

2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

LIBRARY NAME

Penticton Public Library

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).

Penticton is a community with a wine and sport tourism-based economy on the southern tip of Okanagan Lake. The population is 36,885 as of the 2021 census, this is a 9% increase from the previous census. The city is also under pressure with a lack of affordable housing, and the vacancy in our rental market is under 1% and rents have outstripped average wages. According to the latest Living Wage for Families Report the cost of living in Penticton requires a minimum wage of \$18.55 per hour, assuming two working adults.

The Penticton Public Library is a single branch municipal library in an aging shared facility with the Penticton Museum & Archives. The Library launched its new Strategic Framework and Business Plan in June 2021. This is a value focused document – designed to be nimble and responsive to changing circumstances and recovery from the pandemic.

2. MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

Project/Program Name

Integrated Library System migration to new open-source program

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

In 2021 the Penticton Public Library migrated to a new Integrated Library System (ILS). This was largely due to timing; it was scheduled to be reviewed in 2020 to determine if we were being well served by our legacy ILS. However, the project became much more relevant due to the increasing pressures of stagnant provincial funding and funding cuts at the municipal level, combined with rising cost of materials.

The Library went through a rigorous selection process focusing on cost and functionality. The goals of the selection was to find an ILS that was intuitive, attractive, and allowed patrons greater control of their accounts, easily and naturally find items, place holds and review items, while also integrating our other digital resources.

The migration and implementation of this ILS took place over the summer of 2021 and was ready to launch in September. Typically, we would expect growing pains as the staff and community adapt to a new ILS; however, we have heard nothing but praise from our patrons of the useability of the new ILS.

How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?	
This project meets many of the Library's strategic goals by providing relevant service, promoting literacy, offering access to a broad range of ideas and opinions, promoting engagement with the collection. While ensuring that the Library remains a sustainable resource operating with fiscal integrity.	
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.	
1. Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	The new ILS improved access to the Library's collections and digital resources to Penticton Public Library patrons. The legacy catalogue offered limited linking to digital resources or external websites and those it did link through were difficult to maintain.
2. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	The lower cost of this resource enabled the Library greater ability to access cataloguing records facilitating a staff reorganization and enhancement of the technical services department. This provides the ability of library staff to be more flexible in the projects they take on for the public and to focus on things that add value to the library's public service.
3. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	The integration of the library's digital resources facilitates access to resources which advances citizen engagement for library users. For example, it allows the Library patrons to access to digital resources, including BC Clicklaw when searching the catalogue.
4. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	The Library Board was involved in the decision-making process through contract approval and by ensuring the board was informed through all steps of the selection process as well as possible outcomes.

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.

The Immediate outcome of this project was to change library capacity, creating opportunities for Library Staff to engage in different aspects of the project and enhance library service overall. For example, instead of requiring two full time cataloguers the Library was able to reposition one of those positions to a Digital Services Technician which would focus on the Library's digital presence and developing training opportunities for the public.

Intermediate Outcomes for the ILS migration are increasing engagement with the Library's catalogue and digital resources. By integrating the Library's digital resource within the library's catalogue (which we were unable to do effectively with the legacy ILS) patrons can access library databases, community and provincial resources. Ultimately, we plan to also integrate links to relevant library programs within the catalogue. For example, our one-on-one technology help for patrons linked with searches that bring results for computer guides.

Long-term outcomes for this project will be enrichment of the Library's patrons lives through ease of access to resources that enrich the lives of British Columbians. It will improve the library's capacity to serve patrons through linked resources and making it less likely that resources will be missed through patron self directed searching.

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

No.

Project/Program Name	
Unbox: anti-racism boxes	
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.	
<p>Inspired by the “you need this box” project out of Alberta, this project is intended to reduce racism and discrimination in the South Okanagan. Unbox encourages participants to conduct an “audit” of the community using the lens of an ally - identifying areas that preserve racial inequities embedded in our society. Following self reflection activities (developed by the South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services OneWorld Youth Crew and Newcomer Council) participants were invited to meet and discuss their audit and reflect on what they have learned.</p>	
How does this project/program support the library’s strategic goals and/or community?	
<p>This program supported the library’s strategic goal to improve Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in our community by highlighting areas that we as a largely white community need to address to be an inclusive and welcoming city. Further this project addresses the library’s goal to enhance community connections.</p>	
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.	
1. Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	
2. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	Enhances the Library’s capacity by encouraging library staff to attend Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion training to better understand the impacts of our own biases on others.
3. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	The success of this program was its degree of citizen engagement in the program and in the community. The primary partner in this program is the South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services. This group’s function is to link newcomers to settlement services. The project also reached out to the local Friendship Society to support reconciliation.
4. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	

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

The Immediate Outcome of the project to develop partnerships and engaged both underserved community members and regular patrons. In conducting the community audit people discovered the different cultures that make up our communities, they will also realize the degree by which new commers and non-white Canadians are the target of racism, both passively and actively.

The Intermediate outcome of this project is to draw attention to our community's cultural make-up and challenge the assumptions that individuals not directly affected by racist action make within our community. The intermediate goal is to encourage individuals to becomes the agents of change in our community.

The Long-term outcome will be to move our communities towards becoming more open and accepting.

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

Yes. We initially partnered with the South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services (SOICS) to develop this project – they also brought in the Okanagan Regional Library. These partnerships were both in outreach and service delivery.

Funding for this project came form the BC Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Grants.

Project/Program Name

Summer program series

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

As we were not doing in-person programs in the summer of 2021 the Library's programming staff developed several distinct take home program series for library patrons all based on our previous extremely successful Teen Summer Takeover program. These programs provided library reading lists, games, challenges, and opportunities to explore our community. This program series included the BC Summer Reading Club inspired booklet, Nature Challenge, Teen Summer Takeover, and the Adult Reading Challenge.

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

Summer programing is where we often take the opportunity to connect patrons with our community. One of the pillars of the Library's strategic goals is to meet our community needs by fostering connections between people, organizations, and ideas.

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.

5. **Improving Access** for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)

6. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	Library staff took advantage of training opportunities in program creation and development, social media-based marketing and communications, and graphic design in order to make this project work.
7. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	While the major focus of summer programs is fun, the secondary goals is to encourage residents of all ages to explore and learn about our community. Beyond the “beaches and peaches” it also encourages patrons to explore the En’owkin Center at the Penticton Indian Band, the Museum, Art Gallery, as well as local businesses.
8. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	
What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for examples of how to write short, medium, and long-term outcomes.	
<p>The immediate outcome of the program is simply that participants will have fun reading and exploring library resources, beyond this that they will explore the community.</p> <p>Intermediate outcomes include the educational value of continuous reading for children during the break in the school year, but also for adults to be encouraged to explore the mental health benefits of reading for pleasure. The connections patrons make with each other and the larger community. Exploring services or community institutions that they may otherwise not.</p> <p>The ultimate outcome of these programs is to maintain the library’s place in the lives of our patrons and encourage continued access to the diversity of ideas and resources which help build community. Additionally we wish to enhance participants experience in the community by helping them discover the other services found here.</p>	
Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner’s role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?	
<p>No.</p>	

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)	<p>The PPL continued to meet and adapt as needed to COVID-19. We held very limited programming but developed a series of take home and online programs. The major financial hit the library took in 2020 and 2021 came on the municipal level, however as the need increased the City provided the funding to reopen at pre-pandemic levels. The library was able to use a portion of the technology grant to supplement the Library of Things collection and to boost our Wi-Fi for access outside the library for those who chose not to comply with the mask mandate.</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic and, more specifically, the changing mandates and protocols have been a challenge to adapt library service to. For example, while we were able to return to full hours in 2021, we were not able to return to regular in person programming. Hours of staff time were spent on finding, reading, and understanding the different health orders in order to try to provide the best possible library service under those circumstances. Additionally, there were more questions around the validity and reliability of information in our collections as a result of the influx of misinformation in print.</p> <p>Provincial and local operating funding was used to help manage the extra demands on the library's supply budget.</p>
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	

<p>Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health and wellness)</p>	<p>Recruitment has been a major challenge in 2021. PPL had a vacancy open for 3 and then 6 months with very few qualified candidates. We speculate this is due to the high cost of living and lack of vacancies in Penticton.</p> <p>Mental wellness has been a major challenge over the previous two years as our staff, as with everyone else, navigate through the pandemic. Of particular note are the challenges of working with certain members of the public, who believe that mask mandates are an infringement of their rights and have become increasingly disrespectful to those who regardless of their personal beliefs, respect that the Library staff must enforce these mandates.</p> <p>As with many communities we have seen a rise in the volume of our vulnerable communities and unhoused individuals. There are many people who visit the library who are experiencing homelessness, addiction, and mental health issues. And as the strain of the pandemic is ongoing, we have noted a decrease in empathy for these individuals. Additionally, we have noted an increase in aggressiveness and belligerence from some members of the public, which takes a toll on staff wellbeing and feelings of safety while at work. As managers we strive to support our staff and feel the strain of the conflicting priorities of service and openness when faced with these challenges.</p> <p>We have made a focused effort to do mental health boosting staff activities to try and help with this and have enhanced our Employee Assistance Program as well as encouraging staff to use provincial resources. Staff have been encouraged to take advantage of the Library's Employee Assistance Program and the provincial resources around wellness.</p>
<p>Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)</p>	
<p>Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)</p>	
<p>Aging/damaged facilities (e.g., need for repairs, renovations, upgrades/expansions)</p>	

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: 23 March 2022



Board Chair Signature: _____

Date: 23 March 2022