2023 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

LIBRARY NAME:

Stewart Public Library Association

CHECKLIST

For the PLGR to be considered complete, please ensure you have provided information for each of the following sections. 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 – provide a brief description of your library and the community it serves (e.g., demographics, local economy, governmental relations, historical context, current issues, etc.).

Stewart BC is a district municipality on the British Columbia-Alaskan border and is home to approximately 400 citizens. It is situated at the end of the Portland canal and surrounded by majestic mountains, icefields and forests. Since the early twentieth century, people from all over the world have come to Stewart for mineral exploration. Although Stewart was built on mining, many other industries help drive the economy such as shipping, tourism and logging.

2023 Year in Review – Highlight activities and accomplishments that the library has focused on this year. Briefly outline how library funding (local, provincial, annual, one-time/targeted) has been used or earmarked for library services and/or special initiatives to meet community needs.

This year the library has focused on continuing to deliver programs and services whilst raising funds to renovate a building for the library. By the end of 2023, we were successful in raising enough funds for renovations to have a functioning library where we will be able to begin operations in the Spring of 2024. We acknowledge how important the library is to our community, and we strived to keep operations as normal as possible with quality programming, services and outreach.

Our per Capita funding received from the provincial government combined with funding from the District of Stewart makes up our daily operational funding. Staff wages, utilities, connectivity, programming, databases, maintenance are funded through these two streams.

The BC One Card grant allows us to serve library patrons from all over British Columbia. We see many visitors from all over the province, especially during the summer tourist season. They appreciate being able to use our library simply by having an active library card.

The Literacy and Equity Grant funds our literacy programs and our library collection. This year we have used it to fund our Summer Reading Club programming, Junior Book Club, Adult Book Club and some collection development. This year, we did not purchase as many books as we normally do as we are in a period of transition.

The one-time Enhancement Grant was earmarked for library renovations. Without a functioning library, it is very difficult to offer predictable, quality services. The Enhancement grant enabled us to complete necessary renovations that will allow us to begin operating in our permanent home.

One-time funding from many different local companies and individuals have made the Stewart Public Library Revitalization Project possible. The 2022 COVID-19 Relief & Recovery (CRR) and Emergency Planning & Preparedness (EPP) Grants were used for renovations to the building as described further in this report.
We have acquired approximately $400,000 through donations, fundraising and grants.

2. FEATURED INITIATIVES

Please describe any significant initiatives the library has undertaken in the past year, focusing particularly on use of the 2022 COVID-19 Relief & Recovery (CRR) and Emergency Planning & Preparedness (EPP) Grants, and plans to use the 2023 Enhancement Grant. To report on multiple initiatives, "copy" the blank table below and insert additional tables as needed using the "paste" function. Use one table per initiative.

Stewart Public Library Revitalization Project	
What is the nature of this initiative? (both may apply)	
☒ New targeted initiatives	☒ Supporting/enhancing existing operations
Area of Operations (select as many as apply)	
☐ Basic operations 　☐ Salaries & benefits 　☐ Lease & utilities 　☐ Collections	☐ Technology 　☐ In-house patron software/hardware 　☐ Loanable hardware 　☐ Staff software/hardware 　☐ Connectivity
☒ Facility upgrades	☐ Library programming
☐ Strategic planning and governance	☐ Staff development
☐ Emergency preparedness	☐ Community outreach
☐ Other (please specify):	
Social Impact (select as many as apply)	
☒ Accessibility and inclusion	☐ Environmental sustainability, climate action
☐ Mental health and wellness	☐ Reconciliation and Indigenous relations
☐ Other (please specify):	
What is the status of this initiative?	

☐ Planning/research stage	☒ Implementation in progress
☐ Complete	☐ Ongoing as part of operations

Is this a multi-year initiative?

☒ Yes	☐ No

Summary – Provide a brief description of the activities undertaken this year. Please include details such as any partnerships or resources leveraged to accomplish this initiative.

The Stewart Public Library began renovations on a new space for the library at the beginning of 2023. Fundraising for this initiative started in the summer of 2021 and proceeded to the end of 2023. Through this time, we were able to secure the funds necessary to complete the renovations through various streams. The District of Stewart purchased the building, and the library raised the necessary funds through support of local businesses, government bodies and fundraising. Renovations began at the beginning of 2023 and were near completion by the end of 2023.
.

Progress Report – If you have reported on this initiative in a previous year's PLGR, what has changed since then? What progress has been made, or what obstacles have you encountered?

Last year we reported that we were in the fundraising stage of the project. We have completed fundraising for the necessary renovations that will allow the library to begin services from the new space. We found it challenging to find grants that funded capital projects, and those that were available considered us a government entity, making us ineligible.

Budgetary Information – please outline whether/how provincial funding (annual or one-time/targeted e.g., CRR, EPP, Enhancement Grants) contributes to the estimated cost of this initiative.

Grants received through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs-Public Libraries Branch, had a big impact on funds needed to renovate the new library.
The Emergency Planning & Preparedness Grant was used to purchase an HRV heating system that will help to mitigate the spread of disease and viruses. With future plans to combine this with a generator and propane heat, the library will be able to act as a warming station in the event of an emergency. We used the 2022 COVID-19 Relief & Recovery grant to build an accessible meeting room where the community can come together to connect, network and learn new skills. A space like this does not currently exist in Stewart and is an important initiative in meeting the community's needs. The effects of social isolation from the Covid-19 pandemic are still being felt by many members of our community.

Rationale – Why was this initiative prioritized? (e.g. fulfilling commitments under strategic plan, responding to emergent community need, availability of funding, etc.)

The library has struggled over the years to have a permanent space to run library services. After being on the move once again in 2021, it was imperative to find a space that would be a forever home for the library. Our focus this year has been fundraising to renovate the new space so we could begin normal operations and programming once again for the community.

What impacts does/will this initiative have on the library and/or the community? Please include any applicable metrics or quantitative data to demonstrate impact.

The new space will have a tremendous impact on the community of Stewart as well as on the library. The community will now have a safe space to access all the services and programs they have come to rely on. The library will now have a permanent space to deliver the services and programs that are so important to our community. The pandemic combined with the loss of our library building created a major feeling of isolation for those community members who relied on the Library as their social hub. With this new space we hope to once again bring connectedness to our remote community.

Youth Zone	
What is the nature of this initiative? (both may apply)	
☒ New targeted initiatives	☒ Supporting/enhancing existing operations
Area of Operations (select as many as apply)	

☐ Basic operations
    ☐ Salaries & benefits
    ☐ Lease & utilities
    ☐ Collections
	☐ Technology
	    ☐ In-house patron software/hardware
	    ☐ Loanable hardware
	    ☐ Staff software/hardware
	    ☐ Connectivity

☐ Facility upgrades	☒ Library programming
☐ Strategic planning and governance	☐ Staff development
☐ Emergency preparedness	☒ Community outreach
☐ Other (please specify):	
Social Impact (select as many as apply)	
☐ Accessibility and inclusion	☐ Environmental sustainability, climate action
☒ Mental health and wellness	☐ Reconciliation and Indigenous relations
☐ Other (please specify):	
What is the status of this initiative?	
☐ Planning/research stage	☐ Implementation in progress
☐ Complete	☒ Ongoing as part of operations
Is this a multi-year initiative?	
☒ Yes	☐ No
Summary – Provide a brief description of the activities undertaken this year. Please include details such as any partnerships or resources leveraged to accomplish this initiative.	
We have partnered with the district of Stewart, Northern Health and the Stewart RCMP to provide a weekly drop-in for youth between the ages of 11-18 years of age. With the library being in the middle of renovations and not having a space to provide this programming, the District of Stewart donated a space for us. Each week, Northern Health staff, RCMP and library staff work together to create a space that is inclusive, safe and appealing to the youth of our community. The Youth Zone was furnished with the help of the Northern Health Imagine grant which enabled us to create a fun space that the youth enjoy. Moreover, we also received grants from BC Hydro Community grant and BC Parks Park Enhancement grant that assisted us in providing STEM and outdoor recreation activities for our Youth Zone. The Youth Zone will be moved to the new library space once the library is open.	

Progress Report – If you have reported on this initiative in a previous year's PLGR, what has changed since then? What progress has been made, or what obstacles have you encountered?
This is the first year of this initiative, however we have reported in previous years a desire to build programming that will reach the tweens and teens of our community. Through strong partnerships we have been able to build a program that is of interest to this demographic and fills an important need within our community.

Budgetary Information – please outline whether/how provincial funding (annual or one-time/targeted e.g., CRR, EPP, Enhancement Grants) contributes to the estimated cost of this initiative.
The annual Per Capita provincial grant funding helps support our staff wages for this program.

Rationale – Why was this initiative prioritized? (e.g. fulfilling commitments under strategic plan, responding to emergent community need, availability of funding, etc.)
The Youth Zone helped to fulfills two goals under our strategic plan: 1. To collaborate with businesses, organizations and people within our community to enhance our programming 2. Connect with all age groups within our community to provide equal opportunity for services and programming for all. There is a strong need in our community for after-school barrier free activities for the youth. Stewart is a remote community, and there are no on-going activities for the youth to participate in that run all year long. We are proud of our community collaboration with this initiative and having the opportunity to expand our reach.
What impacts does/will this initiative have on the library and/or the community? Please include any applicable metrics or quantitative data to demonstrate impact.
We have an average of 7 youth between the ages of 11-18 that attend the weekly program. The youth have been given the opportunity to explore various activities such as Robobot making, Environmental stewardship, cooking and baking. They are also given the option to plan their own activities and have a choice in what the Youth Zone offers. Through this program the library has been able to build new partnerships, service an under-served demographic as well as provide mental and physical support to a vulnerable population.

3. CHALLENGES

The following topics have been identified as recurrent themes in prior years' PLGRs, along with challenges that have surfaced throughout the current year. Use the 'Other' row at the bottom of the table 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 "copy" the last row and use the "paste" function to insert additional rows as needed.

Please use the check boxes in the 'Rating' column to specify how severely your library has been impacted by each challenge in the past year. If a listed challenge does not affect your library, you may leave that row blank.

Use the 'Response' column to briefly describe how the challenge has affected your library in the past year, and what actions your library has taken to address it, referring to the Featured Initiatives section above where applicable. If no action was taken, explain what the barriers are.

Challenge	Rating	Response
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues, forecasting uncertainty, local budget)	☒ High concern ☐ Moderate concern ☐ Least concern	The Stewart Public Library Revitalization project came with its challenges. Raising funds to build a new library with rising costs delayed our opening. Skilled labour was difficult to find locally, and we often needed to bring in contractors from at least 4 hours away, increasing our costs. Shipping to a remote area is expensive, however we were able to mitigate this cost by having most of our delivery donated. We utilized different spaces in town to continue services until sufficient funds were raised.
Governance (e.g., changes on the library board, relationship/conversations with local government)	☐ High concern ☐ Moderate concern ☐ Least concern	
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	☐ High concern ☐ Moderate concern ☐ Least concern	
Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health, and wellness)	☐ High concern ☐ Moderate concern ☐ Least concern	
Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)	☐ High concern ☐ Moderate concern ☐ Least concern	

Infrastructure/facilities (e.g., aging/damaged, renovations, new builds/upgrades/expansions)	☒ High concern ☐ Moderate concern ☐ Least concern	A lot of time from staff and volunteers to raise funds for new infrastructure. This can be highly stressful and has a mental and physical toll on those involved. Fundraised for renovations for a new building and built partnerships with local businesses who helped fund the projects.
Community access to the library (e.g., geographic isolation, lack of local public transit, building accessibility)	☒ High concern ☒ Moderate concern ☐ Least concern	We have not had a permanent space to operate from for the last two years. This created some confusion amongst the community. We did our best to remain visible and predictable through signs, advertising and frequent updates on our operations. We were fortunate to be able to stay in the same space for 2023.
Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	☐ High concern ☐ Moderate concern ☐ Least concern	
Public health (e.g., COVID-19, vaccinations, access to Telehealth)	☐ High concern ☐ Moderate concern ☐ Least concern	
Regulatory impacts (e.g., accessibility, privacy, employment standards)	☐ High concern ☐ Moderate concern ☐ Least concern	
Vulnerable communities (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental health crisis)	☐ High concern ☐ Moderate concern ☐ Least concern	
Sociopolitical tensions (e.g. intellectual freedom, protests, global events, racism, homophobia)	☐ High concern ☐ Moderate concern ☐ Least concern	
Other (please specify)	☐ High concern ☐ Moderate concern ☐ Least concern	

4. BOARD APPROVAL

Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.

Library Director Signature: *R. Mitchell*   Date: _____ Feb. 26, 2024

Board Chair Signature: *Lynn*   Date: _____ February 26, 2024