

2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

LIBRARY NAME

Salmo Valley 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).

For the Salmo Valley Public Library, 2021 turned into '2020 part 2'. The past couple of years were not what anyone could have imagined, but I must say that SVPL staff and board should be proud of the positive things we did accomplish. The year started with the library providing takeout services, but we were quickly able to open the doors for regular hours and public entry by the middle of January. The direct funding, we receive from the province is very much appreciated and well manage. These funds help us be responsive to the specific needs of our community, which was an extra challenge this year. As with most sectors in the province, we spent many hours adapting plans and protocols throughout the year. I believe BC Libraries were directly impacted in 3-4 health order changes. Having stable funding from the province helped us be secure in navigating the challenges.

The Village of Salmo and Area G continue to see an increase in new families moving to the community. For the combined population we serve in the Village of Salmo and AREA G of the Regional District of the Central Kootenay, SVPL provides services to 2790, according to the 2021 census. Many of the residents in the area are home owners and have a long term vested interest in the community and its services – such as the library.

As the community grows so does the Salmo Valley Public Library as we continue to be a hub of activity. Our library is situated right in the middle of the community and we prided ourselves on being a welcoming and inclusive community space that is accessible and convenient.

As for many, 2021 has been yet another year with many significant changes and challenges. One of the positive things that has continued to happen has been a regular connection with ABCPLD, Kootenay Library Federation, and other Library Partners. The usage of online meeting rooms has truly brought us all together and allowed us to strengthen our work and how we connect with each other. This has been a space to share ideas and challenges that help build our connections, which we then are able to take with us into our own communities.

Further encouraging changes are how well we were able to continue to adapt and play a positive roll within our community during these challenging times. We have been able to provide services, when others could not - digital collections, online learning, databases, and then we were able to quickly set up to provide take away (curbside) services when needed. We were also able to be a source of

information and support regarding provincial health orders and vaccine information. It was helpful to many that the library was able to provide these services, as we were one of the only places in our community that was able to do so.

2. MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

Please describe any new or major ongoing projects/programs the library has delivered in the past year. To report on multiple projects/programs, “copy” the blank table below and insert additional tables as needed using the “paste” function. Use one table per project/program.

Project/Program Name
Phyllis Tatum Reading Garden
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.
<p>The Phyllis Tatum Community Reading Garden has developed a portion of the outside space of the Salmo Library. The Salmo Valley Public Library is in a community building that is owned and operated by the Salmo Square Society. This building houses the Salmo Museum, Chamber of Commerce, and the Salmo Library and is located right downtown Salmo.</p> <p>The idea behind this library led development of the space was to create an outdoor extension of the indoor library community space; a space that is welcoming and accessible for all. The project has seen the development of a 30x15 ft yard space into a shaded area with seating and low maintenance perennial plants and trees, it is accessible to all community members, and the non-profits who work out of the Salmo Square Society building, as well as all other community groups who wish to access. The area is fenced with gates so parents can comfortably enjoy the space with their children, and thanks to the connectivity grant from BC Libraries Coop, there will be access to the free library Wi-Fi.</p>
How does this project/program support the library’s strategic goals and/or community?
<p>The project was an opportunity for the library to address a need to provide an outdoor space for community members to relax and connect, access free internet, and offer an extension of all the library services in a safe and welcoming space. By providing an outdoor extension of the library community space, we have met a need for outdoor spaces for people to meet, learn, and connect. Although this was a need we had recognized prior to 2020, the library’s priority issues have shifted slightly in view of the current operating climate. This opportunity became more of a priority project after the changes during 2020, and the recognition that the library and the community would benefit greatly from having an outdoor extension of the library space at this key downtown building.</p> <p>In our 2017 community survey, we heard from people that an outdoor space in which people would be able to sit and access the internet was needed. We also have been running many children and youth programs outside, and the prior space was not very usable, nor was it one that enabled us to build upon to develop further community programs.</p> <p>Many of our residents are not able to travel to larger communities in order to access all the benefits a library provides. Having a vibrant and attractive library, both inside and outside, right in the centre of town contributes to making our community a great place to live, learn, and do business. In our 2017 survey, 48% of the respondents said they access the library for events and programs. Our library has over 1130 active cardholders, some of whom are families, so the number of library users is even greater. This is close to 45% of the population of our service area and does not include those who use the library on a casual basis. Both register library users and non users will be a part of the long-term development and use of this space. We also have an active group of volunteers who enjoy dedicating their time to supporting the library space and community. They are excited about the project and working on developing the garden over the years.</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.	
<p>1. Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)</p>	<p>Access to outdoor meeting spaces for changing times with communicable diseases such as COVID-19 Providing stronger and easier access to the internet in a rural community where there are still many people who can't receive or afford a home internet service</p>
<p>2. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)</p>	<p>Having an outdoor meeting space for programs and meetings, allows for collaboration across the community and with other community groups. It also provides a space for the library staff, board members and volunteers to meet in an outdoor setting. Provides meaningful work for library volunteer group.</p>
<p>3. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)</p>	<p>This new outdoor space is a community space. We foresee a future of it being well used not only for library programs but other local non-profits and school groups. There will also be opportunities for knowledge sharing in this outdoor space. It has opened connections and ideas for future plans to work with local Indigenous peoples to create knowledge sharing features in the space, ones that support lasting reconciliation.</p>
<p>4. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)</p>	<p>The building that the library is situated in is owned and operated by a non-profit group of which the library has 2 members sitting on the board. Historically there hasn't been a very productive relationship about management of the building space. With this project we have see a positive and active change in the governance of this building and the relationship between the library and the non-profit who own the building.</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.

Public libraries serve the needs of the whole community. Our library's service community consists, but is not limited to, senior citizens, children, and parents with little ones, newcomers, all of who need and use places to connect and meet.

The benefit we see inside the library will happen outside too and not just by library users but by the community as a whole. The library helps new moms connect at baby story-times; elderly people, often facing difficult life transitions, attend events and find that they make new friends; teenagers meet up after school, and readers discuss current events. These are just some of the benefits provided by the space our library has created, and these will happen more with an outdoor space. Inside and outside libraries are providing spaces that allow for community-building connections.

Short-term impacts:

- Will be largest with the groups of people who currently use the library most often, and the many who access our free internet when we are closed.
- Another short-term impact that has been seen as a result is that this will aid as the community learning to navigating issues around communicable diseases and the need for meeting places that are outside.

Long-term impact:

- community groups and library programs using the space over the years.
- updated our WIFI services to better serve people when using this outdoor area, and set the library up for when the community has stronger internet service.
- This outdoor space is going to greatly enhance our ability to provide services to the community, and not just for the library programs such as the Provincial Summer Read Club Program, but for many other community groups and programs.
- Furthermore, by creating this community space at the non-profit Salmo Square Society building the Salmo Chamber and Museum will also be able to enhance their services.

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

The Salmo Library has created a Reading Garden Sub-committee that includes staff, Friends of the Library, and Library Board members. This is the group of people that have been leading this project. We hired a local Salmo Landscaping company to complete the project. The area is being managed and maintained by the Library Board, staff, and Friends of the Library group. The Sub-committee is also in contact with the Salmo Square Society Board and the Village of Salmo to make sure that are aware and in support of the project.

This space has all ready been booked to be used by our local Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy group to run a summer program for kids.

The local daycare has asked if they can use the space for outings for the group.

We have been approached with the idea to collaborate another community group to paint a mural on the back wall in this new area, one that highlights Indigenous knowledge and history.

The Connectivity grant we received from BC Libraries Coop allowed for us to put a WIFI repeater in this new area. This has provided stronger internet connection in the outdoor space.

To help us complete this project, we received funding from the Columbia Basin Trust.

[Copy and insert additional tables below for each additional project/program as needed]

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>A major challenge during COVID was we could no longer rely on our volunteers: rural libraries, like ours, that are not attached to regional systems do not have the capacity (staffing or funding) to fill in the gaps and divides that the pandemic exposed. An example that illustrates this, is our reliance on volunteers to support and deliver library services. Volunteers left during the pandemic (an ongoing issue as many volunteers are seniors), leaving us struggling to offer regular services, in addition to the pressure of offering additional services brought on by the pandemic.</p> <p>Provincial funding that supports collaboration between libraries was very helpful during this time, as working with other libraries for supports was very helpful when we did not have the capacity within our own staff (ie: online programs, zooms, shared collections, marketing materials) Work in collaboration with other public libraries and library federations on related projects using the literacy and equity grant was supportive for some of the challenges faced.</p>
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	<p>One of the challenges that our rural library (along with many other rural public libraries) continues to face is insufficient financial support. We struggle to meet the demand for programming, tech support, and professional development with an operating budget that can only handle a small staff at a below average wage. Every year it gets harder to create a budget that will grow with the demands of the community but stay within the limited amount of funding received - Staff are overwhelmed with work and the demand to</p>

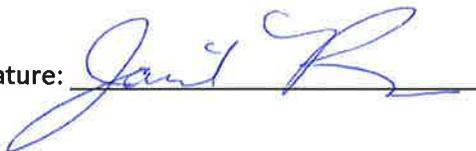
	meet the challenges and changes needed for these times. This is where the per capita operating grant for the province is used.
Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health and wellness)	As mentioned above – without our volunteer base during covid our lack of staff was exposed. Without the financial support for our operating budget, we can not afford more staff or the pay staff adequately. This may look like cutting hours or other budget lines, such as books or programs.
Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	
Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)	This continues to be a struggle but with the support from the Connectivity Grant the Province of BC provided to the BC Libraries Coop we have been able to add 3 WIFI repeaters and a stronger firewall, all which have greatly increase or internet speeds and security.
Aging/damaged facilities (e.g., need for repairs, renovations, upgrades/expansions)	Our building does not have air conditioning and during the heat dome it was very difficult for staff to work in the space. As high temperatures are most likely to become a more regular occurrence, we are now looking for funding to support us putting a A/C unit in the building. This will be led by library, as the building owners do not have the capacity or funding to do this. We will be able to find funding through grants, but it is important to note here that again this takes limited time from our small staff.
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)	With that said, it would seem that are biggest challenge is that we continue to see our local funding not increase as well as Provincial, which has meant it is becoming harder to meet the ever-growing needs of the community, along with the extra challenges we all faced in 2021.

4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.

Library Director Signature: 

Date: March 18, 2022

Board Chair Signature: 

Date: March 18, 2022

