



LIBRARIES BRANCH:  
2020 PROVINCIAL LIBRARY GRANTS REPORT

# Chetwynd Public Library

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## INTRODUCTION

### What makes your library a community hub

The Chetwynd Public Library is known as the ‘community hub’ because of the large number and wide variety of services it provides to the citizens of the District of Chetwynd and surrounding area. We have become the gathering space for community connections and resources which enhance our regular library services. Patrons come to the library for a large variety of reasons such as:

- Attending library programs, workshops, meetings, or courses in our community room.
- Borrowing books, other resource materials, or items from our “Library of Things”.
- Checking blood pressure on our machine.
- Contributing to, or borrowing from our “Seed Library”.
- Learning about our current resident pets (we have two geckos and an axolotl).
- Printing resumes, immigration forms, employment packages, certificates, and other important documents. Along with faxing and/or scanning to email.
- Reading current newspapers and magazines.
- Receiving a safe, comfortable and welcoming space to work, study, visit, or read in.
- Relaxing, visiting, and enjoying a coffee, breakfast, or lunch from the Library’s Bistro.
- Selecting materials or community information from the resource corner.
- Using the computers for a variety of reasons including internet research.
- Watching their children play and learn in a safe and welcoming environment.

With all the services and activities available at the library and with our extremely friendly and welcoming staff, we have become the community’s living room. At times patrons come into the library just to have that sense of belonging and being connected to other community members. Our library collaborates with many community groups, which connects and strengthens our community. After March 18<sup>th</sup>, our library searched for creative ways to connect and engage our community outside the walls of the library.

### Demographics of our community

Chetwynd is located in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains in northeastern British Columbia. It is the first town eastbound that travellers encounter after emerging from the Rockies along Highway 97 and acts as the gateway to the Peace River area. The 64-square-kilometre municipality consists of the town, a community forest, and four exclave properties. Nearby there are four provincial parks, two lakes, and several recreational trails; being surrounded by these trails Chetwynd is known for hiking, hunting, fishing and winter sports – perfect for outdoor enthusiasts. Uniquely beautiful chainsaw carved statues can be found throughout the town site, which is renowned for its annual international chainsaw carving competition. Chetwynd is among the younger communities in the province of British Columbia. In 1962 Chetwynd became incorporated as a Village. The population of the District of Chetwynd is

estimated to be 2503 as of the 2016 census data. This does not include the Regional District unincorporated areas of Saulteau First Nations, West Moberly First Nations, East Pine, Hasler Flats, Lone Prairie, and Jackfish. The combined population is now estimated to be closer to 7000. It is home to a Northern Lights College campus. The primary Industries in Chetwynd are forestry, oil, gas, mining, ranching, and tourism. Even though our community has dealt with the closures due to COVID-19, there has still been a steady flow-through of industrial traffic with the pipelines, installation of new windmills and the building of the Site C hydro dam.

### **Any industries that are present and influence your area**

Chetwynd is an industrial based town:

- two large sawmills
- a pellet plant
- three active local coal mining operations
- oil and gas exploration and processing plants
- various wind power sights
- hydro power at a nearby community and the construction of Site-C Dam (approximately 100 km away)

Although all of these industries provide employment to many local residents, we have seen an increase in temporary short-term workers. Due to the influx of these workers, rental property is hard to come by and/or costly; therefore many companies have opened up camps to house their workers. Throughout COVID-19, many of these workers were grateful to access the library when it reopened with limited services, so they could complete their mandatory online orientations and pre-employment courses as well as sign lease agreements for temporary housing. At this time, because of the many industries that are up and running, our community is in a boom. With the social distancing and self-isolation measures that are in place due to COVID-19, some of the locals were a bit nervous with so many transit workers in the community; however, these fears were put to rest with all the companies putting in strict guidelines to ensure everyone's safety. Even though we are a heavily industrialized community, outdoor recreational activities are super important to our regular and long-term residents. We have many rivers, lakes, and large green space areas that deliver a huge variety of both summer and winter recreational activities.

### **Some challenges that your library and community face**

- Chetwynd is located in the heart of a resource-based area and we feel the effects from the highs and lows of the oil, gas, coal, wind power, hydropower, and forest industries. The housing market has been a real challenge for newcomers due to the constant changes in these industries. It can be extremely challenging for new residents, low income families, or young people just starting out to find affordable housing. With the large number of transient workers in town, the hotels and rental property's are often at maximum occupancy limits and there is

nothing left for residents to rent. The restaurants also benefit from the large number of workers; however, this influx of business is not maintainable.

- Since we are a small town and do not have the amenities that larger centres have it has been difficult attracting professionals such as doctors and nurses. Therefore, the library does its part in providing services that make the town more attractive to new comers. We want to welcome newcomers and show them that Chetwynd is a warm and friendly place to live.
- Similar to all communities in BC, Chetwynd has an aging population and as the community hub, our library takes pride in offering services and events to enhance the lives of our seniors and elders.
- We have currently outgrown our library space and our building is very old with many outdated and structural issues. Although we were unsuccessful in our grant application for funding to build a new library it is very evident that our current location will not suit our needs in the near future and we need to look towards other opportunities to ensure a new library is built.
- It was great to work with the COOP this year and we are grateful for the technology grant we received from the province. We used the additional funds to increase our internet speed and access as much as we could; however, without the fibre optic lines and infrastructure our speed time lags quite a bit behind the majority of other locations within the province. Digital access is still a struggle for many residents in the outlying areas. Many areas still do not have cell phone or internet service and those who do have services pay prohibitive fees.
- There is no public transportation in the town other than a one-car taxi company and the long and cold winters make it difficult for some to get out.

### **Strategic Plan what your goals are and where you are in the process of achieving those goals.**

We have completed year four of our strategic plan. With a dedicated and responsive library team, the Chetwynd Public Library strives to deliver excellent customer service. Our team is personable, knowledgeable, and helpful in accessing services, and are committed to continuous improvement.

#### **Mission**

We will nurture the social, cultural, and economic success of our community by engaging the community in a spirit of reading, learning, and discovery.

## Vision

To empower and inspire a creative and literate community.

## Government Priorities, Goals, Programs and Services, Partnerships

### STRATEGY 1 – Improving Access for British Columbians

Supporting a connected library network that leverages its strengths and structure to deliver user-centred programs and services through the province.

There is more detail on Improving Access for British Columbians under our Technology Grant Final Report.

Although we are aware that computer services are an essential service for our community; we never realized how much so until COVID-19 hit.

As soon as we closed our library in March, we made sure our Wi-Fi signal was expanded as much as possible and ensured patrons could access it 24/7. We put signs up on all our library windows with the free Wi-Fi password and directions to what exterior locations around the building had the strongest signals. Even though our internet is extremely slow, there was always a vehicle or two parked outside the building access our free Wi-Fi. Along with the free Wi-Fi password, we put up posters with information about all the free digital resources. It was a bit confusing, trying to figure out what additional digital resources became available through the COOP, but we managed to share as many of the additional free resources to our patrons that we could find.

It was not until we had patrons back in our library that we were able to receive some constructive feedback about the digital resources offered. The free GALE courses were a success, once we figured out how to allow participants to print their certificates of completion, but there were not many positive things said about the digital resources. Many, especially our senior population, would come into the library to receive assistance on how to use their personal tables or devices and how to access our digital resources. We received feedback from frustrated library patrons on how long the wait time was when downloading e-books or audiobooks. Some titles would not even come available due to the lengthy wait times.

During a meeting with our federation manager, I inquired about Overdrive and Libby, which resulted in our federation starting its own Advantage Collection in hopes of eliminating, or at the very least decreasing, the wait times for downloadable books. Due to the industry in our northern communities and the amount of long haul drivers, the audio books are quite popular in our area.

The patrons expressed so much gratitude when they were finally able to book a time on the computers through our gradually phased in reopening. The staff were equally grateful to have patrons back in the building. Once people were able to come back into the library they expressed to us how much nicer it was for them to do their job orientations on a computer opposed to using their phones and “hoping for the best”. They were grateful to have our assistance, and to be able to print their certifications of completion. With the closure of so many countries, we had a few dual citizenship residents reapplying for citizenship from their home countries. They needed to access government sites, scan and email documents to make application if they thought they might one day want to return and reside in their home countries. This was an extremely invaluable service to provide for them.

We currently have our portable 3D printer on loan to the schools, which they very much appreciate. Other than using our in-house 3D printer to print the medallions for Chetwynd’s First Virtual Run, it has received minimal use this past year. It is typically a hit with our school visits, and has been used for a wide variety of projects. From creating visor clips, and coding boxes, to making a glow-in-the-dark sea turtle with a stain glass shell that was entered into a 3-D contest. We did reach out to Northern Health after hearing about the mask straps created with the 3-D printer; however, there was no interest for them in our area. What the local Primary Care Clinic did recommend was for the library staff to assist patrons with the Telus Babylon app/process, which the staff gladly did.

Needless to say, we could not offer the digital services we do without the support of the BC Libraries Cooperative and our IT firm ESW IT North. The consortium pricing through the North East Library Federation enables us to subscribe to collections that may otherwise be cost prohibitive. And, of course thank you to the Province for the Technologies Grant!

## STRATEGY 2 – Building Capacity

To support the delivery of quality programs and services that people depend on, we will work with the library community to guide our investment in training and professional development opportunities.

Our library staff usually has a program-planning meeting in June where we plan events for the upcoming year. Due to COVID-19, it has been a year of planning, prepping, changing, modifying, and delivering. We spent a considerable amount of time coming up with ways we could creatively, and safely, engage the community during the COVID-19 closure. We purchased a Zoom membership right away in order for the staff to stay connected and work together from their homes. I will always be grateful for the confidence given to me by the board and my staff during this unusual time. COVID-19 restrictions connected my staff in a way we never thought we would be. (More on this under the training section.)

## PROGRAMMING:

- January we continued with our regular in-house preschool and children's programming. We are very proud of our AlphaBITES program, where we offer a healthy snack or meal to all our program participants. I cannot express enough, how amazing it feels to be part of program that educates both caregiver and child on the importance of nourishing a child's growing body and all the incredible benefits of establishing healthy eating habits.
- Before COVID-19 restrictions, we regularly visited all the local daycares, preschools, and elementary schools including the schools and childcare facilities at the two First Nations Communities. During the visits, we exchanged library books, conducted a story time, and did a small craft with the children. When COVID-19 hit we reached out to let them know that we would help them in any way we could. We took the library's tablets to schools that needed them for the students as they were working online.
- Two or three times a months at various locations around our community, the library facilitates activities for our Elders and seniors through our Young@Heart program. The programs are designed to help keep our Elders and seniors active, cognitive, healthy, and engaged in the community through various topics and activities. During the COVID-19 lockdown, this was perhaps the most challenging group to reach and provide services to, as they are in the high risk and vulnerable population. We did manage to succeed at Christmas, which is explained in more detail under events.
- With the initial COVID-19 closure, staff compiled what they needed to work from home and quickly made the shift from in person service to virtual service by posting and monitoring social media and updating it regularly as well as compiling links of activities for our patrons of all ages to do.
- We worked hard to come up with ideas that were fun, engaging, and encouraged social distancing. It was a challenge, and ideas had to be critiqued and modified a few times. In our staff discussions, we pointed out that isolation is the second biggest fear to humankind, the first fear being death. So needless to say, we did what we could to try to reach out to our community in any way possible in hopes to relieve the feeling of isolation for them. We continued to run programming virtually including Wellness Wednesdays program, which we thought, was extremely important during this time. We also started doing an online story time and Sunday morning craft program.

- We have a Resource Corner Coordinator that networks with local businesses and puts together “Welcome to Chetwynd” packages for new residents. Our Resource Corner Coordinator ensured she stayed connected with the local businesses, and reached out to the public in a variety of ways when COVID-19 hit. Through phone calls and the internet, she ran programs such as let the resource corner do the research for you, stump the resource corner, spot the bears and hearts, what are you doing to keep busy/active at this time? She also worked with the District of Chetwynd to put out a summary of a community support and outreach contacts.
- Looking for ways to connect with our community, we asked if we could set up our library tent at the local Farmers Market. We gave away free books, that were donated to the library from a bookstore that closed. We handed out programming kits, so participants would have all the supplies they would need to participate along with our virtual programming. This included books, craft supplies, activity suggestions, and healthy snacks. We promoted the seed library by handing out garden kits and having a portable seed library at the market.
- We moved our summer reading to a zoom platform and continued to offer a preschool zoom program into the fall and winter. It was a bit of a challenge with our AlphaBITES program to include a healthy snack with the kits. We had to order in some healthy snack options that our local grocery stores were unable to supply us with.
- Luckily, we were able to host a couple of park dates that were appreciated by the caregivers. Due to the popularity and need our community showed for caregivers to connect we started a caregiver make & take night to promote literacy and as an opportunity for caregivers to connect via zoom in a kid free event. Those that participated said that it was so needed and appreciated!
- We implemented a storybook walk in Chetwynd. We switched out the story on a regular basis to keep the walk refreshed and to encourage people to get out more often and read the story before it changed. The storybook walk starts at the library and trails along the paved boulevard ending at Carvers Row where the latest chainsaw carvings are on display. The route accommodates caregivers pushing strollers and small children on bikes.
- Our library organizes and runs a Community Kitchen, which we usually run out of the local high school. Because the schools are closed to outside guests, we had to look for a new location. The Moberly Lake Community Hall was identified as a great location with its additional ovens and kitchen space. We worked with our regional district, the owners of the hall, to ensure we had all the COVID-19 safety plans in place, both for the presenter



and participants. Unfortunately, we only ran two kitchens before we had to close the program down in November. We are currently running a virtual kitchen until we are able to open up again, or perhaps run both.

- We have been working with the Tansi Friendship Centre and their Youth Coordinator to deliver group activities, when and how we can during this time. It has been sporadic but we have managed to deliver a couple of programs. One program was a pizza party and at another we purchased and distributed some “Unworry” books which we felt were completely suitable due to everyone living through a pandemic.
- During the latter part of the year, our library was all about “take-out kits”. We put together sensory kits, zoom preschools kits, family literacy kits, gardening kits, craft kits, and seasonal kits. We tried to come up with as many fun, engaging, active, literacy kits we could think of. The kits were picked up at the library and taken home for families to use, either on their own or through one of our virtual platforms.
- Our patrons sure missed their book clubs; it would have been nice to do more for them during the closures; however, they are pretty happy that book clubs are back up and running again.

The Chetwynd Public Library has been exploring opportunities to expand library spaces to respond to community needs, including outreach services. An Advisory Committee was formed; consisting of the Library Director, Library Board of Trustees, District of Chetwynd, and Peace River Regional District; to work together towards the building of a new library. The Advisory Committee submitted a proposal in the hopes of obtaining a grant for the building. The committee had hoped to announce the building of a new structure at the end of September 2019. They were not notified until the beginning of 2020 that they were not successful in the grant application. With COVID-19 taking place in March the committee was stagnate throughout the remainder of the year. During December the committee came back together virtually to discuss what new approach and/or direction they would like to take towards the goal of a new library. They are hopeful that 2021 will produce action towards achieving this goal.

### STRATEGY 3 – Advanced Citizen Engagement

Engaging citizens – listening to British Columbians and raising awareness – improves public service and makes people’s lives better as they benefit from government programs and resources.

The library hosts or facilitates a number of events throughout the year. Right before COVID-19 hit we were getting ready for our Baby Welcoming party, Friday Family February Flashlight nights, Children’s Art Gala, and Bursting with Brilliance.

When COVID-19 hit we had to think outside of the box and come up with some pretty creative ideas on how to engage our community in a spirit of reading, learning, and discovery.

Every year our library does something to promote physical literacy. We have some great and wonderful organizations in our community that host large active events such as: West Moberly First Nations, West Moberly Days; Sauteau First Nations, Pemican Days; The Chetwynd & District Rec Centre, CCC ½ Marathon; Peace Christian School, the Adventure Race; and Northern Health, with a variety of walks to bring forward awareness for various alignments. To avoid any conflict of activities we reached out to them and then met up via Zoom to come up with the idea of **Chetwynd's First Virtual Run**.

The Chetwynd & District Rec Centre was in the process of starting up a virtual learn-to-run program when we contacted them. This sparked a few more ideas and the library partnered up with the Tansi Friendship Centre to host a shoe drive. With the library closed at the time, the public could drop off new and lightly used runners at the Tansi Friendship centre. Special quarantine bins were set-up and COVID-19 safety plans put into place for people to pick-up the shoes. This gave participants the equipment needed to participate in the Virtual Run scheduled for August.

When the partnership came together, we launched it with a virtual bottle toss video.

<https://www.facebook.com/46190008040/videos/249131672974448>

A different group would put together a short video clip that was posted on our Chetwynd Public Library Facebook page and Chetwynd Resource Corner at the Chetwynd Public Library Facebook page weekly. The videos showed a variety of ways to get out and be active and encouraged our community members to get out and do the same.

Unified community groups working together for the health and wellbeing of our community in the middle of a pandemic is something we strived for. **I encourage you to view the final video produced by our local TV station CHET TV:**

**With the message "Strong Libraries, Strong Communities" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJda1l6p-Q>**

This event gave the library an opportunity to create a lasting memory for our community by working with with Northern Health, Sauteau First Nations, West Moberly First Nations, Tansi Friendship Centre, Chetwynd & District Rec Centre, Chetwynd Visitor Centre, and Peace Christian School.

The library put together the race packs which included a finishers medal made with our 3D printer and the kits were handed out by the library staff at the Farmers Market or through our library take out service.

Setting up our library tent at the local Farmers Market this past year, gave us the opportunity to be visible in our community and offer resources however we could. The president of the Farmers Market was thankful for our participation and said, ***“The library added a fun community feel to the market this year”***. I am not sure if the library would have ever considered participating at the Farmers Market pre-COVID; however, after last season I think it will be a regular occurrence to see the library tent set-up amongst the others. We formed yet another partnership, this one with the Chetwynd Arts Council to hand out Art Kits at the Farmers Market.

We utilized our time and space at the Farmers Market to celebrate Multiculturalism Day. It turned out to be an excellent way to promote our communities many diverse cultural backgrounds and our Filipino community made a wonderful appearance. They too are now regular vendors at the Farmers Market

Being a part of the Farmers’ Market allowed us to continue to connect with our community by: notifying the public of the literacy programs we had running and how to access them, as well as advised participants on how to access the kits so that they would have all the materials needed to participate in the programs. We received many thanks such as this heartfelt one from one of the parents:

***“THANK YOU for a wonderful summer program. The challenges you faced to produce the program were crazy and you were able to handle it so well. Not only that, the kids truly enjoyed the zoom times and looked forward to it every week (and were mad at me when I forgot☺) The supplies you provided were more than I expected and I am sure, meant the world to every kid who participated, not just mine. So, from the bottom of my heart, thank you for being you!”***

With the help of our EMS workers, we were able to hold a fun little summer reading club wrap-up party. To many of the children it was so exciting to see their program leaders “live.” The program leaders enjoyed the opportunity to spend a bit of socially distanced fun time with the children with a variety of fun and safe activities. The children eagerly waited for our EMS vehicles to make an appearance and have a quick photo taken before the season wrapped up. Not our typical wrap-up party, but during a pandemic we will take what we can get!

This year the Chetwynd Public Library assisted Stan Fraser in his Walk and Talk the Peace. He walked from Fort Nelson, BC to Chetwynd, BC to bring awareness to mental health. The library helped by being a drop off and pick up place for the t-shirts and donations, advertised on social media, and helped with the logo design. This was his third walk and the Chetwynd Public Library was honoured to be a part of it again. The Walk also gave us another opportunity to network with Saulteau First Nations, West Moberly First Nations, Tansi Friendship Centre, as well as the Moccasin Flats Society,

Chetwynd RCMP, Chetwynd Fire Department, Chetwynd Ambulance Service, District of Chetwynd, and health care and fitness workers.

For **Halloween**, we managed to pull off a mini Halloween walk-through trick'r treat at the library. Fortunately it was warm enough that we were able to leave all doors open (no touchable surfaces) so children along with their caregivers could enter the library to trick'r treat at the bistro, continue around our circulation desk to receive a craft kit bag and a Halloween book as they exited.

We were able to host our **8<sup>th</sup> Annual Gingerbread House Competition** in partnership with our library bistro. I think this added a much-needed Christmas spirit for our community. Our gingerbread house judges and library patrons that entered the building got to see the festive sight and enjoy the amazing gingerbread aroma! This is an event that we almost took for granted; however, this year we had a whole new appreciation for it.

Every year the library hosts an annual Christmas Turkey dinner for our Elders/Seniors through our Young@Heart program. Due to COVID-19, we were unable to offer this amazing event. Many of our Elders/Seniors look forward to the opportunity to see each other, visit, reminisce, connect, share a delicious meal, and most importantly to be together over the holidays. Knowing this time is so incredibly important to our senior population we brainstormed ideas of what we could do under the circumstances and within the perimeters of the COVID-19 guidelines. We wanted to let them know they are loved, thought of, and not alone. Our first idea was to contact our local TV station and have them produce a video of the Elders/Seniors wishing each other a Merry Christmas. We would also have had them video families caroling to add that extra bit of heartfelt seasonal spark. Once the restrictions tightened and limited the number of people that could be together, we had to cancel this and quickly come up with another plan to celebrate our Elders/Seniors and let them know they were thought of and not alone this Christmas. With a strong goal in mind and determination to deliver, we came up with the **Elder/Senior Christmas Pen Pals**. The library staff put a call out to have Elders/Seniors nominated to receive a special Christmas card. We ended up receiving 242 name on the list along with a little personalized note about them: hobby, occupation, things they liked to do. The library took the Christmas cards and list of names with the little write-ups to the students at local elementary schools. A couple of our funders caught wind of what we were doing and donated gift cards so each holiday card contained two gift cards, one for \$20 and the other for \$25. Through the help of a wonderful board member, the cards were all mailed out. The library received so many heartfelt thank you's (which are still coming in as I type this report) of how much the Elders/Seniors appreciated the holiday cards, especially the personal touch from the students.

## STRATEGY 4 – Enhancing Governance

We are providing strategic direction at the provincial level and will continue to support governance education.

I cannot say enough about how much I have enjoyed and how grateful I am for all the Zoom outreach calls/meetings from ABCPLD, NELF, BCLTA, CALP, and DECODA. It is truly amazing how COVID-19 has brought us all together, especially the networking between the directors through the ABCPLD zoom meetings. I think that the continuation of these meeting will only strengthen the library world and the services we provide, as we are now united and stronger than ever.

While the Chetwynd Public Library staff were working from home, we took advantage of the time and registered for the online course – *Evaluating, Auditing, and Diversifying Your Collections*. We worked together on this online course, which was really great and interesting. It made us analyze our library on a few different levels such as: the community in which we serve, getting to know the cultures in our community, assessing gaps, having an inclusive and accessible collection, doing a divers audit, understanding own voice authors, and how times are changing in the publishing world. We learnt about our community, (we are over 50% Indigenous, followed by Asian, then Caucasian) but this also gave us an opportunity to learn more about each other by identifying our own ancestral backgrounds, comfort, beliefs, etc. It was not only a benefit to analyzing our community so we can better serve our patrons, but a surprisingly a wonderful teambuilding opportunity that helped us to know and respect each other on a whole new level. The whole experience brought us all closer together.

I took advantage of the BCLTA online workshops and thought they were wonderful! Babs as always is so welcoming and a breath of fresh air in any workshop she facilitates. Wonderful energy and I love how she supports both board and library directors; she is great! I participated in the *Governance of a Library the Big Picture, So you think you need a new library now what?*, and *Moving from a PLA to a Municipal Library*. All zoom workshops were interactive and had some really great takeaways. With a couple of Library Board Trustee resignations and terms coming to an end I am sure BCLTA and the online workshops will be a great resource for my board as we approach the transition of new library board members.

The Assistant Library Director and I took an Indigenous Cultural Safety Training workshop put on by DECODA. We work, live, play and are related to many people that reside on the two First Nations Reservations in our area. Not all the points made in this workshop were shared; however, overall it was a great learning opportunity and an opportunity to connect and share stories with others around the province. Wanting to connect on a greater level with our local First Nations Communities this course gave us some great takeaways. We know about Treaty 8, but we will be reaching out to get

more details, map, land acknowledgement, logos, etc. We gained more of an understanding in using the phrase “who am I in relation to”. It was reassuring, as we have been learning more about our native culture and traditions. We take pride in displaying native art, hand crafted by a local bead maker in the library. Our goal is to add more local culture into the library. There was a Ted Talk presented by Nikki Sanchez and I think many of us resonated with what she said, *“This history is not our fault, but it is our responsibility to work collaboratively to heal and move forward”*.

## COVID-19 AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES

### Chetwynd Public Library Timeline of events due to COVID-19

- March 17<sup>th</sup> – Closed the library to the public as of 8 pm
- March 18<sup>th</sup> – Staff gathered supplies so they could work from home
- March 19<sup>th</sup> – Worked with our IT person to set-up remote desktops so staff could access them while working from home.
- March 20<sup>th</sup> – Subscribed to zoom and started a group email to ensure all staff were connected. This started our communication and networking world via zoom.

While our library was closed indefinitely due to COVID-19 my staff and board were dealing with the results of a failing building. We had a large homemade fish tank in our library and due to years of power outages and the fish tank overflowing and flooding black mold had formed throughout the wooden base of the tank. Also, due to the age and faults of the building, black mold had formed under the sink in the staff room.

While staff were working from home, we were able to deal with some of these libraries building issues:

- April 23<sup>rd</sup> – We Care Restoration did an air quality test for mould.
- April 30<sup>th</sup> – Had DF Technical & Consulting Services conducted a second air quality test for mould.
- May 11<sup>th</sup> – It was deemed safe for staff to be back in the building at which time we discovered mouse droppings in various locations around the library. We took this time to do a thorough clean, purge, and disinfect of all areas. A “silver lining”, as we were able to take everything out of all areas: cupboards, drawers, storage room etc. to purge, disinfect and organize. Once we were done, it was nice to be clutter free (for a while) and most importantly we are hoping the steps we took improves the air quality in the library.
- May 14<sup>th</sup> – We had our heating and cooling units serviced and a contractor come in to access and replace the mouldy boards under the staff room sink.
- May 16<sup>th</sup> – We had our furnaces and ducts cleaned and sanitized.
- May 19<sup>th</sup> – Removal of the fish tank and installation of our Plexiglas barrier at the circulation desk, (sneeze guard).

Throughout this time, we were also creating and implementing our COVID-19 safety plan.

### Phased Re-opening Timeline:

- June 01<sup>st</sup> – Opened the Library Take Out.
- June 08<sup>th</sup> – Our library has a bistro and it opened for take-out only.
- June 18<sup>th</sup> – Relocated computers ensuring they are the required 2 meters (6 feet) apart.
- June 29<sup>th</sup> – Opened the library with limited services. Computer and printer access by appointment only. The bistro opened with limited seating as well.

- August 03<sup>rd</sup> – library open for limited browsing via appointment
- October 01<sup>st</sup> – Library hours increase with three day/times that are open for drop-in browsing
- November 01<sup>st</sup> – Library is open for drop-in (masks are recommended, patrons are asked to sanitize their hands, and maximum occupancy limits and social distance guidelines are adhered to)
- November 19<sup>th</sup> – Masks became mandatory and no social gathering. All patrons, companies, and organizations cancelled their community room bookings for meetings and events.

I think the hardest part about reopening with the COVID-19 safety guidelines was for our staff to walk that fine line between greeter and bouncer. Libraries are known for being amongst the most welcoming places in a community. Our library still is and we take great pride in taking care of our community, but it was challenging to enforce the changing guidelines to our patrons. We knew that when they walked through the doors they would want things to be the way the library was pre-COVID so staff had to be extremely vigilant in welcoming patrons, maintaining their own health, safety, and comfort as well as educating the public on the new procedures.

Our library is situated right beside a high school and the most challenging was corralling the students when they would come over to order or pick-up their lunches from the bistro. It was not easy for the staff, but I have to say they were persistent in the kindest, yet strictest way, that we now have a nice respectful steady flow of traffic through the library with our students. The students enter through one door and exit through another so they are able to stay the 6 feet apart.

During the past year we only had one incident where a patron refused to wear a mask. The staff put up friendly signs regarding the necessity of wearing a mask.

I would like to reflect on all the great things that the COVID-19 closure brought to the Chetwynd Public Library and staff:

- An opportunity to do some much needed cleaning and purging to our failing building in order to improve the air quality for both staff and patrons.
- An opportunity for staff to connect with each other on a deeper level by taking the time to understand each other's background and culture after having the opportunity and the time to take an online course together.
- The ability to slow down! Before COVID-19, it was a mad rush of meetings, schedules, and deadlines. Once the whole world shut down it showed us that it is totally alright to not feel well, and if meetings or deadlines are missed not to be stressed out about them, the world keeps spinning and everyone is going to be ok. I think it created a bit of a more forgiving less judgmental world.
- We found ways to get out and be active in our community. We were able to partner with some pretty amazing groups and organizations in our community and promote "STONG LIBRARIES = STRONG COMMUNITIES".
- Time to reflect on being community focused and what that means to us.
- Time to show gratitude to our funders.
- Forming relationships through online programming and zoom meetings. THANK YOU ABCPLD for bringing the library world together!! Great things are coming our way, as we are stronger together than apart 😊

The Chetwynd Public Library (CPL) is grateful for the technology grant. With this grant, we were able to purchase equipment and provide technical services that our patrons would otherwise not be able to access.

When we first heard about the grant, we debated as to whether it would be better to upgrade our servers and hardware, which the public would not be able to see, or purchase items that they would be able to see and get excited about being able to use. After much debate, we realized that we need both in order to fulfil the varied needs of our patrons.

We have been slowly upgrading our hardware for the past two years; however, to date we have not been able to afford to upgrade all our equipment. This grant money allowed us to complete this project and let us provide for the staff and patrons all new computers downloaded with the latest version of Windows and Microsoft Office.

Chetwynd and area do not have access to fiber optic lines; therefore, we are limited in our ability to upgrade internet speed and connectivity. We increased our speed as much as we could during this time by adding more access points and subscribing to a monthly firewall subscription.

We purchased three web-based cameras so patrons and staff are able to access the web-based networking world such as Facebook live and Zoom meetings. We are able to set patrons up with a private location for Zoom interviews and have our community room set-up where small groups can Zoom together.

Because we are situated in a small town, there are not a lot of activities for young people to participate in and no technological based centers such as Science World, Telus Centre, or a planetarium. We would like to continue making the library a gathering spot for our young people and provide them with equipment and services that would make them enjoy their time with us. Therefore, we purchased two VR headsets and two gaming computers. We know that this equipment will become a big hit with all our young patrons, our seniors as well as all those in between. Unfortunately, due to the limited access in the library they have not been used as much as we had intended. After an ABCPLD meeting we got the idea to loan out the VR Headsets to the local paramedic that visits the seniors residents. We are excited to try this in hopes that they enjoy their little virtual escape.



## 2020 Library Technology Grant Interim Cover Sheet – Chetwynd Public Library

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Chetwynd and area do not have access to fiber optic lines; therefore, we are limited in our ability to upgrade internet speed and connectivity but we do need to have more wireless access points. When the library was completely closed due to the pandemic, we posted signs on the outside windows instructing patrons how to connect to the library's WiFi and which areas provided the best access. The patrons greatly appreciated this service but the internet speed was very slow and at times unobtainable due to the large number of patrons trying to log on. This was also a problem when the library was fully open and many patrons would be trying to access the internet at once. Many of Chetwynd's outlying areas do not have internet access; therefore, they rely on the library to provide this necessary service. We need to have adequate services to meet the needs of our patrons.

Because our computers are used by a wide variety and age of patrons we feel it is important to secure our computers with a good firewall system which will also allow a bit more speed through to our users. With the additional funding we are grateful that we will be able to subscribe to a monthly firewall subscription.

With the grant funds we will be able to purchase visual technical items that the community will enjoy. With web based networking we want to create various spaces in the library where the staff, individual patrons, and groups can access services. This would allow them access to platforms such as Zoom with very little technical disruptions to the connections. We would like to purchase three web based cameras, speakers, and headsets.

Because we are situated in a small town there are not a lot of activities for young people to participate in and no technological based centres such as Science World, Telus Centre, or a planetarium. We would like to continue making the library a gathering spot for our young people and provide them with equipment and services that will make them enjoy their time with us. To this end we would like to purchase two VR headsets and two gaming computers. We know that this equipment would become a big hit with all our young patrons, our seniors as well as all those in between.

2020 LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY GRANT REPORTING FORM: [CHETWYND PUBLIC LIBRARY]

Total Technology Grant Amount: [\$10,762]

Area of Need	Outcome	Metrics	Strategic Links	Actions	Collaborative Links	Timeframe	Project Budget	In-Kind/Leveraged funds	Comments
<b>Patron hardware upgrades (public computers, printers, etc.)</b>  <b>3 separate functioning internet log-in areas with web based cameras to accommodate things such as virtual meetings that can be used by either staff or public</b>	That both staff and patrons will have a reliable place to log into their internet accounts, search engines, or electronic meetings. Have reliable audio and visual connections.	Will be determined on how often they are booked and used.	Supply and demand. Due to COVID more and more people are utilizing the electronic meeting platforms. We have a large transit work population that depend on the library computers for a variety of reasons. Therefore this would help improve access, build capacity and advance citizen engagement.	We will advertise to our community that the library now offers this service and a space where they can access electronic meeting platforms.	All demographics and a variety of ages are brought together into the library for this space that has been created for them: students, business members, volunteer organizations etc. This hardware also allows us to run smoother virtual programming; we are currently running our children's programs through zoom and this will give us better connection, sound, and video for a more enjoyable program.	Within 2020	\$700		The timing of this grant comes at a very opportune time to benefit from our changing times and how we now communicate as a web based community.
<b>Patron hardware upgrades (public computers, printers, etc.)</b>  <b>2 Virtual Reality Headsets</b>	Patrons of all ages have access to the VR headsets. As we are a small community many citizens have never had the opportunity to take part in VR. Most of the local seniors have never had experience with this type of technology. We want to make the library a place where people of all	Will be determined on how often they are booked and used.	Allowing our community to have the opportunity to try something fun that has been developed through our technological world. Improving access for British Columbians, Building Capacity, & Advancing Citizen Engagement	Order, install and train staff on how to use the equipment and how to walk the patrons through the process. Advertising to let patrons know they are able to book a time for VR equipment use.	All demographics and a variety of ages are welcomed into the library to try the VR headsets. Being in a small town we do not have a space & science centre and it is wonderful to be able to offer these headsets for public use.	Within 2020	\$1,700		This may too come at an opportune time as people may want to put on the VR headsets and escape into another visual space for a while.

	ages can come to experience the usual library services but also unusual services. The CPL has long been considered the `hub` of our community.								
<b>Patron hardware upgrades (public computers, printers, etc.)</b>  <b>We are in the process of upgrading our computers; this grant has allowed us to be able to update all of them.</b>	This completes our computer upgrade project and our library is now equipped with all new computers	Seamless use of computers. Patrons and staff are able to log into these new computers with no hardware errors or computer crashes.	On a daily basis patrons come into the library to search the internet, key documents, print and scan documents that are extremely important to them. With the computer upgrades we feel more confident that we are providing service that is of extreme importance to many locals and visitors. Improving access for British Columbians, Enhancing Governance	Smoother, quicker, quieter, and reliable running computers.	All demographics and a variety of ages.	Within 2020	\$3,500		
<b>Patron hardware upgrades (public computers, printers, etc.)</b>  <b>2 gaming computers</b>	We have a busy group of gamers that visit the library. They have been using old computers that do not always work the best. Due to the popularity of the gaming world we thought this was a great fit.	Will be determined on how often they are booked and used.	This gives our patrons an opportunity to try something that they may not otherwise have the opportunity to try and experience. It lets the young people of our community know that the library is a	Advertise, let the public know that they are here.	Brings our patrons together and into the library	Within 2020	\$3,500		

			great place to visit. Improving access for British Columbians, Building Capacity, & Advancing Citizen Engagement						
<b>Patron software upgrades</b>  <b>Update from Windows 7 to Windows 10 and obtain software for the VR headsets</b>	This will benefit both staff and patrons	More positive experiences when opening, utilizing, and experiencing the software used at the library	Having updated software will help to improve access for British Columbians,	Order and install	Familiarity to the software that they have used. Excitement to try something new in regards to the VR programming.	Within 2020	\$1,362		
Choose an item.	Click or tap here to enter text.							Through the BC Libraries Cooperative we received additional funding for a monthly firewall subscription, more WIFI access points and switches	