



PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT 2020 - 2021

NORTH VANCOUVER CITY LIBRARY

INTRODUCTION

The City of North Vancouver is located on the unceded traditional territories of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nation and Səl̓ílwətaʔ/ Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nation.

The City of North Vancouver (the “City”) is a small community located at the base of the mountains on the North Shore. It is bounded to the south by the Burrard Inlet, and the District of North Vancouver to the east and west. According to the 2016 census, the City supports a population of 52,898 people, with a land area of approximately 12 square kilometres. Due to its central location on the North Shore, relatively high density, transit accessibility with a SeaBus connection, and proximity to Vancouver’s central business district, the City is recognized as a Regional Town Centre within the Metro Vancouver region.

The most recent census tells us that 67% of the population speaks English or French, with 32% identifying English as a second language. The most predominant languages after English are Farsi, Tagalog, Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Korean and Spanish. We have a large contingent of newcomers in the community; over 2,500 newcomers were provided service by our local partner, North Shore Multicultural Society in 2020.

The City’s Official Community Plan (OCP), adopted in 2014, provides direction while balancing the diverse needs of the community. City Council’s 2018-2022 Strategic Plan complements the OCP and provides further focus and direction for its four-year term. In alignment with City Council’s vision to be “The Healthiest Small City in the World”, the library has identified how library services, priorities and strategies support the City’s five priorities: A City for People, A Connected City, A Liveable City, A Vibrant City and A Prosperous City.

North Vancouver City Library (NVCL) is a 36,000 square foot single-site library system, located in the heart of the City. Situated on the Civic Plaza across from City Hall, in one of the densest neighbourhoods of the City, it is easily accessible by many City residents. It is within walking distance for many residents and school children. We are located close to a thriving elementary school and condominium developments continue to be built around a busy business corridor on Lonsdale Avenue.

While our daily in-person visits have decreased in 2020 due to temporary closure, reduced service hours and public health recommendations, the range of ages and demographics is still very visible. Our customers see the library as their community hub. In our year-end survey, 95.8% of library customers reported they feel inspired to learn more as a result of using the library, and 96% reported they feel the library is comfortable and welcoming.

This was especially evident early in 2020 following the crash of Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752 in Tehran, Iran – eight residents of the North Shore’s tight-knit Iranian community lost their lives. As the news spread, the library became a place for the community to connect and come together in mourning, hosting CBC Radio’s Early Edition with Stephen Quinn, providing a book of condolences, and supporting a candlelight vigil in the Civic Plaza in partnership with the City of North Vancouver and North Shore Multicultural Society.

2018-2021 Strategic Plan

In 2017, the library Board and staff undertook in-depth research on major drivers of change in our community and environment, and engaged with stakeholders and residents about their library use, needs and aspirations. The result was a new mission, vision and strategic priorities, captured in the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan.

Mission: We foster the love of learning in all its forms, connecting people to ideas, experiences and one another.

Vision: We will be the welcoming, vibrant hub of a thriving community by empowering growth, sparking curiosity, fostering creativity and innovation and galvanizing community potential.

Strategic Priorities:

- Inspire Learning, Discovery & Creation
- Create Vibrant Spaces
- Honour Indigenous Perspectives
- Enhance Access & Inclusion

Strategic Goals and Accomplishments

2020 was the third year of our four-year Strategic Plan. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, normal operations were disrupted and much of the planned work for 2020 was impacted. Library staff turned their attention from planned priorities to more immediate matters.

Key accomplishments in 2020 included:

Inspire Learning, Discovery & Creation

- Library cardholders flocked to Lynda.com and other subscription online learning resources available for free through the library, accessing **86,763 online courses** – an increase of **nearly 200%**
- **72.6%** of library customers reported they believe the library is an **important source of support in navigating technological change**
- With reduced service hours, library staff provided 40.1% less **in-depth instruction and research** support to customers; however the number of **questions answered per service hour** actually increased slightly
- Staff **transformed library programming** and migrated to online formats

- NVCL partnered with other North Shore libraries and TELUS to roll out **400 tablets and smartphones to vulnerable residents** through the **Take Home Tech** initiative
- With support through from the provincial Digital Initiatives Grant and an Emergency Community Foundation Support Grant, NVCL developed a **laptop, tablet and hotspot lending** program, to roll out in early 2021

Create Vibrant Spaces

- Staff **reopened the library facility** with health and safety protocols in place, working to ensure high-demand services for our most vulnerable populations were prioritized
- Despite reduced access to seating and services, **96.0%** of visitors reported they feel the library is **welcoming and comfortable**
- NVCL created a **Fresh Air Library** outdoor reading room space

Honour Indigenous Perspectives

- In collaboration with the other North Shore libraries, we hosted a virtual community program for 500 registrants with Chief Bob Joseph, author of ***21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act***
- We circulated **393 items from our adult Indigenous collections**, a decrease of 44.7%, which is consistent with the overall decrease in borrowing of physical materials
- Staff met with colleagues at West Vancouver Memorial Library and North Vancouver District Public Library to plan a **coordinated approach to Squamish Nation and Tsleil-Waututh Nation** about library service to their residents

Enhance Access & Inclusion

- **91.6%** of library customers reported a **greater sense of community belonging** as a result of their use of the library – an increase of 12.5% from 2019.
- While program attendance was impacted by pandemic-related restrictions, staff pivoted to offer online programming – by year-end, **1,685** people had attended programs focused on **dialogue and community connections** and **1,760** people had attended programs focused on **newcomers and language learning**
- Closure of the library in March drove customers to our digital branch. **455,365 digital visitors** browsed our website, searched the catalogue, accessed subscription databases and downloaded e-books, e-audiobooks and digital magazines and newspapers. **92.7%** of website visitors feel that **nvcl.ca is intuitive and easy to navigate** – an increase of 26.5% since 2019
- While home delivery was temporarily disrupted, library staff prioritized this service and made home deliveries and provided alternate formats to **88 home-bound or print-disabled residents** unable to come to the library or use conventional library materials

NVCL SERVICES, PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES ALIGNED WITH PROVINCIAL STRATEGIES

In 2020, while responding to the evolving pandemic and related public health and workplace safety measures, North Vancouver City Library moved forward a number of initiatives to reduce barriers, increase access, support staff development and build community knowledge.

IMPROVING ACCESS FOR BRITISH COLUMBIANS: TAKE HOME TECH

Connectedness and engagement are vital to the well-being of communities. The North Vancouver City Library aspires to be a platform for learning, discovery, connection and access to information and technology – and to be a key source of support and inspiration as community members navigate personal and technological change.

2020 Initiative: Take Home Tech

When the three North Shore libraries (North Vancouver City Library, North Vancouver District Public Library and West Vancouver Memorial Library) closed in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they were deeply concerned about community members who depend on local libraries to access Wi-Fi, computers, and technology support.

Like libraries, many critical services closed and moved to digital and telephone service delivery as a result of the pandemic. With this change, people without access to a computer or smartphone, including many seniors and other vulnerable individuals, were no longer able to make important connections with services and loved ones—a devastating blow during a time of crisis.

In April 2020, staff from the three libraries connected with TELUS to request a donation of devices to help support our most vulnerable residents. TELUS came through generously with a donation of 200 tablets and 200 mobile phones and the **Take Home Tech** initiative was born. Libraries then worked through the tri-municipal North Shore Emergency Operations Centre and community partners to distribute devices to those who needed them the most. The libraries also developed a package of training materials for new users, and provided one-on-one help for those who were new to the technology.

As anticipated, the demand for devices was greater than the supply, and the distribution was based on needs across a broad spectrum of vulnerabilities, including:

- people in financial need
- isolated seniors
- people with multiple vulnerabilities

Partnerships that support this priority:

Working through the tri-municipal North Shore Emergency Operations Centre, staff at the three North Shore Libraries reached out to nearly 90 agencies on the North Shore who had identified the need for tablets and mobile phones to connect with their clients in a previous survey of service providers. The

goal was to package and distribute the 400 devices with supporting materials through libraries and local service providers.

Outcomes:

As a result of this program, all 400 devices were distributed through 20 partner organizations. Time was of the essence in getting these devices into the hands of those who needed them. This was deemed more important than developing a robust assessment tool in advance and gathering additional data; however, feedback and stories were forwarded by partner organizations and from the individuals who received phones and tablets. Here are some examples:

“We, and more importantly a number of our marginalized clients, have been the recipients of your generous donation of cell phones. It has truly benefitted our clients, and enhanced the care that we have been able to provide. During this very isolating time, our clients have been able to maintain communication with their families and care communities, and to seek safety, connection, and care when they need it.”

– Vancouver Coastal Health’s Health Connection Clinic

Kudos to the libraries for being there for us and our seniors over and over and over again!!”

– North Shore Community Resources

“One of the tablets was given to a [senior] resident at Capilano House (subsidized housing). He used it to connect online with friends and also to check out grocery store deliveries and prices. Having this device has made him feel more connected and also valued as a senior in the community. He feels that somebody cares about him and he appreciates being able to connect with others.”

– Parkgate Community Services Society

“I am so grateful to TELUS and the library for giving me this tablet and hope to be learning more on how to use it to its full capacity. Being able to send an email to my granddaughter and receiving messages from her is invaluable to me. Thank you so much.”

– Senior at Capilano House (subsidized housing)

BUILDING CAPACITY: CUSTOMER SERVICE TRAINING

North Vancouver City Library values Community Focus and Being Welcoming & Inclusive. We strive to put our customers and community at the centre of everything we do and to deliver services that satisfy and delight. We work to make everyone feel safe, welcome and comfortable. Implementing pandemic-related public health measures challenged us to find the balance between service and safety.

2020 Initiative: Customer Service Training

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a major service adjustment for the North Vancouver City Library. As we came to grips with our new reality, one question that was at the forefront was our focus – “how do we continue to provide quality customer service in a time of need?”

When we closed our physical facility in mid-March, we knew our traditional service models had to change quickly. Readers' advisory and reference services that previously were offered primarily in person quickly shifted to email, telephone and a new chat service as information staff moved to working remotely. Staff began recording virtual programs from their living rooms. Recognizing the community's deep need for reading material, we were one of the first libraries in the Lower Mainland to offer "takeout" library service.



As case numbers levelled, and public health and workplace safety measures began to roll out, we turned to planning for a phased, safe facility reopening. This was an important response to the overwhelming community need for connection and access to essential services – including public computers and Wi-Fi.

As we planned for reopening, we recognized an opportunity to implement improvements to our customer service while at the same time promoting a culture of safety.

Pre-pandemic, we routinely experienced challenges with fluid internal communication in our multi-storey facility. We also observed periodic issues around staff accountability, service consistency and service reliability. As we grappled with implementing public health and workplace safety measures, we recognized we needed to support communication between staff in different parts of the library, and also help staff navigate the fine line between encouraging safe practices and enforcing or policing public health measures.

Prior to re-opening, we creatively addressed these issues in a number of ways:

- 1) Implemented daily “scrum” meetings to share time-sensitive information, updates, customer feedback, and best practices for quality customer service – as well as address staff worries and questions
- 2) Implemented a system of communication radios for use by all front-line staff to establish an open communication channel and enable team members to work together to effectively manage customer and safety concerns
- 3) Created and delivered a customer service training session for all staff as part of our re-boarding process, prior to reopening. This training involved all front-facing staff and was based on principles from Mark Colgate’s *The Science of Service* – specifically the “3Rs” (reliable, responsive, relationship-based customer service) and “TOFU” (taking ownership and following up) – with specific pandemic-related scenarios

Partnerships that support this priority:

This work was supported by the shared work of the InterLINK federation to introduce Mark Colgate’s *The Science of Service* for use by all member libraries.

Outcomes:

As a result of this work, we observed:

- Staff felt increased confidence in safety measures and their ability to keep themselves safe
- Improved ability to respond to emerging issues quickly and collaboratively, thanks to ease and speed of communication
- Increased sense of teamwork among staff, and increased trust in floor supervisors who lead daily scrum meetings and provide backup over the communications system
- Staff had more tools, strategies and support to deliver quality, calm customer service in challenging times
- Staff were able to effectively and successfully encourage community compliance with public health guidelines
- A significant reduction in complaints and incident reports

In our year-end survey, customers expressed a high degree of satisfaction with library service, and 94.3% indicated they agreed or strongly agreed they would recommend the library to a friend or neighbour

ADVANCING CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT: COMMUNITY RECONCILIATION PROGRAMMING

As Indigenous Peoples’ cultures have been deliberately suppressed in our heritage institutions, it is vital for libraries to actively participate in reconciliation. North Vancouver City Library aspires to be viewed as a partner authentically committed to reconciliation, in part by supporting community programming.

2020 Initiative: Community Reconciliation Programming

The COVID-19 pandemic created a major disruption in our community programming. In early March 2020, we were forced to cancel all planned in-person programming and begin a dramatic shift towards

pre-recorded video and live virtual programming. Throughout this change we were committed to continue to work on our strategic priority to Honour Indigenous Perspectives.

During our initial facility closure, staff created a series of video book reviews in recognition of National Indigenous Peoples Day, featuring a selection of titles by Indigenous authors focusing on Indigenous experiences. In September, staff recorded another set of video book reviews in commemoration of Orange Shirt Day. These videos are saved on [NVCL's YouTube Channel](#).

As we transitioned to live virtual programs, we used our Virtual Drop-In Book Club as an opportunity to amplify anti-racism conversations in our community. In July, we hosted a virtual conversation about *So You Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo, followed by a conversation in August about Bob Joseph's *21 Things You May Not Know About The Indian Act*.

Due to the pandemic, many of our plans had to change — including our plans to host Bob Joseph, author of *21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act*, at a live community event in North Vancouver for over 700 people. This major event was a collaboration among the three North Shore libraries and the North Vancouver Recreation & Culture Commission. When it became evident that the in-person event could not go ahead, we pivoted to host Bob Joseph for a moderated virtual community talk titled *An Evening with Bob Joseph*. Five hundred people registered for the Zoom event to hear Mr. Joseph talk about his book. Metis host and moderator Alexander Dirksen then facilitated a conversation based on questions from participants.

Following the event, we once again collaborated with WVML and NVDPL to co-host a book discussion on *21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act*. The program was designed as a follow-up opportunity for participants to deepen their learning.

In addition to the community event, Bob Joseph also conducted a half-day online workshop, “Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples”, for library staff and trustees.

Partnerships that support this priority:

For our staff training and community events with Bob Joseph, we partnered with the North Vancouver District Public Library, the West Vancouver Memorial Library and the North Vancouver Recreation & Culture Commission.

For our book club conversations, we partnered with the North Shore Multicultural Society and Reconciliation Canada to help us host meaningful and safe community conversations on topics which can be triggering for many.

Outcomes:

As a result of this work:

- Our Indigenous Peoples Day and Orange Shirt Day video book reviews reached a total of nearly 800 people through the library's social media channels. This included 28 “click-throughs” — viewers who went on to explore our Indigenous collections and materials further
- 46 people participated in our two Bob Joseph “*21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act*” Virtual Drop-in Book Clubs.

- 500 people registered for the virtual public event with Bob Joseph (the maximum number of registrants our Zoom license would permit), and 33 staff and trustees participated in his training session.

In addition, participants in community programming reported that they:

- Had increased their knowledge about the content and impacts of the Indian Act, and had greater awareness of context for current issues and events
- Felt motivated to deepen and extend their learning
- Felt increased commitment to making change and speaking out against racism
- Experienced an increased sense of safety and support as a result of facilitator participation in discussions

ENHANCING GOVERNANCE: ELIMINATING OVERDUE FINES

North Vancouver City Library is working to identify and resolve barriers to accessing library services. Recognizing that many community members struggle to access library services, it is our aspiration that all members of our community will feel a sense of community and belonging in the library.

2020 Initiative: Eliminating Overdue Fines

The North Vancouver City Library eliminated fines on overdue materials on May 1, 2020 – the first library in the Lower Mainland to do so. This initiative supported our strategic priority to “enhance access and inclusion” and marked the culmination of a multi-year process involving library staff, trustees and City Council.

Recognizing that charging overdue fines was creating persistent barriers to access for vulnerable community members and generating negative customer service experiences, Library staff first raised the possibility of going fine-free with the Library Board in early 2019. In their governance role, Trustees had many questions, including: what was the evidence? what would the financial impacts be? how would the library ensure that materials were returned in a timely fashion for use by others?

Library staff conducted research and prepared a report to address Trustees’ questions. System data showed that about 28% of overdue fines were going unpaid, and more than 10% of active cardholders had a “block” on their account resulting from unpaid fines. Libraries in other jurisdictions who had already gone fine-free reported no perceptible change in overdue rates following elimination of overdue fines. This data suggested that fines did not have the desired effect of encouraging people to return their materials on time, and instead resulted in non-payment of fines and reduced use of the library.

Anecdotal observation indicated that overdue fines and “blocks” disproportionately affected users, especially those with lower incomes and households with young children. Many customers perceived fines as punitive, triggering embarrassment and defensiveness and resulting in challenging interactions at our Welcome Desk.

A financial analysis conservatively estimated that the cost of levying and processing overdue fines added up to about two-thirds of the total revenue realized. Staff were able to identify potential savings that could be used to offset 80% of lost revenue.

With this information in hand, the Library Board unanimously supported a motion to eliminate overdue fines in June 2019, to take effect with the 2020 budget.

A final step was approval by City Council of an increase to City Library's operating budget of \$10,000 to cover the remaining 20% of reduced revenue, which took place in April 2020 with several councillors speaking in favour of the initiative.

Overdue fines were officially eliminated on May 1, 2020, in the early days of the pandemic, shortly before the library launched takeout service. Given global events, the moment didn't get the attention we might otherwise have expected (though our local paper did publish an article about the move). However, this was a critical time for our community who were dealing with the social, economic and personal impacts of the ongoing pandemic and were desperate for access to materials, information, technology, and community connection.

Partnerships that support this priority:

This initiative illustrates the synergy that can take place among trustees, staff and municipal councils. Trustees ensured decision making was data-driven, fiscally responsible and strategically aligned; staff provided research and expert advice; and council expressed support through a modest funding increase.

Outcomes:

The pandemic has brought extended loan periods, temporary closure and many other disruptions that have made it challenging to fully assess the impact of this change. Already, we have observed the following outcomes:

- The percentage of active cardholders who are "blocked" has fallen from 10% to 2%
- We have seen a 60% increase in overdue materials returned or settled
- During school group visits, all students are able to borrow materials (where previously it was typical for several students to be blocked due to overdue fines)
- Elimination of arguments and altercations between customers and staff regarding overdue fines
- Reduced service charges and other costs for processing of fines
- Increased staff capacity for other priorities

ADDITIONAL REPORTING FOR 2020

TECHNOLOGY GRANT – FINAL REPORT

North Vancouver City Library, working together with North Vancouver District Public Library and West Vancouver Memorial Library, used funds from the provincial technology grant to leverage additional funding from the West Vancouver Community Foundation and build a collection of devices to lend to

residents at risk of digital exclusion and social isolation. The collection will include an additional 10 tablets, 20 Chromebook laptops, and 10 Wi-Fi hotspots with data plans.

We anticipate the Chromebooks and Wi-Fi hotspot lending programs to be launched in winter and spring of 2021 respectively. The tablets – lent out pre-loaded with apps designed to help users connect with family, friends, and government services – launched in October 2020. In the four months since their launch, these tablets have circulated nearly 40 times. We have heard directly from two of these borrowers, both of whom were seniors without any previous access to such technology. Both seniors reported being able to learn a new technology as a result of this service, and one told us that it made it possible for her to be able to connect with her grandchildren online while social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Both users were “thrilled” and “extremely grateful” to have access to this program, and “couldn’t wait to borrow [the device] again”.

With access to information technology at public libraries still limited by the pandemic, lending these laptops, tablets, and Wi-Fi hotspots will help bridge the digital divide, and ensure that vulnerable residents gain access to the tools and technology that they need to learn and connect, and stay healthy during a challenging time.

COVID-19 AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Like most public libraries throughout the province, City Library’s initial closure in March was swift and sudden.

When we closed our physical doors on March 16, 2020, staff pivoted service delivery to an online model nearly overnight. The library built and curated a [Library at home](#) section on its website to connect the community to valuable resources for working, learning and having fun while isolating at home. [Story times](#) and [book reviews](#) migrated online to YouTube and Instagram. Librarians showcased the myriad of resources and databases available online with a weekly [Home learning video](#). The library launched a chat service to connect with its customers and continue answering reference questions and providing readers’ advisory guidance in real time.

Library staff worked collaboratively with other North Shore organizations to help launch and maintain the [Connect North Shore](#) web page — a public hub of resources available and community updates about the pandemic. Library staff shared their expertise and experiences in helping community members combat homelessness, food insecurity and mental health issues. That firsthand knowledge laid the groundwork for the Connect North Shore web page and continues to inform and help the community.

City Library also joined with the North Vancouver District Public Library and West Vancouver Memorial Public Library to start the **Take Home Tech** program to provide devices to those in need. The libraries worked with service providers and community organizations such as Silver Harbour Seniors Centre, Eslah7an Adult Learning Centre (Squamish Nation), North Shore Crisis Services Society, North Shore Women’s Centre and many others.



Inventive frontline staff developed safe procedures for a curbside takeout model for books, magazines and audiovisual materials and launched **Library Takeout** on May 4, 2020. The takeout model helped safely deliver 11,849 library materials and processed 1,796 orders through July 2020. Throughout the same period of time, City Library saw a spike in digital materials and resources being borrowed and accessed: 103,069 digital items were borrowed and 51,604 online courses were taken.

In July, after weeks of preparing the facility and staff for the return of customers, the library reopened its doors. Plexiglass was installed at all service points, furniture was slowly reinstated at safe distances, and public computers and study carrels were opened. The response from community was overwhelming — many people remarked how much they missed visiting the library, browsing for materials and connecting with the staff. The library continued to reinvent service delivery and created a vibrant, outdoor space — the **Fresh Air Library** — for customers to sit, read a newspaper or have their lunch.

As public health guidelines allowed, the library slowly reintroduced more services for the public. In the fall, **individual bookable spaces** became available for customers to take private video conferencing calls, conduct job interviews and connect with family across the globe. Operating hours were extended in September and again in January to safely accommodate more people in the building.

Video conferencing- and screen-fatigue started wearing heavy on our customers. As the second wave of the pandemic ramped up, the library responded with a **brand-new collection of jigsaw puzzles and board games** to help the community get some relief from the screen and spend quality time with their bubble — just in time for the holidays.

Looking ahead, library staff are looking at opportunities to accommodate customers where they're comfortable — be it in the digital space with **self-paced learning** and discovery, or collaborating on a **community-wide citizen science** project throughout the North Shore.

No one in our community has gone untouched by COVID-19. The pandemic highlighted how critical the library and library services are to the community. We continue to develop innovative ways of reinventing our services and connecting with our customers.

SUMMARY

Two years into our strategic plan, 2020 promised to be a year to follow through and build on the many projects and initiatives undertaken in 2018 and 2019. With four new Trustees joining the Board, we planned to re-engage with our strategic plan. We looked forward to launching a community technology learning lab, building the case for expanded library spaces and services in response to a growing

community, deepening our reconciliation work, and working on staff development and policy to strengthen equity, diversity and inclusion.

On March 16, 2020 North Vancouver City Library closed its doors in response to growing concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic, which would prove to be the driver for nearly all of our work for the rest of the year. In response to anxiety about economic impacts and the request of the municipality, we returned nearly \$200,000 (about 5% of our operating budget) in savings resulting from a hiring freeze, temporary layoff of auxiliary staff, and reduced spending on training, development, physical collections and other operating costs. At the same time, we absorbed significant increased costs for plexiglass barriers, personal protective equipment for staff and the public, and other equipment and supplies related to the pandemic.

Many of our goals and priorities for 2020 had to be re-engineered for the pandemic context, and many others were delayed or deferred altogether due to lack of staff or financial capacity.

The pandemic has shown us how deeply the community values and relies on the public library – for core services like borrowing, public technology access and literacy programs, as well as intangibles like community belonging and feelings of normalcy. It has shown up the creativity and resiliency of library staff and trustees. It has also underlined a deep digital divide and social and economic inequality – which call for focused attention and effort in the coming year, while we continue to evolve and respond to the unfolding pandemic.

Library Technology Grant – Interim Report

North Vancouver City Library

October 8, 2020

North Vancouver City Library, working together with North Vancouver District Public Library and West Vancouver Memorial Library, is using funds from the provincial technology grant to (a) leverage additional funding from the West Vancouver Community Foundation and (b) purchase 24 laptops, 10 tablets and 10 WiFi hotspots. The devices will be made available through a lending program so residents at risk of digital exclusion and social isolation can have access to technology and Internet. Library staff will create clear-language instructions to circulate with the items and provide phone and video support to community members borrowing the items.

Access to computers and internet at public libraries has been interrupted and continues to be restricted by pandemic-related measures. Typically, more than 550 people access library computers at the three North Shore Libraries every day, and our data suggests 10-15% of residents rely on the library for computer or internet access.

As education, workplaces, social and professional services, and social interaction all increasingly move online, many members of our community, including the most vulnerable, are experiencing not only social distancing but social isolation and a profound disconnect.

By lending laptops, tablets and WiFi hotspots North Vancouver City Library aims to bridge the digital divide and ensure vulnerable residents gain access to the tools and technology they need to learn and connect.

Following the pandemic, some of the laptops will be repurposed as a mobile classroom for community outreach. Remaining devices will continue to be made available for loan.

2020 LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY GRANT REPORTING FORM: NORTH VANCOUVER CITY LIBRARY

Total Technology Grant Amount: \$22,808

Area of Need	Outcome	Metrics	Strategic Links	Actions	Collaborative Links	Timeframe	Project Budget	In-Kind/Leveraged funds	Comments
Other, please specify Patron loanable devices (laptops, tablets, WiFi hotspots)	Loanable devices help reduce barriers to digital inclusion and equity for customers who rely on the library for access to computers and the internet.	# of devices for loan # of checkouts # loans to individuals who are vulnerable % who feel better connected to family or friends % who report learning new technology skills % who are better able to access supports and services	Accessible, loanable devices support the provincial strategic priority to improve access for all British Columbians	Purchase tablets, laptops and hotspots. Complete PIAs. Configure for use. Develop policies and procedures. Process and circulate items. Work with partners to ensure we are connecting with vulnerable residents.	We are partnering with the other two North Shore library systems to seek matching funding, and to collaboratively plan and implement these programs across all three systems. We will work with community-based service providers (ex. Vancouver Coastal Health, Canadian Mental Health Association, North Shore Family Services, School District 44, North Shore Multicultural Society) to ensure devices reach vulnerable residents.	July- September 2020: Research devices and test. October 2020: launch tablets November 2020: Launch hotspots January 2021: Launch laptops (back ordered)	Devices: \$22,000 Software: \$5,000 Hotspots (including data fees): \$9,000 Misc: \$1,808 TOTAL \$37,808	\$15,000 from the West Vancouver Community Foundation. All went towards increased number of devices for loan.	