

2022 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

LIBRARY NAME

Fort Nelson Public Library Association

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.).

The Northern Rockies Regional Municipality (NRRM) was incorporated on February 6, 2009. The NRRM encompasses about 10% of British Columbia's landmass and is situated in the province's northeast corner. The first regional municipality in British Columbia, the NRRM includes the communities of Fort Nelson, Fort Nelson First Nation, Prophet River First Nation, Toad River, Testa River, and several smaller communities. The town of Fort Nelson is the largest community within the NRRM and the primary service sector for the northeast region. Fort Nelson has always been a diverse and welcoming community with a beautiful landscape that entices many to enjoy its splendour.

The Northern Rockies region's economic base is built on natural gas, oil, forestry, tourism, trapping, and agriculture. Since the 2016 census, our community has seen a significant downward trend in population and employment. The Statistics Canada 2021 census reported that our population has decreased by 18.8%, with a current, total population of 3,947.

The Fort Nelson Public Library (FNPL) serves the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, encompassing the Fort Nelson First Nation, the Prophet River First Nation, and a growing number of visitors each year. FNPL operates under the mandate of being responsive to the residents and visitors of NRRM by providing access to resources, community-oriented programs, and services in a welcoming and safe environment. FNPL is an active member and a strong supporter of our

community and continues to offer programs and build community partnerships that can help support and meet our community's diverse needs.

As the Fort Nelson Public Library (FNPL) continued to adjust and respond amidst pandemic restrictions throughout 2022, we kept true to our strategic priorities outlined in our 2019-2022 Strategic Plan by focusing on our programs and services, technology offerings, our facility and sustainability. 2022 was the final year of the Library's three-year strategic plan; the board and staff look forward to connecting with our community partners and residents to hear what they value most about the Library and where we can direct and prioritize our efforts for our next Strategic Plan to meet the needs of our community.

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
EARTH WEEK AWARENESS
Provide a brief description. Please include details such as any partnerships or resources leveraged to accomplish this project/program.
<p>In April, the library focused on activities, programs, and challenges to promote Earth Week awareness. We organized and facilitated a community clean-up on Earth Day; we had various community members join in to lend a helping hand. Some of these included classes from our local secondary school. Attendees were provided free hot chocolate, goodies, and resources donated by Metalic Safety, our local safety supply store, to assist with the clean-up.</p> <p>We had promotional displays for Earth week, including an interactive vermicomposting display, where patrons could interact with a container of dirt and worms. We collaborated with Collectively Sustainable, our local compostable waste pick-up service, for another display demonstrating compostable waste, and information regarding everything that the worms at our local vermicomposting facility could eat. We also had a special guest from our Municipality, our NRRM Community & Social Development Coordinator, who came in for a special presentation on vermicomposting, providing information on the benefits of composting organic materials and information about land pollution from landfills and the process and benefits of vermicomposting.</p> <p>We purchased and provided games in the library for children to play and learn more about recycling, which involved placing garbage and recyclables in their correct bins. We created bingo cards, which patrons could check off through environmentally friendly actions throughout Earth Week to earn entries into our draws. All our regular programs focused on sustainability, and every participant was able to gain an extra entry into one of our giveaways. Taking part in any of our programs, events, or activities earned draw entries for prizes. We had numerous prizes that focused on being environmentally friendly, such as a beehive kit to promote saving the bees (along with some local</p>

honey), a planting tool with some seeds from our seed library, and other similarly themed prizes for all ages.

We pulled together all of our community's sustainability efforts into a brochure. We provided that as a handout so anyone interested in trying to be more environmentally friendly would have our local resources accessible to them.

We also facilitated our first community book swap, with tables outside our doors filled with materials from our used book sale and donations from our community. This event encouraged our community to bring down books they no longer needed and exchange them for something new. It is a great way to continue promoting sustainability here in the library by giving books second, third and fourth homes.

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

This program supported two goals in our 2019-2022 Strategic Plan: Sustainability and Programs and Services. Through our Earth Week activities, we focused our energies on collaborating with our community partners to promote sustainability efforts and educate them on the importance of being environmentally conscious. We fostered learning and personal growth through events and programs and provided social opportunities for all ages. All enjoyed these activities, and we look forward to repeating this event.

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

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

Advancing Citizen Engagement:

Through our Earth Week awareness, we created numerous opportunities for community engagement. Through our displays, we were able to promote local sustainability efforts, provide information on important topics and promote our collections. Our programs and activities allowed us to build strong relationships with our patrons and community partners.



What are the key outcomes of this project/program?

Short-term Outcomes:

- The project positively impacted our community by promoting sustainability and taking action on sustainability efforts by initiating a community clean-up.
- Promoted library services and resources.
- Increased opportunities for collaboration with community groups, organizations, and partners
- Increased community engagement through programs and activities

Long-term Outcomes:

- Building long-lasting relationships within the community.
- Supporting education for all ages through increased awareness of sustainability and Earth Week Awareness.
- Supporting local businesses through partnerships.
- Working towards a more sustainable community.
- As a result of our awareness week and the conversations we had, we increased the number of community members diverting compostable waste to our community vermiculture project.

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

Through provincial grant funding, we were able to utilize funds to purchase multiple giveaways for the draws and purchase promotional resources to promote sustainability efforts in our community. This funding significantly contributed to our Earth Week Awareness success!

Project/Program Name

CHILDREN’S PLAY AREA

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

This summer, we created a new space near our mural for younger age groups and their caregivers to enjoy playtime. We have had very positive feedback from the community on the addition of this space for little ones and have noticed a significant increase in families returning to the library! There is a wide variety of toys and games, puzzles, and a new play kitchen which includes wooden kitchen accessories.

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

Our newly designated play space supports our library’s strategic plan by focusing on building and developing comfortable spaces within the library. This play space is in frequent use and provides opportunities for families to meet up and socialize with other families while their children socialize and utilize the space. Our new play space fosters learning, personal growth, and social opportunities for all ages, which meets the needs of our Programs and Services priority as outlined in our strategic plan.



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

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

Advancing Citizen Engagement:

- Provides a space for young children and their caregivers to enjoy while visiting the library. It builds a love of the library for our younger ages!
- Provides opportunities for programs for younger age groups.
- Our Fort Nelson Play School visits this space almost daily through the colder months, and families continue to use the space following programs they attend or while their older children are in the programs. This space encourages families to stay longer and enjoy all the library offers.

What are the key outcomes of this project/program?

Short-term Outcomes:

- Create a designated children's play area.
- Increased enjoyment for patrons using the library.
- Visually appealing esthetic and inviting atmosphere.

Long-term Outcomes:

- Increase visits from younger age groups and families.
- Increase in program opportunities.

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

Funds from the Provincial Grants were used to purchase portions of this project's materials and resources.

Project/Program Name**COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS**

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

FNPL staff focused on collaborating with our community partners and building relationships to provide services and events to our community. Through these collaborative partnerships, we have significantly increased our program offerings here in the library.

- We partnered with School District 81's Speech-Language Pathologist, Gabrielle Johnston, to celebrate Speech and Hearing Month by building an informational display and providing a story time/craft program. During this program, the Speech-Language Pathologist was available to answer questions about early childhood speech and language milestones.
- For National Truth & Reconciliation, a display was built and filled with educational resources focused on the history of residential schools and their ongoing impacts. The display included pins with an orange shirt to reinforce the message that every child matters. Thanks to grant funding provided by the Law Foundation of BC and the Law Matters program at Courthouse Libraries BC, books were purchased to increase awareness and understanding of this topic and handed out for free to community members.
- Throughout the summer and into the fall, FNPL collaborated with the Fort Nelson Literacy Society to offer numerous programs here in the library, including programs such as Learn to Sign, where patrons were able to learn beginner Sign Language, a meet the Expert Series, which included special guests from our community that were able to provide learning on topics such as beginners First Aid, and hair braiding, etc. Another great collaboration with the Literacy Society included a Make-and-Take program, where registrants could make food or slime and take them home! So many fun and educational programs were facilitated here in the library through this partnership.
- The Public Library took part in the Northern Rockies Art Council's HeART walk this past summer. The Northern Rockies Art Council displayed pieces that local artists created in several companies around town, and various pieces were displayed here at the library. The arts council created and distributed a map showcasing all participating businesses, which was a great way to promote the library.
- We joined the Northern Rockies Arts Council in their annual Street Festival, which took place at the Fort Nelson Heritage Museum on September 9th and 10th. The library hosted a table where we promoted Fort Nelson Public Library - Northern Rockies Region Archives and all our different programs and services. We handed out program guides, informational brochures about the archives, and custom 'I Love My Library' pins. We were pleased to see so many community members wearing their pins proudly in support of their library! Our table had over 220 visitors.
- For our Summer Reading Club over the summer, we partnered with the Phoenix Theatre for two events. One was a NELF-sponsored performance with Mary Lambert, and the other was for a Chalk & Freezie event, where we invited members of our community to join us in making mini chalk masterpieces out on our entryway and offered freezies from our Theatre.
- We partnered with the Fort Nelson Fire Department, who came to the library and provided a storytime, followed by a tour of their firetruck.
- We partnered with the Northern Rockies Recreational Center for a quarterly story walk. We supply a story to display on the walking track for families to enjoy when accessing the track.

The story is spread out over a distance, promoting literacy as well as a healthier and more active lifestyle.

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

Through these collaborations, we were able to support two areas outlined in our 2019-2022 Strategic Plan – Sustainability and Programs & Services by:

- Facilitating and creating programs and activities that focus on all age groups.
- Reaching out to our community through community partnerships and programs.
- Reaching out to residents who are not presently engaged with the library, through appropriate community events.
- Maintaining and building relationships with community partners and schools.
- Advocating the value of the library to the community.
- Strengthening relationships with key strategic partners.

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

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

Enhancing Governance:

- Through these collaborative partnerships, we significantly increased our program offerings here in the library.
- With the increase in offerings thanks to these partnerships, we were able to broaden our reach within our community by drawing from all the partnered organizations' users.

Advancing Citizen Engagement:

- These partnerships created increased opportunities for our community engagement.

What are the key outcomes of this project/program?

Short-term Outcomes:

- Created opportunities for increased community engagement.
- Increased program offerings.
- Provided programs and events for all ages.
- Promoted local artistry.
- Promoted library services and programs.
- Promoted healthy living and literacy for all ages.

Long-term Outcomes:

- Long-lasting relationships.
- Potential for more partnerships.
- Building increased awareness and love of the library.
- Promoted healthy living and literacy for all ages.

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

The provincial grant funding allowed us to utilize funds to facilitate programs and events through these partnerships. Funds were used to purchase giveaways and to purchase promotional resources for these events.

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)	N/A
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	N/A
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	N/A
Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health, and wellness)	N/A
Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	<p>Fort Nelson has seen its fair share of vital services in our community disappear over the last few years. Our health services continue to be very restricted. Families expecting new babies are expected to leave town at least a month before their due date for deliveries because of a lack of staff and resources to care for them here in our community—the same for anyone requiring surgery, a lack of staffing and resources means many must travel to seek care. For emergencies, our closest hospital is Fort St. John, 381 Km away, a 4-hr. drive with 'good' weather and even longer in winter conditions.</p> <p>A recent loss for our community is the ability to do lab testing locally. With a lack of qualified lab technologists, our lab specimens are now being sent to Fort St. John, resulting in longer turnaround times for results.</p> <p>Another service our community has lost is our Greyhound services, a</p>

	<p>lifeline to individuals needing alternate transportation methods or experiencing financial barriers and increasing isolation in our remote community. The BC Bus has helped mitigate some of these issues. However, it only runs twice per week, arriving one day and leaving the next.</p> <p>FNPL tries to help with this issue by having open hours seven days a week to accommodate all different schedules and availability to allow patrons to access both physical and digital informational resources.</p>
Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)	<p>Our internet is expensive when compared to most of British Columbia. While we generally have good speed in our community, our connections can be unreliable due to aging infrastructure. The cost is and continues to be a significant barrier for many in our community.</p> <p>Many of our community members rely on our free internet services. They utilize the library's wireless internet and public access computers for various reasons, including performing career searches and applying for jobs, education needs such as distance study and writing exams, online correspondence, general research, and entertainment.</p>
Aging/damaged facilities (e.g., need for repairs, renovations, upgrades/expansions)	<p>Our facility has had numerous plumbing and foundation issues that have come to light over this past year. Significant rain downpours over the summer resulted in water pouring into the library through the exterior walls and soaking our front carpets. We had numerous floods through our ceiling from facilities above us and have been informed that they were due to multiple issues with the aging facility's plumbing. There is hope that all of the problems will be addressed by the planned Town Square Renewal Project, which is detailed in section 4 of this report. They are currently investigating, planning, and estimating the costs for the work needed to update these issues.</p>
Community access to the library (e.g., geographic isolation, lack of local public transit, building accessibility)	<p>The disappearance of our Greyhound services here in Fort Nelson, along with the recent loss of our only taxi service, a lack of alternative transportation methods and the rising costs of gas prices, have continued to create barriers for our community members when accessing the library.</p> <p>For a community whose winter season lasts for what seems like forever, this contributes to feelings of isolation in our community. FNPL tries to help with this issue by having open hours seven days a week to accommodate all different schedules and availability.</p>
Vulnerable communities (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, addiction, or mental health crisis)	<p>The library has seen an increase in users dealing with addiction and mental health issues. In light of this, permanent staff were able to take First Aid & CPR/AED Level C training. A portion of the Provincial Grant Funding was used to provide this training.</p> <p>Thanks to an initiative from Northern Health and our NELF federation, Fort Nelson Public Library received four DementiAbility Kits. These kits include resources that provide stimulating brain activities for people experiencing cognitive decline, such as memory loss and thinking skills, due to disorders like Alzheimer's. Two permanent staff were also able to take</p>

	DementiAbility training, which was offered and paid for through Northern Health's initiative to help support staff in implementing our Cognitive Care Kits.
Other (please specify)	

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 project details; instead, to 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

We are still working towards meeting the set goals outlined in our interim reporting for the Covid-19 Relief and Recovery Grant. We are keeping to our outlined timeline and plan to utilize the grant funding as detailed in the overview below.

	Grant budget	Reallocated budget
COVID-19 Relief & Recovery Grant Amount	\$24,786.64	\$30,000
Emergency Planning & Preparedness Grant Amount	\$8,262.21	\$3,048.85
Total Grant Amount	\$33,048.85	\$33,048.85

Project Progress Report

Please use this section for the following:

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	Technology Updates
Rationale	Using the Covid-19 Relief and Recovery Grant, one of our outlined goals was to update outdated technology and increase our current technology offerings to provide reliable technology access and increase engagement with the youth in our community through expanded program offerings.
Area of Need	COVID-19 Relief
Action/Output/Deliverable	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public access computers are replaced, and accompanying hardware and accessories are more accessible. 2. Tech Lounge space created in the library to reengage youth in the community and create more accessible technology.
Outcome/Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our current public computers exceed their life expectancy and require repeated IT maintenance. By replacing all public access computers, we will offer our community more reliability for their online informational needs. We will focus on purchasing accessible keyboards and accessories for all public-access computers. • Create a Tech Lounge in the library to entice more youth engagement opportunities. Our statistics have shown an increasing downward trend in youth participation in library programs & activities. We are hoping to attract more youth to the library with this initiative. It will also allow us to increase programming and utilize some of our gaming options in-house, promoting our current collections.
Metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase usage of computer access • Increased youth engagement and participation • Increase program offerings for youth
Collaborative Links (if applicable)	
Expenditure	\$10,000
Detailed status update since the interim report (e.g., complete, in progress, pending, deferred, etc.).	To date, we have replaced our public computers entirely and purchased accessible keyboards for users experiencing visual impairment, which has resulted in a significant increase in usage. We have also purchased a gaming console and accompanying accessories. We will be working towards creating a Tech Lounge in the library to entice more youth engagement opportunities in the library. We plan to purchase hardware, a projector screen, and youth seating by the end of 2023. We also have invested in multiple charging cords for

	various technologies, that patrons can borrow in-house in the library.
Comments (optional)	

Project/Program /Activity	Furniture & Shelving
Rationale	<p>In light of the updated Accessible British Columbia Act, we plan to focus on ensuring that the library meets all accessibility requirements. Using a portion of the grant funding, we want to prioritize replacing furniture with more accessible, longer-lasting options to remove any barriers to service.</p> <p>We also plan to replace some of the current furniture with furniture that holds up better with our cleaning routines implemented during the Covid-19 pandemic.</p>
Area of Need	Covid-19 Recovery
Action/Output/Deliverable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace all the tables and chairs in the library's quiet study areas with accessible furniture. • Replace/purchase new shelving for a growing collection. • Replace worn and deteriorating furniture with commercial furniture that will hold up to cleaning routines.
Outcome/Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furniture is accessible, more user-friendly, and will better meet the needs of our community. Current furniture is heavy and not accessible for any mobility issues, such as wheelchair access. The chairs are bulky and have arms which prevent the ease of sliding in and are difficult to move due to the weight. The tables are too low and have a lip which prevents wheelchair access. • There are areas of our physical collection areas that have no remaining room. There are also areas where we have mix & match shelving; the current shelving is older, and the older models do not align with the current models. Replacing the shelving with current models can increase efficiency and expand shelving to allow for collection growth. Purchasing increased shelving provides the ability to increase our popular collections. • Our furniture has aged considerably, and the constant cleaning has deteriorated some of the finishing. We will purchase items that will hold up better, using a portion of the grant funding. This will enable us to continue our cleaning routines to mitigate the spread of various illnesses.
Metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased usage of study spaces and improved accessibility for all users. • Increase popular physical collection by 10-20% • Increase longevity of furniture to better hold up to cleaning routines
Collaborative Links (if applicable)	<p>https://nr.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/search/?keywords=Town%20Square%20Renewal%20Project&location=184271 (Link provides available information from our local government on the Town Square Renewal Project)</p>
Expenditure	\$20,000

Detailed status update since the interim report (e.g., complete, in progress, pending, deferred, etc.).	Needs to be completed; our current goal is to utilize the Covid-19 Relief and Recovery Grant to meet the goal by the end of 2024/2025.
Comments (optional)	<p>The Northern Rockies Regional Municipality is working on a Town Square Renewal Project, which is set to complete over the next few years. The tenants will be included in this project, and the library is a current tenant and is included in these planned improvements.</p> <p>There are a lot of unknowns currently, and as such, the library is holding off on making any massive changes until we know what the updates will include. There is potential that the library's current layout may change, and there is also potential for increased space in the library.</p>

Project/Program/Activity	Emergency Procedures and Training
Rationale	We will be focusing on creating and implementing procedures to ensure the safety of library personnel and our library users. This will allow us to be better prepared in an emergency.
Area of Need	Emergency Planning & Preparedness
Action/Output/Deliverable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create safety procedures and policies. • Collaborate with local first responders to provide scenario training for staff. • Staff take professional development opportunities focused on library safety.
Outcome/Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented emergency procedures & increased emergency preparedness for staff. • Increase library safety by creating safety procedures to prepare better for emergencies. • Better prepare staff in the event of emergencies.
Metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and emergency preparedness procedure manual will be completed by the end of 2023. • Staff will complete scenario training, and professional development focused on library safety. • Decrease in incidents in the library.
Collaborative Links (if applicable)	
Expenditure	\$3048.85
Detailed status update since the interim report (e.g., complete, in progress, pending, deferred, etc.).	To date, we have finished a fire emergency plan and are planning to have all staff complete fire emergency training with our local fire rescue. Introduction to Business Continuity is being taken through the Justice Institute of BC, thanks to our NELF federation, which will be helpful in emergency planning.

	<p>The course introduces the why and how of developing a business continuity plan for your library, to enable a return to operations as soon as possible following a service disruption (evacuation, flood, etc.). Once this course has been completed, more work will be put into creating emergency procedures & increasing opportunities for emergency preparedness training for staff.</p> <p>After some research, the Fort Nelson Public Library determined that we would not be working towards implementing a security camera policy and purchasing a security camera for the library entrance, as we do not easily qualify for the use of security cameras. Instead, we will focus on professional development with staff regarding mental health issues, handling difficult situations, and working smartly and safely.</p>
Comments (optional)	

5. BOARD APPROVAL

Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.

Library Director Signature: 

Date: February 24, 2023

Board Chair Signature: 

Date: February 24, 2023