

2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

LIBRARY NAME

Radium Hot Springs 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).

The Village of Radium Hot Springs is a vibrant community nestled between the Purcell Mountains to the West and the Rocky Mountains to the East – on the traditional unceded of the Ktunaxa and Secwépemc peoples. The Village is situated at southern entrance to the Kootenay National Park and borders the Columbia River Wetlands.

The Village has experienced exponential growth in recent years; along with expanding infrastructure, the population of Radium has increased by a whopping 72% since the 2016 census. Our catchment areas throughout the Columbia Valley have also experienced considerable population growth, which has further increased our service population. In addition to our full-time residents, there are also a considerable number of part-time residents and seasonal visitors that access our services.

Traditionally, our local population consists primarily of young families, retired seniors, and part-time second homeowners. Many of the existing rental units in our area have been turned into short-term rentals. With rising housing costs and a shrinking rental market, many local families have had to relocate or dramatically adjust their living situation. Some rely on friends and family, and others are forced to stay in a hotel long-term while they wait for affordable rental units to become available.

The Radium Hot Springs Public Library is a municipal library located at the heart of the Village – inside the Radium Hot Springs Centre. The facility overlooks Legends Field, which is home to the Rotary splash park, a skating rink, and heated washroom facilities. We are fortunate to have a strong relationship with our municipal government and rely on them for many in-kind contributions.

2021 was another year full of ups and downs brought about by the pandemic. We did our best to provide consistency for our patrons; however, pandemic restrictions severely impacted our operational capacity. While the Radium Library may be classified as a small library at present, with the rate of growth in our community, we will not stay small for long. We are positioned and eager to grow to meet the needs of this rising population; however, our resources and staff are stretched beyond capacity. Our municipality, regional government and community partners have all stepped up to

varying degrees to provide the library with the capacity it needs to offer essential services to our community. Even with these contributions, and innovative internal maneuvers, we still require additional funding support to meet public need.

2. MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

Please describe any new or major ongoing projects/programs the library has delivered in the past year.

Project/Program Name	
Supporting on-going basic operational services.	
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.	
Our biggest focus in 2021 was supporting on-going basic operational services. This year was perhaps even more difficult than the first year of the pandemic; fluctuating restrictions, public fatigue, and heightened staff burnout made basic operations more difficult than ever. We relied on many partners and grants to maintain basic operations and tried our best to offer innovative solutions within our means.	
How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?	
Despite the difficulty of the year, the Radium Library managed to find ways to work towards achieving future goals. While we had several areas of focus this year, our primary goal was to secure grants and additional funding to support pandemic related revenue-loss. We also worked towards the completion of our Community Tech Hub project and worked towards honouring the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.	
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)	<p>Near the end of 2021, the Radium Library resumed preparations for our Community Technology Hub. Funding for this project came from the Columbia Basin Trust Community Technology Program, with a few smaller supporting grants from the Regional District of East Kootenay Discretionary-Grants-In-Aid Program, the Columbia Valley Community Foundation, and the Village of Radium Discretionary-Grants-In-Aid Program. The grants for this project were approved in late 2019; however, the project was stalled due to the pandemic.</p> <p>In 2021, we were finally able to move ahead with the project, and purchase two new patron computers which replaced our outdated desktop computers. The grant also allowed us to purchase loanable technology, including IPADs, Chromebooks and accessories.</p>

	<p>The project will continue into 2022, where more digital programming will be offered.</p> <p>In late 2021 we were finally able to resume a vital one-on-one tech support service through our partnership with the Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy (CBAL).</p> <p>2021 provided a glimpse for service restoration which brought us closer to being able to maintain and gradually improve access for library patrons.</p> <p>In terms of access to services, we provided a level of consistency with our COVID safe online and grab and go programs.</p> <p>Other innovative programs included a socially distanced outdoor Halloween Candy Chute, outdoor family Storytime and outdoor story walks.</p>
<p>2. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)</p>	<p>The Radium Library is an active member of the Kootenay Library Federation (KLF). The KLF provides access to a variety of professional development opportunities for the staff of member libraries. This year our staff participated in various webinars touching on relevant topics such as: navigating difficult situations, improving accessibility, and general library software training.</p> <p>In late 2019, the Radium Library board supported the director's decision to pursue a Master of Library and Information Studies degree from the University of Alberta in her spare time. Another two courses were completed in 2021. The skills learned from this semester were applied to improve the organization of information at the library.</p> <p>Limited staffing was our biggest obstacle to building capacity. Most professional development opportunities are offered during library hours, and we do not have enough staff in the library to both assist patrons and attend training at any given time.</p>
<p>3. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community)</p>	<p>To ensure children in our community still received consistent access to library programming, we offered a frequent grab & go activities in lieu of regular in-person programs. Our Summer Reading Club was also delivered via grab and go activities. These activities were incredibly popular and allowed us to meet the needs of our community within the context of the pandemic.</p>

<p>knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)</p>	<p>Through our library federation, the Kootenay Library Federation, we were also able to reach our patrons through various online programs. Including adult book clubs, teen book clubs, a teen newspaper, and several webinars.</p> <p>We also updated our website homepage to include accessible links to government resources such as: COVID-19 vaccination information, BC Wildfire Service, 2021 Census information, Anti-Racism, the Homeowner Grant application, and the BC Seniors Guide. Our library also offered free vaccine card printing and lamination services.</p> <p>This year also saw an increase in Newcomers to Canada visiting the library to receive assistance with, and access to, important government resources. The library also served as a safe space for Newcomers to develop community connections.</p> <p>The Radium Hot Springs Public Library supported this goal in 2021 by continuing to foster working relationships with other organizations in the Columbia Valley region.</p> <p>In-person classroom visits were discouraged and limited due to pandemic restrictions; however, the library still provided outreach to our partner school, the Edgewater Elementary School, by delivering grab & go activities and book club sets for classrooms. Many children who live in Radium attend school in the neighbouring hamlet of Edgewater. The EES is located within our catchment area, and due to our interconnected communities, we have had a strong partnership for many years.</p> <p>Our Friends of the Library group also volunteered to provide outreach to the EES school through a one-on-one Buddy Reads program.</p> <p>This year the library took steps to work towards honouring our Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action. We purchased an Every Child Matters Flag to display indefinitely in the facility. We also developed an Indigenous Persons of Canada resource page on our website and observed and promoted National Indigenous History Month. Our collection practices were updated to actively expand our Indigenous resources for all ages. Our future collection practices will include further diversification of resources and educational material supporting the Calls to Action as well as Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity. We also made the decision to</p>
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	close our facility in recognition and support of National Truth and Reconciliation annually on September 30.
4. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	<p>We had many new trustees join our board in 2021. During the pandemic, board focus shifted from regular governance practices to tackling pandemic-related issues and revenue loss. In 2021 our board worked to develop a better understanding of municipal library governance models and regional funding models.</p> <p>The board reviewed the current Strategic Plan, and in 2022, a new Strategic Plan will be developed.</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.	
<p>Resources and Activities: The library worked to secure funding from multiple sources to support pandemic related revenue-loss so that we could keep our doors open to offer essential services to the public.</p> <p>Output: This funding was necessary for basic operational costs, and to meet the needs of the ever growing-community. Local governments and community partners were instrumental in this endeavor.</p> <p>Immediate Outcomes: Community members were able to access essential library services. Vulnerable populations do not have access to technology at home and rely on the library to access basic technology. The pandemic notably created an increased dependence on technology. At the library, we saw an increase in patrons using the library specifically to access technology or receive assistance with technology.</p> <p>Intermediate Outcomes: The public had a safe space to access essential services; despite our limited capacity, we tried our best to provide programming and resources within the parameters of pandemic restrictions.</p> <p>Ultimate Outcomes: Communities rely on public libraries to provide access to essential services. Many people who did not use the library prior to the pandemic sought out library services. We stretched ourselves beyond our capacity to help to deliver the provincial goals of improving access, building capacity, enhancing citizen engagement, and enhancing governance. To sustain the community need surrounding this goal, public libraries need more operational funding to retain staff and maintain open hours. The need for library services is only going to increase as communities deal with the aftermath of the pandemic.</p>	
Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?	

Yes, as mentioned there were many essential partners involved in keeping our doors open. Including local organizations and grant funders.

This list includes, but is not limited to:

The Village of Radium Hot Springs

- Increased funding, in-kind support

The Regional District of East Kootenay

- Increased funding

The Columbia Valley Community Foundation

- Provided grant funding to address pandemic related-revenue loss/pandemic related costs

The Kootenay Library Federation

- Provided support to enhance the delivery of library services

The Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy

- Worked together on shared initiatives and programming

The Columbia Basin Trust

- Provided grant funding for CBT Tech Hub Project to improve technological access

The Friends of the Radium Library

- Fundraised during brief periods when pandemic restrictions were loosened

The Edgewater Elementary School

- Library provided outreach to the school through grab and go activities. The school fostered the relationship by picking up the kits to bring to their classrooms.

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)	The fluctuation of restrictions and safety protocols made it impossible to plan for in-person programming, and at times made it difficult to keep the doors open due to staffing shortages. It also resulted in significant mental health challenges for staff who had to enforce and police safety protocols – which were not always well received by the public. Emotional labour and staff burnout increased significantly.

Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	While we were not affected directly by the floods, we did feel the effects of the heat wave in summer 2021. Our facility provided water bottles and did our best to provide areas for patrons to cool down, while adhering to restrictions.
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	We do our best to offer innovative programming and services within our budget. Rising costs and reduced revenues have forced our library to make significant cuts to our budget, which limits our ability to serve the growing needs of our community.
Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health and wellness)	The pandemic brought to light the need for more trained staff rather than a reliance on volunteers for operational needs – which is something our library relied heavily on during pre-pandemic times. Trained staff provide service consistency and that is something we aim to achieve. We have not been able to increase to our pre-pandemic hours because of this; however, we are working to slowly incorporate staffing increases into our budget so that we can meet community need. Staff faced constant burnout as a result of being front line workers, and we did our best to support the mental wellness of staff.
Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	Our community is facing a significant housing crisis. In our area, there is a lack of availability and affordability for homeowners and renters. There are also not enough social supports available for vulnerable persons. We try to support our patrons in these areas where we can. The local daycare also relocated in the last year, and local families now must look further away for childcare options. The local bank has also been forced to reduce operating hours, which limits accessibility.
Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)	Patrons in our outlying catchment area do experience connectivity issues, and significant storms have caused issues with cellular service and phone lines. Vulnerable populations rely on the library for access to technology and strong connectivity is essential to be able to provide this service.
Aging/damaged facilities (e.g., need for repairs, renovations, upgrades/expansions)	We are fortunate to have recently moved into a spacious facility; however, as the needs for the community expand, so does our need for space and a potential for upgrades.
Community access to the library (e.g., geographic isolation, lack of local public transit, building accessibility)	Lack of local public transit is a significant issue in our area. Patrons within walking distance are able to access the library; however, those in our catchment areas that rely on public transport face barriers to access.

Vulnerable communities (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental health crisis)	Our vulnerable communities have really suffered this past year and the need for support has increased tremendously. The lack of social supports for vulnerable populations puts a significant strain on public libraries, which are already being pushed beyond capacity. Staff have taken training to assist those experiencing homelessness, and hope to take naloxone training in the future to be prepared for any scenario.
Other (please specify)	

4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.

Library Director Signature: Jacqueline Kozak

Date: March 17, 2022

Board Chair Signature: Sony Eason

Date: March 17, 2022