

INTRODUCTION

The Sunshine Coast Regional District is bound on three sides by water and on the fourth side by mountains. No road connects the district with the rest of the province. Ferries and aircraft provide access to the lower mainland and the northern reach of the Sunshine Coast and Powell River.

The Sechelt Public Library serves a catchment area of over 18,000 people (District of Sechelt Community Profile 2019) as well as resource shares with the Gibsons & District Public Library. Citizens travel up and down this coastal area utilizing services, including both libraries, in all areas. Together we serve a population of roughly 30,000. The area also contains two reading rooms which are funded directly by their local area governments and are run by volunteers. The Pender Harbour Reading Centre receives provincial interlibrary loan services brokered by the Libraries Branch.

A popular vacation and retirement destination, tourism and the arts are emerging sectors but forestry and mining are still strong. According to a 2018 Community Profile, 88% of the catchment area population is 15 years old and older. According to census data, the 50+ cohort in our catchment area is 20% larger than the same provincial cohort. The 75+ cohort in our catchment area is 80% larger than the same provincial cohort.

The Sunshine Coast prides itself on a strong sense of community, collaboration and resource sharing. The Sechelt Public Library has a reciprocal borrowing agreement with Gibsons and District Public Library, located 23 km to our south. With the move toward patron directed interlibrary loans using SITKA, the library's ILL services have increased substantially. This has tremendously improved access, while at the same time has necessitated increased operational capacity. A member of Public Library InterLINK, the library also participates heavily in a coordinated interlibrary loan system between the federation members. In addition, up to the end of 2019, the library provides space to the District of Sechelt Community Archives.

SUCSESSES AND CHALLENGES

2019 marked a significant turning point for Sechelt Library. Significant additional local funding was granted to the library as a result of the 2019 budget process. This new funding will allow the library to better cope with the many and varied challenges it faces to provide excellent service to the community. Part of the budget request focused on updating furniture that is decades old. Allocated funds will see updated furniture arrive in the library in 2020. The board

of Sechelt Library also participated in a strategic planning process which will result in a new Strategic Plan to be launched in 2020. This, with the added funding, will help set a positive direction for the library for the next several years.

The library continues to face a space challenge with overcrowding, which contributes to issues of accessibility in the public areas and staff workroom. A consultant's report in 2011 – 8 years ago – described the library as having grown “to the point of bursting.” The library coordinates with the District of Sechelt to book various programming and meeting rooms as it does not possess its own programming or meeting space. However, agreement with the District allows the library to book several rooms in buildings around the library. Two of the strategic objectives for our Strategic Plan include expanding the workspace into the previous archives area and improving the children's area of the library to allow for more people in the space.

Sechelt Library anticipates signing a five year funding agreement with its three funding bodies in 2020. As well, the library shares a municipal building with the District of Sechelt.

The library remains a central community hub with increases in adult programming attendance and increases in foot traffic. A survey conducted as part of the strategic planning process demonstrated the exceptional service. Sechelt Library is incredibly proud to state that 95% of respondents stated that their experience with the library was either good or excellent. Library staff received a rating of 98% for friendly and helpful and a 99% rating for being knowledgeable. These figures are important as it was revealed that 41% of respondents come into the library specifically to get help from library staff.

With the confidence and backing of our community, we know that Sechelt Library has a vibrant future that will allow us to work in partnership with other community organizations to address the needs of our population and create a better Sunshine Coast.

LIBRARY PRIORITY 1

Improving Access

1) Library goal:

To provide the public with access to democratic processes

To support the public to participate fully in society

Program: British Columbia Framework for Accessibility Legislation

Sechelt Library hosted a session which invited citizens to voice their opinion on BC's new framework for accessibility legislation. There was no session scheduled for this service area, so Sechelt Library provided access to this important democratic process. We forwarded all the comments and questionnaires to the BC representative.

Outcome: The library is bridging inequality of access to democratic processes.

2) Library goal:

To provide the public with access to mental health collections

Service: Loaning Light Therapy Lamps

Partnerships that support the priority: Sunshine Coast Community Foundation & Pender Harbour Health Centre

In 2019, Sechelt Library used funds received from a Sunshine Coast Community Foundation “Community Health and Mental Resource Collection” grant to begin a loan program for Light Therapy Lamps. Many libraries have lamps in their libraries for patrons to use. Because of the geography of our service area, it is not always possible for patrons to visit the library on a regular basis. For this reason, we created a SAD lamp collection that allows patrons to use the lamps in their own homes without the restriction of having to come into the library more frequently than might be possible. Further, Sechelt Library partnered with the Pender Harbour Health Centre to provide lamps for lending to Sechelt Library patrons in the Pender Harbour area. This service area is the furthest removed geographically from the physical library building. Providing access through partners allows us to grant the same level of service to Pender Harbour patrons as those who live nearer to the library.

Outcome: The library is offering access to mental health resources regardless of proximity to physical library.

3) Library goal:

To provide accessible materials to visually impaired patrons

Service: Braille for audiobook collection

Sechelt Library remains dedicated to providing access to our resources for every level of ability. We continued work to include braille on the covers of audiobooks as well as our labels for “holds” material. This allows visually impaired patrons ~~the ability~~ to find material they have put on hold and to “read” the titles of audiobooks ~~using braille~~. This ~~allows for~~ affords greater independence and accessibility to library resources.

Outcome: The library provides access to library materials, regardless of visual ability.

4) Library goal:

To provide areas outside of Sechelt with improved library service

Program: Toddler time with Strong Start
Brain Health

Partnerships that support the priority: Strong Start & Community Schools

Sechelt library increased outreach in 2019 specifically to the Pender Harbour service area. Two targeted areas were young children and the older adult population. In partnership with Strong Start, our children’s programmer participated in a program aimed at toddlers and their parents.

Through this program, we were able to introduce Sechelt Public Library services to those who might not drive to our physical location. Building relationships is the best vehicle for demonstrating the relevance of library programs and services to parents and families. Being in the community and speaking to the needs of young families is paramount in building meaningful and lasting relationships and is the cornerstone of improving access to our programs and services.

Through a partnership with Community Schools, we were also present in the Pender Harbour community through a 5 week Brain Health program. This program proved popular among older adults in the Sechelt community and offering it again in Pender Harbour allowed those who do not regularly come to Sechelt access to a program specifically designed for the older adult demographic.

Outcome: The library provides access to programs outside the immediate physical library location.

LIBRARY PRIORITY 2

Developing skills

1) Library goal:

To provide the public with knowledge to safely use current technology

Programs: TELUS wise Seniors Workshop

Partnerships that support the priority: TELUS

In 2019, Sechelt Library began offered an Online Safety course through our partnership with TELUS. This allowed participants to gain knowledge about how to get the most out of participating in the digital world safely.

Outcome: The library is offering the best possible digital services to our community.

2) Library goal:

To provide the public with access to current technology AND to assist library patrons to become competent in using technology.

Program: Windows 10 Computer Class

In 2019, Sechelt Library offered 2 three week courses focused on familiarizing patrons with Windows 10. This coincided with the change of library computers to Windows 10, ensuring that

patrons are able to use library computers effectively and knowledgeably. The added benefit was providing knowledge to help patrons with their home computers as well.

Outcome:

The library is offering the best possible digital services to our community.

The library enables patrons to be comfortable with the continued use of new technology, as well as contributing to an increase in digital comfort.

The library transforms information into the implementation of new skills and competencies.

3) Library goal:

To provide the public with access to current technology AND to assist library patrons to become competent in using technology

Programs: Makerspace programming for kids

Makerspace programming for families

In 2019, Sechelt Library increased access to technology through increased makerspace programming for both kids and families. Increasing programming to a weekly basis allows patrons access to new technology on a regular basis. Materials for the makerspace were purchased thanks to TELUS and CIP grants and funding from Friends of the Library. These materials allow the library to offer a menu of services that fall under different skill building areas:

Robotics: Dash, Dot, Cue, Ozobots

3D building: Keva blocks, Lego, MakeDo

Electronics: Squishy Circuits, Circuit Scribe

Programming: Makey Makey, Nintendo Switch Labo, Bloxels

These programs allow participants to experiment and play with technology they often would not have access to. Creating a family makerspace program that requires parental involvement also encourages families to form bonds and create a shared understanding of technology. Experimentation, trial and error and prototyping are key ways to introduce participants to design and learning outside of a school context.

Outcomes:

The library provides open access and use of resources and tools that help people create content and learn by doing.

The library creates flexible, multipurpose spaces to gather, study, learn and share.

The library transforms information into the implementation of new skills and competencies.

4) Library goal:

To provide the public with access to current technology AND to assist library patrons to become competent in using technology.

Program: iPad Class

In 2019, Sechelt Library offered a 5 session iPad class to develop iPad skills for our older adult population. These sessions allowed patrons to familiarize themselves with how iPads work and to use various apps to communicate with loved ones, sort photos, access library materials and to participate more fully in online communication.

Outcome:

The library is offering the best possible digital services to our community.

The library enables patrons to be comfortable with the continued use of new technology, as well as contributing to an increase in digital comfort.

The library transforms information into the implementation of new skills and competencies.

LIBRARY PRIORITY 3

Collaborating on Shared Goals

1) Library goal: Provide Information Support for Dementia Caregivers

Program/Service: Dementiability Education

Partnerships that Support the Priority: SCCF, Community Resource Centre, Seniors Planning Table, Lions Club, Friends of the Library

As a library that serves an above average older adult population, Sechelt Library remains committed to serving our patrons through every stage of life. Sechelt and surrounding communities have a number of people with Dementia and our entire community is looking for

ways to serve them as well as their caregivers. In 2019, Sechelt Library partnered with the Sunshine Coast Community Foundation, Lions Club, Community Resource Centre, Seniors Planning Table and Friends of the Library to provide training from *Dementiability* to both library volunteers and Vancouver Coastal Health workers. Twenty two people were trained in the methodology with a goal of creating lendable Dementia Care Kits in 2020. The training provided attendees with knowledge of how to provide support that allows those with Dementia to live with purpose and meaning regardless of ability. It also provided caregivers with some problem-solving techniques to relieve some of the stress associated with caregiving.

Outcomes:

Dementia Caregivers in our community are aware of and able to access information that successfully meets their needs and aspirations.

Seniors are better able to age in place through continual cognitive engagement.

Those with Dementia experience decreased isolation caused by their disease.

2) Library goal: Create awareness of issues surrounding reconciliation

Program: “First Contact” viewing

Partnerships that Support the Priority: Siyaya Reconciliation Movement

As part of our commitment to reconciliation, Sechelt Library partnered with Siyaya Reconciliation Movement to present the television show “First Contact” to the community with discussion to follow. First Contact is a Canadian documentary series that challenges the views of six Canadians over 28 days as they experience indigenous Canadian life firsthand.

The audience for this program was comprised of both First Nation and Second Nation attendees. After each viewing, conversation circles were formed with each participant expressing their reactions to the show.

Outcomes:

The library advanced towards becoming a more trusted partner in reconciliation.

The library created a dialogue with our community around topics of reconciliation.

3) Library goal: Create community awareness of First Nations cultural contributions

Program: Weaving Reconciliation

Partnerships that Support the Priority: Siyaya Reconciliation Movement

Another program in support of reconciliation work was the continuation of community weaving in the library. We were honoured to have weaver kwayimin Andy Johnson in the library creating his weaving project. In his proposal, Andy states, “I was born and raised on the Sunshine Coast. I was with my grandmother Cecil August a lot growing up, and this is where I learned a lot of the shashíshálhem history and culture. I am a shashíshálhem language teacher at Kinnickinnick Elementary School and a Cultural Ambassador for shíshálh Nation.”

Members of the community were invited to come and learn how to weave and to weave their own part of the project to make it a true work of the community.

Outcomes:

The library advanced towards becoming a more trusted partner in reconciliation.

The library created a dialogue with our community around topics of reconciliation.



LIBRARY PRIORITY 4

Enhancing governance

Library goal: Create a Strategic Plan for 2020-2023

In 2019, the Board of Trustees for Sechelt Library conducted a community survey as the first step to creating a new strategic plan and a new vision for the library. A strategic planning consultant helped to facilitate the foundation for the plan that will be presented to the community in early 2020.

The strategic planning process allows Library Trustees to be proactive in seeking out a positive future for Sechelt Library. By looking at challenges and trends in the community, we are better able to set a direction for the organization that meets the needs of those we serve. Setting

realistic goals and objectives that are in line with our vision and mission provides a firm foundation from which the organization can grow and evaluate success.

Outcomes:

The library provides transparent organizational objectives and goals.

The library demonstrates good governance to funders and community.

SUCCESS STORIES FROM BC'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Dementiability Training

In 2019, Sechelt Library provided Dementia training to both community volunteers and Vancouver Coastal Health workers. This marked the first stage in a plan to increase service to those in our community with dementia and those who care for them. The second stage of this project is developing lendable Dementia Care Kits in 2020 that contain 8-10 activities to meaningfully engage those with dementia.

The decision to embark on this project was a direct result of community need. With a population that has a higher than provincial average of seniors, there is a community of those with dementia, but also a community of caregivers who are at a high risk of burnout as they seek resources to help provide an increased quality of life to those they care for.

Sechelt Library is a small library with approximately 15 staff. While we saw this community problem as both an information and service need, we knew that we did not have capacity to do community training and service provision based on our own resources. Friends of the Library made our initial community consultation possible. We then leveraged our community partners who held a similar mission and sought to work on the same community issues. The Seniors Planning Table and Community Resource Centre were instrumental in helping Sechelt Library secure funding to bring a trainer from *Dementiability* to the Sunshine Coast in order to offer a two-day training session. We received funding from the Sunshine Coast Community Foundation, Lions Club and generous personal donations. The Hospital Foundation also provided funds for Vancouver Coastal Health staff to receive training.

Training as many community members as possible was vital as our small library will now depend on many of those who attended to participate as volunteers in the creation of multiple Dementia Care Kits that will be loaned out to caregivers (both within a professional and non-professional setting). First time borrower of kits will receive a one hour training session on the philosophy and methodology behind the activities in the kits. This training will be provided by

our volunteers who attended the two-day session. The training, activities and resources are based on a Montessori approach that aims to provide people with dignity, meaning and purpose regardless of their ability.

Quotes heard at the end of the training session:

“I wish I had found this two years ago so I could have helped my wife.”

“Focusing on meaning and purpose is what life is about. Having dementia shouldn’t change that.”

For more information, please contact Elle Archibald at 604-885-3260

SUMMARY

2019 was a transformational year for Sechelt Library. With a large increase in local government funding, the library was able to move forward with increased confidence to create a strategic plan that will build a firm foundation for future growth and success.

While the challenges ahead are many, this increased support allows us to concentrate on finding the best ways to serve a growing population.

Key findings for 2019 result from our community survey. It is clear that our community wants more programming and an increased collection. Improving the library space is also a key concern for our patrons.

Our survey also revealed a challenge that needs to be met in the oncoming years. A large amount of our population remain unaware of many of the digital services we provide to the community. Increasing awareness of our services is a key priority moving forward. We serve a wide geographic area but only have one physical building. Digital services are a key method for delivering much needed and wanted library materials. Meeting this need will require a concerted marketing campaign as well as outreach programs to our various service areas. Through this, we will be able to work towards increased digital participation which can radically alter the services available to rural areas.

Sechelt Library is proud to serve our community and it is clear from our survey that the community feels proud of the service that we offer. With this high level of community support backed by increased local funding, we are eager to find new and better ways to meet the increasing demands and needs of our patrons.