Curling Club and Tennis Club,
- Resurrected the 1896 Langham Cultural Centre for art shows, entertainment, offices,
- Hosted May Days and Logger Sports for several decades

- Hosted the popular Kaslo Jazz, Etc. Summer Music Festival for over two decades, and
- Developed a community fund that grew to over \$1,000,000 in a decade.

The above list of volunteer accomplishments is far from complete. Our library also has a dedicated team of volunteers helping with day-to-day operations, governance, plus special projects. Some of our volunteers have donated their time for over a decade! In 2021, with ongoing pandemic restrictions, KDPL offered 82 programs delivered in a variety of safe ways including maker kits, Zoom programs, activities in the park, outdoor Storywalks, and a few small activities at the library. There were 960 participants in total and many 'thank you's' for the fun activities during COVID times.

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
Project 1: To examine volunteer management
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.
<p>KDPL has operated with a 'one staff + one volunteer per shift' model for well over a decade in order to spread staff out and maximize operating hours for the community. Volunteers have been and continue to be an important part of library services in Kaslo; we are fortunate to have generous people do a great deal of good work in our community. However, it was time to examine the volunteer program and volunteer management due to frequent vacant shifts and quality of service issues.</p> <p>Our library has had 2 permanent part-time staff and up to 20 volunteers. In late 2019, the project to examine volunteer management per the strategic plan started with a team meeting (staff and volunteers) to discuss vacant shifts and workplace safety. Approximately 26% of shifts needed to be filled each week and only half could be. This meant that staff worked alone about 30 open days per year posing a safety issue. It is important to work in pairs in case there is an emergency, injury, or unacceptable behaviour in our library.</p> <p>The combination of a large volunteer team, varied levels of computer literacy, short shifts (2 hours/week) and frequent time away also meant that keeping volunteers up to date with so many library services in an ever-changing tech environment was next to impossible. Two hours per week is not enough time to remember all the things you need to know at the front desk and embrace change. This meant more errors and quality of service issues. However, I applaud our volunteer team for ongoing dedication to library services within an impossible framework!</p> <p>Then in March 2020, the volunteer program was suspended since most fell in the vulnerable age group for the COVID-19 pandemic. This meant that staff worked together regularly for the first time in over a decade. Once layers of protection were in place, we reintroduced the program with only a few volunteers to keep our team/bubbles small for</p>

safety. This pause and gradual reintroduction of volunteers provided an ideal time to reflect, test, see positive outcomes, and plan for a shift in our service model going forward that continues the volunteer program in a sustainable way while improving quality of service and staff safety.

The new model runs the volunteer program at about 50% of what it was. Out of four open days, two operate under the 'one staff + one volunteer' model and the other two days have staff working together.

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

This project – to examine volunteer management - is part of Goal 4 of our 2019-2023 Strategic Plan to 'Further enhance the library as a workplace.' It supports our priorities for providing quality services in a healthy organization as well as our values of personal safety.

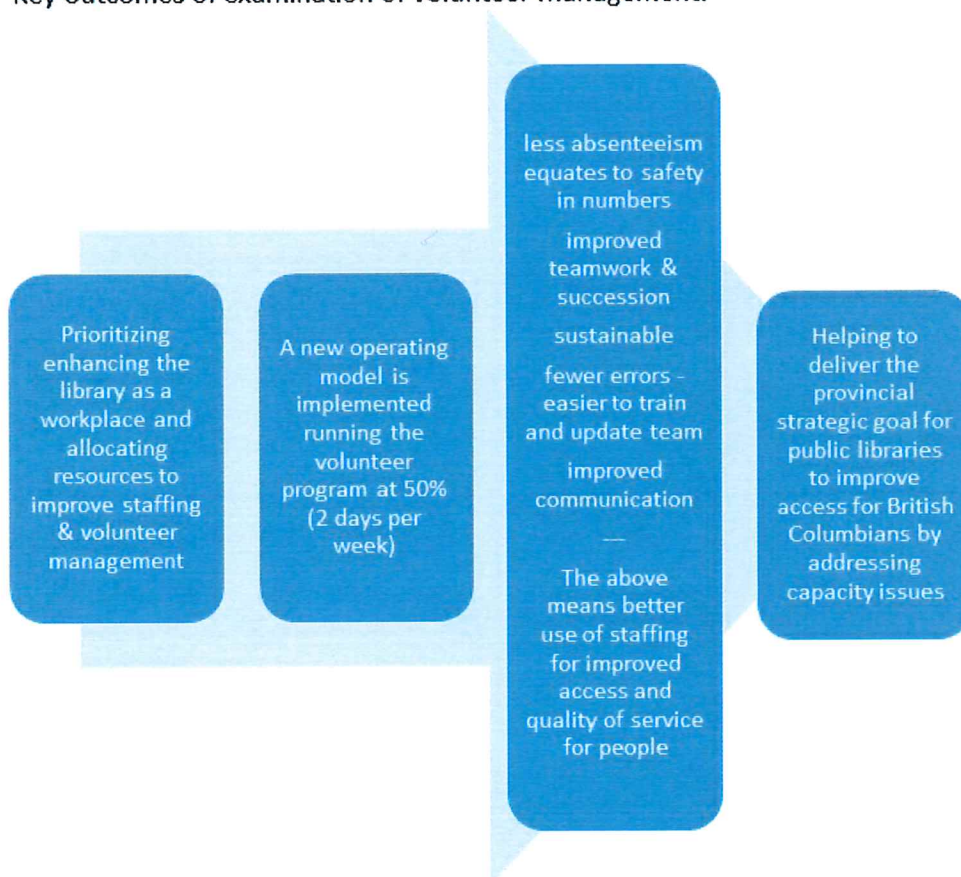
How does this project/program support the [B.C.'s strategic goal\(s\) for public library service](#)? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.

<p>1. Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)</p>	<p>Access to digital collections is improved by having more staff on site. We help people with tech needs on demand, but this can be challenging to do so effectively when there is only one staff on site. By increasing staff overlap from one hour a week to eleven, there is more time for us to spend with people who need assistance with digital collections or tech questions without the need to make appointments.</p>
<p>2. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)</p>	<p>With a smaller volunteer/staff team to manage and increased staff overlap time, we expect an improvement in capacity. It is much easier to keep track of and update a small group compared to a team of 20. It is also much easier to find out who is making a regular error and correct. We've already noticed that there are fewer errors to troubleshoot than before. This not only frees up staff time, but it translates to better quality of service for the community. With staff working together for two days each week, it is easier and faster to share information and training in person rather than having the extra work of writing emails or notes to communicate. With the schedule changes that have been implemented, work attendance has improved significantly making it possible for staff to attend professional development webinars more often. Before this scheduling change, the director spent a lot of time trying to fill shifts. Both the director and staff spent a lot of time solving mysterious problems (errors on the ILS) and writing communications to each other regarding programs, grants, problems and more. While the new model that has been implemented still has some issues to work out, it has automatically increased capacity by eliminating some daily duties & problems.</p>

3. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	Similar answer to improving access: By increasing staff overlap from one hour a week to eleven, there is more time for staff to spend with people who need assistance with government forms/services/resources without the need to make an appointment. On demand services are improved.
4. Enhancing Governance of the library system	na
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.	

1. Less absenteeism –
2. Errors reduced
3. Services improved
4. Staff relationship improved
5. Succession may be easier with smaller team

Key outcomes of examination of volunteer management:



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

na

[Copy and insert additional tables below for each additional project/program as needed]

Project/Program Name

Project 2: New Library Project: Building for the next 100 years

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

After 40 years, our library has outgrown the basement of City Hall. There are no other ways to expand or improve the space and some opportunities for services and programs for the community have been lost as a result. With no designated program space, programs are limited to after hours. Out of 10 similar-sized communities, the Kaslo library is the smallest when adjusted for population.

Naturally, the collection is also undersized compared to similar communities. Even so, the circulation per capita at KDPL is higher than the provincial average! We live in a community of readers! The KDPL Board has been seeking solutions and has teamed up with the Village of Kaslo and community members to build a new facility. Fundraising started in September 2020.

A new purpose-built library will contribute directly to six of the Village of Kaslo's community-wide goals:

- Continued development of cultural, social and educational opportunities,
- Investment in public infrastructure,
- Restoration and growth of community capacities in health and well-being,
- An innovative community that supports diverse economic development,
- An engaged public, and
- Continued development and improvement of amenities.

Kaslo has a large active library membership. Our community loves to read and enjoys programs and services. Community support for this project has been demonstrated via 374 expressions of interest (September 2020), almost \$500,000 in financial support, and enthusiastic comments ('when do you break ground,' 'I'm excited about the new library,' 'when will it be ready'...to list a few).

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

The New Library Project includes all the steps required to achieve the second goal of our 2019-2023 Strategic Plan to 'Move into a new facility'. Three committees are working towards this goal including the:

Planning Committee: developing vision, design, budget, and pursuing grants,

Fundraising Committee: planning fundraising events and handling communications, and the

Kaslo Library Building Committee: a joint committee with representatives from the library board and the Village of Kaslo to review, provide advice, and make recommendations to Council and the Library Board on:

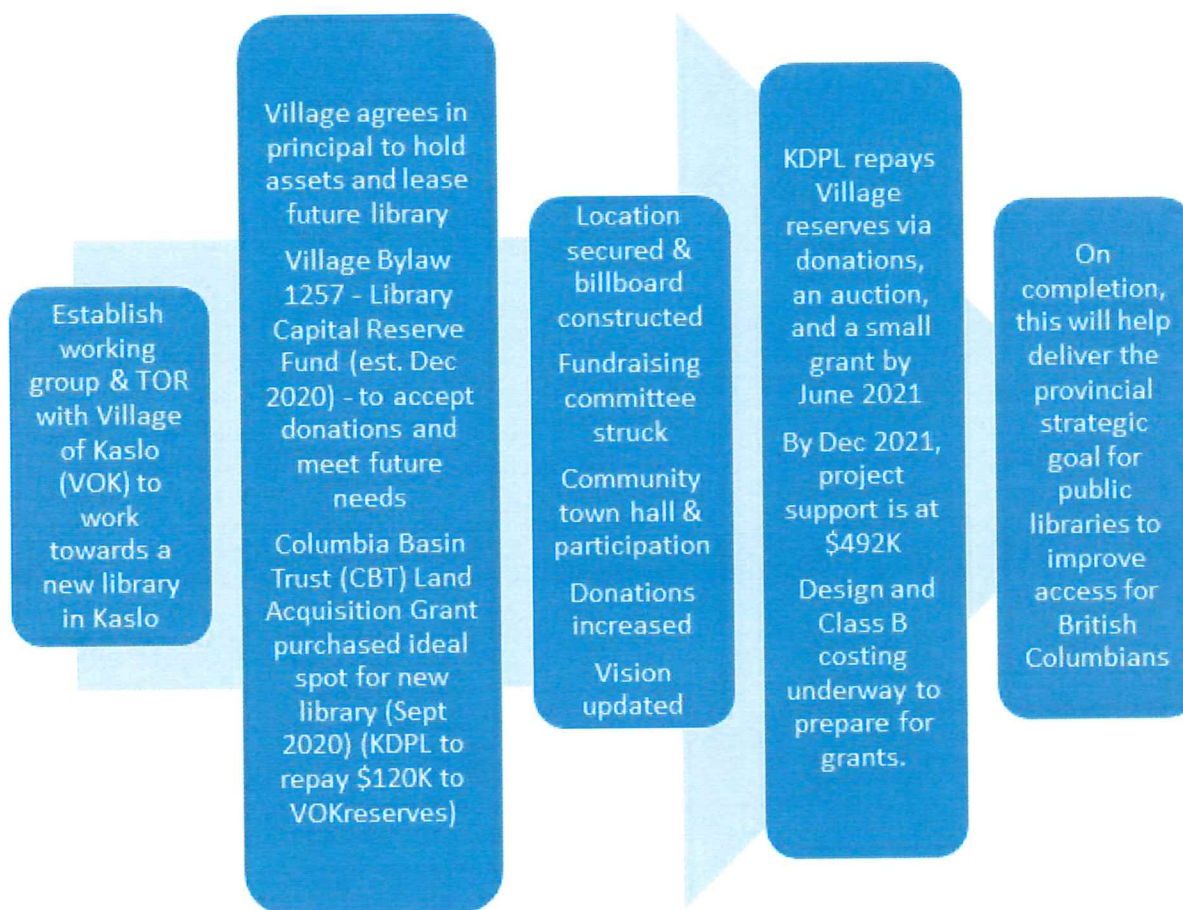
- Developing terms of reference for the Village and Library to work together on the project, including an ownership model and operating framework.
- Land acquisition, site planning and design.
- Identifying grant, partnership, and fundraising opportunities.
- Communication.
- Public consultation.
- Financial planning, asset management and long-term sustainability of the project.

How does this project/program support the [B.C.'s strategic goal\(s\) for public library service](#)? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.

<p>5. Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)</p>	<p>We are planning for a fully accessible facility with a better set up for technology including public workstations, a variety of seating for use of personal devices and Wi-Fi, charging stations, and high tech programming spaces including a large program room and a meeting room that will be available to other organizations even after hours. The confirmed downtown location already improves accessibility! This project is all about improving access to resources and technology for all.</p>
<p>6. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)</p>	<p>We are also planning for building capacity. We know, from looking at the statistics of other new builds or expansion of libraries in the Kootenays (Invermere, Radium, Trail, and Salmo), to expect a 24-29% increase in visits and service demand. We have been in communication with local government to discuss rough estimates for increased operating costs for rent, janitorial, cleaning supplies, staffing, insurance, and tech assistance.</p>
<p>7. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)</p>	<p>By upgrading the facility (accessibility, better location, increased staff, program & meeting rooms, and open service areas with easy access to technology & assistance), it is our intention to advance citizen engagement. Our community is made up of active and engaged life-long learners. An upgraded facility will better support this this engagement with current shared resources and also help those who need assistance with government services and programs.</p>
<p>8. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)</p>	<p>na</p>

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.

Key outcomes of New Library Project (to date - ongoing)



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

This project includes several partnerships and will include more as we proceed. Establishing a partnership with the Village of Kaslo (VOK) was the most important first step to begin and continue this project since Public Library Associations are not allowed to own land or buildings under current legislation. We have the support of Mayor Hewat, Village Councillors, and CAO Dunlop that has helped to launch this project and provide administrative support. This has led to the establishment of Village Bylaw 1257 Library Capital Reserve Fund to protect community donations towards a new library during fundraising and to holding funds for renovations years later. The Village also applied for a Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) Land Acquisition Grant to secure the ideal location on the main street for the new library. CBT covered 60% of the cost and Village reserves covered the remaining \$120,000 with an agreement that KDPL would fundraise to

repay those reserves. The land was purchased – with the Village as owner – in September 2020. These crucial first steps generated enthusiasm and kick-started fundraising. We were able to repay Village reserves in full by June 2021 thanks to donations, an online auction, and a small grant from the Community Fund of North Kootenay Lake.

Community members, including our Mayor who has stepped up to join KDPL Fundraising and Planning Committees are also partners.

Our fundraising committee has held 5 (Covid-safe) events in 2021 to help raise over \$33K and encourage donations and constructed a billboard on the future site to generate enthusiasm and communicate progress. With COVID restrictions lifting, more event options will be available. Partnerships for some fundraising events include: Kootenay Savings, Fortis BC, Fresh Air Cinema, and Kaslo & District Community Forest.

Our planning committee launched a request for proposals on BCBid and hired Carscadden Stokes and McDonald Architects to further our concept design with more detailed plans and more precise cost estimates (class B). Our main goals are to keep the project affordable for our community and include as much energy efficiency as possible—for example a ‘green’ build that is net-zero carbon or net-zero carbon ready. This supports Kaslo’s adoption of the West Kootenay 100% Renewable Energy Plan as well as the Provincial and Federal Government direction for new infrastructure. Note: Columbia Basin Trust provided some funding for the development of a concept plan in late 2020.

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)	Operations are still returning to a new normal after many adjustments for COVID-19 safety. The key challenge was the added stress to ‘police’ or confront community members regarding mask mandates while the community was becoming increasingly divided with groups forming to

	<p>protest over provincial mandates & freedom. This made customer service difficult (ie maintaining mental health). Fortunately, most of the community followed protocols and stepped up to care for each other. Provincial funding was used for operations, resource sharing including interlibrary loans, interlibrary connect and BC OneCard, and for library programs during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	<p>Provincial Funding has remained stagnant for over a decade, which means that the grants supporting resource sharing & operations have not increased with increased staffing costs and increased postage/supplies over time. We applaud the March 14, 2022 BC Government announcement, "Minimum wage increases tied to inflation to support workers & families." This is an appropriate way to manage budgets & wages. We ask the Province to do the same for public libraries by reinstating the funding for public libraries as a budget line item that also includes inflationary rate increases. This will go a long way to making life more affordable in a StrongerBC.</p>
Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health and wellness)	
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)	<p>Also noted in project 2 of this report. Our library operates from the basement of a National Historic Site that is 124 years old. While renovations have taken place (new wiring, geothermal heat, sprinkler</p>

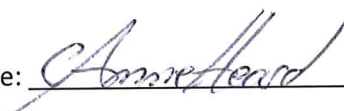
	system, accessible entry, and radon mediation), there are no longer any options left to expand or improve our very small 1,900 sf library. With no dedicated program or meeting space, some technology and other opportunities have been lost for the community. The facility has had water enter through three walls over the years. In 2016, an insurance claim had to be made after the library flooded due to heavy rains.
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)	
Other (please specify)	

4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.

Library Director Signature: 

Date: MAR 18, 2022

Board Chair Signature: 

Date: MARCH 18 2022