

2022 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

LIBRARY NAME

Bowen Island 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. CHALLENGES](#)
- [4. COVID-19 RELIEF & RECOVERY – 2022 PROGRESS REPORT](#)
- [5. BOARD APPROVAL](#)

INTRODUCTION - LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

Provide a brief description of the community and library, focusing on what has changed in the past year. If provincial funding is primarily used to support your library's core operations, please include a general describe where it is applied (staffing, utilities, collections, etc.).

Bowen Island is located in Howe Sound, a 20-minute ferry ride from West Vancouver. We have a population of approximately 4,200 a growth of approximately 15% over the 2016 census. Bowen library is a member of the Public Library InterLINK federation and serves the residents of Bowen Island, visitors, temporary workers, and students on the island, as well as public library InterLINK patrons visiting, staying or requesting materials from Bowen Library. The island has a public K-7 community school under School District 45, a private middle school accommodating 50 students in grades 6 – 9, a Distributed Education Program under School District 40, and several private preschools. The majority of secondary school students travel daily, by bus and ferry, to high schools in West Vancouver.

Bowen library is located in an historic building in the heart of our commercial district, just 100 metres from the ferry terminal. The library is a hub for community gathering and a source of information and leisure materials, public computers, Wi-Fi access, lendable medical equipment, as well as a place for study, work and resource sharing. Tutors meet their students at the library, tele-commuters come to our study space to work quietly away from their busy households, and library programs for all ages draw the community to learn, share, and engage with each other.

The community and the library are challenged by a small tax base, no industry, a large percentage of the working population commuting off-island each day, and yet high expectations from community

members for island facilities and services that are on par with those found in much larger neighbouring communities.

Strategic Priorities for Bowen Library 2022-2024:

- Being Nimble, Staying Current
- Connecting with the Community
- Access and Learning
- Creating Welcoming Spaces
- Effective Financial Management
- Social Responsibility

Bowen library used our provincial per capita grant to support additional staff hours for increased public service hours in 2022. Now open more hours than pre-pandemic, Bowen Library worked to serve families, commuters and seniors by offering extended evening hours and Sunday opening in 2022.

2. FEATURED PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

Please describe any featured 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. You do not need to report on every project/program, only highlights/notable examples.

Project/Program Name
Expanded in-person programming and events
Provide a brief description. Please include details such as any partnerships or resources leveraged to accomplish this project/program.
<p>In 2022 Bowen Library focussed on the return and expansion of in-person programming – library services that were deeply missed during the COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions. A patron survey in late 2021 indicated that patrons were keen for in person social connections, and were pleased with Bowen Library’s COVID safety protocols that made them feel safe returning to the library.</p> <p>2022 new programs included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy Day activities in person at the library and for take home (Book Bingo, Literary scavenger Hunt and Bring Your Own Book Club. • Digital Literacy and Online Safety Workshop for Seniors • Social connection programs such as Chess Mates for families, Games Night for Seniors, Dungeons & Dragons, and Teen Advisory Group • Indigenous connection programs such as an evening of short Indigenous Films; National Indigenous People’s Day Storytime with Kung Jadee; and a Squamish Weaving workshop and story session with Cheximiya.
How does this project/program support the library’s strategic goals?

In-person programming supports the library's strategic goals to connect with the community, provide access to learning, creating welcoming spaces and supporting social responsibility.

In person programs bring the community together to learn together and to connect on a social level. Parents attending early literacy programs with their children commented on the excitement they felt to be able to sit together with other parents and children to share their experiences and learn from each other, as well as from the library programs.

The library is seen as a welcoming space for the community. The removal of fines reduces barriers to patrons, and makes the library feel more welcoming. Our increased programs provided free lifelong learning opportunities for our community members in a trusted and accessible venue.

Programming around National Indigenous People's Day supported the library's goal of social responsibility advancing community's knowledge of Indigenous Peoples.

Seeing our patrons back in the library attending events, workshops and programs provides opportunities for library staff to engage directly with community members, receive their feedback and respond to requests.

How does this project/program support the [B.C.'s strategic goal\(s\) for public library service](#) from the strategic plan, which include:

1. Improving Access
2. Building Capacity
3. Advancing Citizen Engagement
4. Enhancing Governance

1. Improving access – Increased open hours provides opportunities for increased programming. Bowen Library received feedback from the community in late 2021 and applied those findings to plan programs and events that were customer centered.
2. Building Capacity – We used our increased in person programming as an opportunity to build staff skills in early literacy programming. Staff new to programming were mentored by senior staff and community volunteers to build their babytime, storytime and adult programming skills.
3. Advancing citizen engagement – NIPD activities provided opportunities for people to discover resources on decolonization, to interact with Indigenous community members and participate in Indigenous culture.

What are the key outcomes of this project/program?

Attendance at in-person programming increased by 120% in 2022 over 2021. This is primarily due to the ability to host safe in-person programs. In particular adult programs offered were above pre-pandemic levels as was the attendance at those programs.

People’s access to learning programs and social connection opportunities was less constrained by library hours and by programs offered. By increasing opening hours we provided programs during times that suited commuters and busy families, resulting in increased attendance at programs.

Did provincial grants enable this project/program? If so, how?

Provincial grants provided funding for staff time to plan, prepare, market and present new programs.

Project/Program Name

Accessibility improvements – Automatic doors

Provide a brief description. Please include details such as any partnerships or resources leveraged to accomplish this project/program.

Bowen Library received funding from the Federal government to improve physical access to the library building through the installation of automatic door openers.

Automatic door openers were installed on exterior entrance doors, interior doors between spaces and on our two accessible public washrooms. The funds were leveraged with Library Branch funding which provided staff resources to plan, monitor and report on the project.

How does this project/program support the library’s strategic goals?

The addition of automatic doors supports our goal to create welcoming spaces in the library. Ensuring those with mobility, strength or dexterity issues have easy access to the library building.

Our goal to commit to social responsibility is also supported with this project. Changes to accessibility requirements in public spaces would have necessitated this work in future. We are proud to have completed this project in advance of requirements from legislation.

How does this project/program support the [B.C.'s strategic goal\(s\) for public library service](#) from the strategic plan, which include:

1. Improving Access
2. Building Capacity
3. Advancing Citizen Engagement
4. Enhancing Governance

1. Improving Access: This project improves physical access to Bowen Library for individuals experiencing mobility issues as well as anyone with strength or dexterity issues. Families with small children, strollers, etc., find it easier to enter and move through the library making it easier and more welcoming for them to come to user centered programming and services.
2. Advancing Citizen Engagement: Physical access to the library should not be a barrier to using the library. This project makes physical access more equitable and allows all community members, whatever their physical abilities, to use the library more easily and to access the resources they need to learn and thrive.
3. Building Capacity: By improving accessibility of the physical building we are supporting the needs of differently abled citizens to consider employment opportunities at Bowen Library.

What are the key outcomes of this project/program?

Six doors were equipped with automatic openers. All of the library entrance doors, and doors between spaces can now be opened with the push of a button. People's access to the library building is less constrained by physical barriers of the weight and handling of doors. People differently abled, with strollers and other equipment, with strength or dexterity challenges feel welcomed to the library and are more inclined to visit in person. Improving access for all British Columbians using Bowen Library.

Did provincial grants enable this project/program? If so, how?

Provincial grant funding provided staff support in the application for funds, the planning of the project, oversight and final reporting.

3. 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 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 2022. 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 library played a key role in guiding patrons who struggle with technology, through the process to access their vaccine verification, and to then print out the QR code so they could continue to visit local restaurants and establishments and support the local community. Staff were trained on how to find the most up to date resources from the provincial and federal government. This challenge eased in early 2022 as vaccine mandates were lifted by the Provincial government.
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	Inflation impacted the library in 2022 on all areas of purchasing. The budget prepared and approved in early 2022 did not anticipate the quickly rising costs due to inflation. Some areas of library budget were cutback to ensure a balanced budget at year end.
Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health, and wellness)	Funding for staffing remains our greatest challenge. Rising municipal costs for large infrastructure projects have impacted all municipal budgets, including the library. We were asked to reduce our budget request for 2022 which resulted in a decrease of staffing by 0.28 FTE. The library managed to continue operations with our expanded service hours by limiting staff replacement for illness and vacation absences. This puts an added stress on the staff who are covering and is not sustainable. Recruitment of staff is a challenge given the high cost of housing on Bowen Island and the relatively low salaries that can be offered by the library under reduced municipal budgets.
Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	Social services on Bowen Island are not readily available. There are no provincial or federal government service offices on Bowen Island, nor is there a social welfare department in the Bowen Island Municipality. Services for underhoused people and those living in poverty are very limited on Bowen. The Library takes on some of those social services roles, providing temporary shelter and washrooms for those experiencing homelessness, and providing technical assistance to access government services online or by phone.

<p>Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)</p>	<p>While Bowen Island has relatively good bandwidth overall, there are community members who cannot afford internet in their home, or are experiencing homelessness. The library's free 24/7 wifi provides connectivity for those community members, along with printing, faxing and scanning services at no or minimal charge.</p> <p>The increase in people working from home since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic has brought more people into the library to use our study spaces. The increase in the use of online meetings, webinars and other video calls puts pressure on the capacity of the library's bandwidth.</p>
<p>Aging/damaged facilities (e.g., need for repairs, renovations, upgrades/expansions)</p>	<p>The main library building was constructed in 1926, and the single-paned windows and doors have not been upgraded. Throughout colder months staff rely on portable heaters at workstations, as the building is near impossible to heat effectively with the current electric baseboards.</p> <p>The library is looking for grants in order to make the main library building more energy efficient, and is considering installation of a heat pump using COVID Relief and Recovery funds from Libraries Branch, as funding for upgrades will most likely not be available from the municipality.</p> <p>The 1926 building itself is in need of renovations and ongoing maintenance to some of its infrastructure. In conjunction with Bowen Island Municipality the Library is looking for funding for repairs to the building.</p>
<p>Community access to the library (e.g., geographic isolation, lack of local public transit, building accessibility)</p>	<p>The library building is wheelchair accessible but did not have accessible doors. The library applied for and was successful in receiving an Enabling Accessibility Fund grant from the federal government in order to install accessible doors. Six automatic door openers were installed in 2022.</p>
<p>Vulnerable communities (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental health crisis)</p>	<p>Staff are challenged to respond to the variety of social service and mental health needs that vulnerable communities present. The Library is the only indoor space that is free to all community members. People experiencing homelessness, addiction and mental health issues regularly use the library as a safe and free space.</p> <p>Mental health issues may increase with some people and staff are finding it more and more difficult to deal with outbursts, anger and challenges around library policies regarding conduct in the library. More training would help and we will be looking for courses staff can take to better equip them to manage these issues.</p> <p>The bigger picture is a need for social service of some kind on island. People with mental health challenges, living in poverty and experiencing homelessness are often not able or willing to leave the island to access services.</p>

Other (please specify)	
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4. COVID-19 RELIEF & RECOVERY GRANT – 2022 PROGRESS REPORT

Summary and Overview

Please provide an executive summary (overview summary) on the library’s use of the COVID-19 Relief and Recovery Grants. The purpose of this section is not to duplicate the individual projects details, instead provide a short analysis and summary of your overall approach and progress. Please limit to 2 paragraphs and feel free to use bullet points.

Summary and Overview
<p>Bowen Library is using the funding for three different initiatives that support community recovery, expanded emergency capacity, and planning for the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fine free status 2022, 2023 and 2024 • Hybrid meeting technology • Heat pump installation <p>Removing fines on late items removes barriers to service and offers the same access to information, resources and library support regardless of financial situation, particularly needed post COVID-19 as people struggle with economic challenges of the pandemic. Hybrid meeting technology ensures that the library governance can continue during times of health and safety events that may impact the ability for staff or board to physically access the library building. Installation of a heat pump to replace baseboard heating, provides more efficient heating and adds cooling capacity for extreme weather events and to increase staff safety by removing temporary portable heaters that are currently used by staff to stay warm during the winter.</p>

	Grant budget	Reallocated budget
COVID-19 Relief & Recovery Grant Amount	\$24,450.18	\$31,131.29
Emergency Planning & Preparedness Grant Amount	\$8150.06	\$1468.95
Total Grant Amount	\$32,600.24	\$32,600.24

Project Progress Report

Please use this section for:

1. Report progress on projects included interim report **and/ or**
2. New projects developed since interim report (copy and paste tables as needed)


Project/Program/Activity	Fine Free Library Service
Rationale	This initiative supports the Bowen Library's belief that everyone should have access to the same information, resources, and support that the Library has to offer, regardless of their financial situation. Fines are a barrier to the community's most vulnerable populations.
Area of Need	COVID-19 Recovery (Community)
Action/Output/Deliverable	The Bowen Library will remove late fees on all items in the collection for three years, as well as clear any outstanding late fees on patron accounts.
Outcome/Impact	Late fees have been shown to disproportionately affect low-income and marginalized members of the community, as well as children and families. With e-alerts for materials coming due, and a steady increase in the borrowing of digital materials which are automatically returned, overdue fines are a decreasing and unstable revenue source for the Library. Libraries who have gone fine-free have seen an increase in patrons return to the library, with many coming back after not borrowing for years due to charges on their accounts.
Metrics	Collection data and new/returning users. In progress.
Collaborative Links (if applicable)	
Expenditure	\$9,000 over 3 years.
Detailed status update since the interim report (e.g., complete, in progress, pending, deferred, etc.).	In progress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1605 in 2022 (July-Dec fine free) • \$3000 in 2023 • \$3,000 in 2024
Comments (optional)	

Project/Program/Activity	Remote Meeting Technology
Rationale	During large scale events such as pandemics, extreme weather events or other emergency events it is imperative for the library board and staff to be able to communicate other than in person in order to carry on governance and operation of the library. This may involve some staff or board needing to meet in person with others only able to meet remotely.
Area of Need	Emergency Planning & Preparedness
Action/Output/Deliverable	The Bowen Library has purchased technology to enable hybrid meetings for the Library Board and other local groups.
Outcome/Impact	Continuity of governance is key during large scale events which impact library operations. Remote meeting technology allows more Board members to access meetings and carry on the governance of the library. This technology has also allowed for a more diverse board, including those who have young families, different working hours, or other commitments which make attending in-person meetings difficult. The library board demographic has changed significantly over the last year with more than half of the board now comprised of Additionally, members of the public will more easily be able to join Board meetings and contribute their thoughts.
Metrics	Board membership. The number of board members with children under the age of 18 has increased by 16% in 2022/2023. Attendance at board meetings in 2022 climbed from an average of 70% of members in attendance to an average of 85% of members in attendance.
Collaborative Links (if applicable)	
Expenditure	\$1468.95
Detailed status update since the interim report (e.g., complete, in progress, pending, deferred, etc.).	Complete. The technology was purchased in 2022 and has been used regularly since July of 2022.
Comments (optional)	

Project/Program/Activity	Heat Pump Installation
Rationale	Improving the efficiency of heating, and add cooling capacity to the in the 1926 main library building to improve conditions for staff and patrons. The project will also extend the floor space available as extreme weather shelter for both cold and hot temperature extremes.
Area of Need	COVID-19 Recovery*
Action/Output/Deliverable	The Bowen Library will move from baseboard heat to a heat pump that will provide energy efficient heat in winter and cooling in summer for both patrons and staff alike.
Outcome/Impact	The Bowen Library operates in a historical building constructed in 1926. Although the building is a piece of Bowen history, it does not have adequate heating and cooling systems for the extreme weather events that we currently experience and will see in the future. Throughout the winter staff use portable heaters to keep warm, and in the summer there are fans running as there is no AC in the main library building. As the library is relied upon as a free public space for vulnerable members of the community to shelter from the elements, having good temperature control is imperative. Additionally, the library will be able to save on hydro costs and operate in a more environmentally conscious capacity in the future.
Metrics	Hydro charges comparison.
Collaborative Links (if applicable)	
Expenditure	\$23,526.29
Detailed status update since the interim report (e.g., complete, in progress, pending, deferred, etc.).	Pending. We have received 2 quotes for heat pump installation and are awaiting approval of the project from the building owner, Bowen Island Municipality.
Comments (optional)	*This initiative could also fall under Emergency Planning and Preparedness however as it applies to both it has been allocated to the grant with the most funding capacity.

5. BOARD APPROVAL

Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.

Library Director Signature: 

Date: March 17, 2023

Board Chair Signature: 

Date: March 17, 2023