

2018 Provincial Library Grants Report

Introduction

Founded in 1914, the Gibsons & District Public Library (GDPL) is the best-used resource on the lower Sunshine Coast, with 53% of all residents in the Gibsons area holding an active library card. Its service area comprises the Town of Gibsons and three rural areas in the Sunshine Coast Regional District, covering approximately 1,900 square kilometres including two islands.

The demographics of GDPL's service population consists of an above provincial average of residents aged 45 and over, and below provincial average of residents aged 0 to 44. Similar to many rural British Columbia communities, Gibsons and area is transitioning from resource-based industries, and is attracting new businesses in tourism and other sectors. Its workforce includes a very high percentage of self-employed people, many of whom pursue careers via the web.

2018 was an inspiring year full of new initiatives at the library. The newly configured space now allows the library to comfortably host large community events: we filled the space with a diverse range of events including book launches, environmental forums and meet the Candidates event during election time. In addition to these large events, the library experienced its most vivacious year of programming yet with offerings for every taste, interest and need.

In-person visits increased dramatically by 10% in 2018 with 107,641 visits to the library. There was also a 26% increase in program participation with 6,635 individuals taking part in library programming. These increases are largely due to the inviting new library space, and the diversity of progressive programming that the library offered.

2018 was also the creation year of GDPL's new 2019 to 2022 Strategic Plan. With input from members, volunteers and other key stakeholders and through the combined efforts of Trustees, the Library Director and Staff, this new plan was developed to grow the library and expand its horizons. The four main goals identified in the plan are to build community, encourage and enable lifelong learning, invigorate people and culture and create welcoming spaces and resources. As stated by one of GDPL's patrons:

“The Gibsons Public Library is one of the last examples of a true community facilitate that is accessible, for everyone...it is what we should be fighting to protect in terms of publicly-funded institutions. It expands horizons. It is the only place like that on the Sunshine Coast. “

1. Government Priority/Strategy: Fostering Connecting Communities: Advancing access to information and resources

GDPL Strategic Goals and Objectives that support this priority:

Encourage and Enable Lifelong Learning:

We will:

- Inspire learning and critical thinking
- Cultivate Creativity
- Support Digital Literacy
- Increase Library Membership

Create Welcoming Spaces and Resources

We will:

- Partner with other organizations to offer collaborative services
- Help create a cultural hub in Lower Gibsons
- Enhance virtual and online spaces

Build Community

We will:

- Continue to be a hub, connecting people to each other
- Support staff and volunteers to meet their full potential
- Identify and remove barriers to library services
- Evaluate the impact library services have on our community

Invigorate People and Culture

We will:

- Celebrate our diverse community
- Participate in ongoing learning about Truth and Reconciliation
- Provide resources that support people to further their education, develop employment skills and grow local businesses

Programs & Services that align with this priority and outputs:

In 2018, many non-library users became GDPL patrons with a 12% increase from 2017 resulting in 1,452 new library members. Particular emphasis has been given in 2018 on connecting with more isolated, marginalized and/or vulnerable people including people with mental health issues, new Canadians, youth, seniors and people living in poverty. A

monthly LGBTQ2 and allies support group was implemented in partnership with the Sunshine Coast Pride Society. Free legal-aid workshops were implemented in collaboration with the SC Community Resource Centre to provide pro-bono legal advice to people with low incomes. Free tax clinics were provided weekly February to April to assist people with their taxes at no charge; this service is completely run by volunteers. The BC Alzheimer Society provides an ongoing support group for caregivers of people with dementia; and many mental health and health related educational workshops were provided in 2018 including Advanced Care Planning, Anti-Drug Stigma, Fentanyl and Opioid Information Workshop, and others. These initiatives, along with monthly visits by Library Staff to the local seniors care home, provide services to residents that might normally not access library resources.

Lifelong learning is supported in a myriad of ways at GDPL. Patrons can always get support with how to use their digital devices, and are accessing many free online courses through our databases. The Library Director offers a free exam proctoring service enabling distance learners to complete their exams locally. This free invigilation service is in high demand as the number of people seeking distance learning increases daily. This is a key service that supports access to education. Conversational language groups in Spanish, French and Japanese, and weekly knitting and intergenerational knitting groups bring together people in the community to share their skills and learn from each other.

GDPL fosters a connected community in many ways. 2018 was the inaugural year of an Annual Halloween Block Party presented in collaboration with the Sunshine Coast Museum and the Gibsons Arts Building. Over 500 people enjoyed an evening of community celebration that included story-telling, theatre, shadow installations and music. This event brought people of all ages together to interact and enjoy the cultural corner of Gibsons.

Some of the highlight programs that fostered community in 2018 included our monthly open microphone series on different themes, our Chinese New Year Celebration, the monthly GDPL Book Club and the LIFT speaker series that offers educational and inspirational talks on a variety of topics.

Public computer use increased by 11% with a total of 6,975 uses in 2018; Wi-Fi logins increased by 15% with a total of 11,289 logins. The 75 youth involved in our digital literacy initiatives learned how to use Chromebooks to create original music and short films, as well as how to do basic coding. Outcomes from the monthly repair café include people learning how to find the books and resources they need for assistance with home repairs. Fifteen children in the intergenerational knitting program learned how to knit scarves and socks. The partnerships listed above that the library has cultivated resulted in 465 program sessions with 6,635 participants. The library has become a busier and more diversified space.

THE NUMBERS for 2018

Library visits **107,641**
(up 10% over 2017)



Circulation
163,332
(up 10% over
2017)



Program
attendees **6,635**
(up 26% over
2017)



WiFi logins **11,289**
(up 15% over 2017)



Public
computer
use **6,975**
(up 11%
over 2017)



Website visits
28,113 (up 11%
over 2017)



Public
events **465**
(up 15%
over 2017)



New library
memberships
1,452 (up 12%
over 2017)

Partnerships that support this priority:

Vancouver Coastal Health
School District 46
Sunshine Coast WHANT (Women's Health and Networking Team)
Sunshine Coast Pride Society
BC Alzheimer's Association
Christenson Village (Senior's Care Facility)
Sunshine Coast Community Resource Centre Pro Bono Legal Aid Clinic
Sunshine Coast Makers

Outcomes:

Reduced social isolation
Increased computer skills
Increased employment skills
Increased civic engagement
Increased participation in lifelong learning
Increased connections to community

2. Government Priority: Building Capacity: Enabling inspiration and innovation

Library Strategic Goals that support this priority:

Encourage and Enable Lifelong Learning:

We will:

- Inspire learning and critical thinking
- Cultivate Creativity
- Support Digital Literacy
- Increase Library Membership

Create Welcoming Spaces and Resources

We will:

- Partner with other organizations to offer collaborative services
- Help create a cultural hub in Lower Gibsons
- Enhance virtual and online spaces

Build Community

We will:

- Continue to be a hub, connecting people to each other
- Support staff and volunteers to meet their full potential
- Identify and remove barriers to library services
- Evaluate the impact library services have on our community

Invigorate People and Culture

We will:

- Celebrate our diverse community
- Participate in ongoing learning about Truth and Reconciliation
- Provide resources that support people to further their education, develop employment skills and grow local businesses

Programs & Services that align with this priority and outputs:

GDPL serves as a bridge that addresses the digital and technology education divide that exists in our community. Our patrons have access to 8 free public computers, and free access to Chromebooks and I pads that can be used anywhere in the library. Patrons can also access a high quality digital printer that enables them to make copies from any device or location. Staff provide individual support on device use, and seasonal computer training

workshops enable participants to be more prepared for employment and civic engagement.

Our summer programs for young people facilitated inspiration and innovation amongst the children and youth who attended. Participants created independent short films using stop animation, created their own music during our deejay camp, learned to code robotic spheros, and learned to animate digitally. In addition to these technology-based creative ventures, GDPL also fostered other types of creative thinking and work via story-writing contests, book-club discussions, maker mornings and story buddies.

Partnerships that support this priority:

School District 46
Sunshine Coast Tech Hub
Sunshine Coast Makers
Gibsons Library Foundation
Sunshine Coast Literacy Coalition

Outcomes:

Reduced social isolation
Increased computer skills
Increased employment skills
Increased civic engagement
Increased participation in lifelong learning
Increased connections to community
Increased capacity for economic and community development

3. Government Priority: Working Together: Creating lasting and sustainable partnerships

Library Strategic Directions and Goals that support this priority:

Create Welcoming Spaces and Resources

We will:

- Partner with other organizations to offer collaborative services
- Help create a cultural hub in Lower Gibsons
- Enhance virtual and online spaces

Invigorate People and Culture

We will:

- Celebrate our diverse community
- Participate in ongoing learning about Truth and Reconciliation
- Provide resources that support people to further their education, develop employment skills and grow local businesses

Programs & Services that align with this priority and outputs:

As GDPL begins to develop a new five year strategic plan for 2019 to 2023, partnerships are at the forefront of the library's plans to move forward. Vancouver Coastal Health and GDPL have united to bring relevant health education topics to the community. In 2018, these included an opioid-awareness community forum, an advanced-care planning group, an anti-drug Stigma workshop a monthly support group meetings for caregivers of people living with dementia, it's Not Right Elder Abuse prevention workshops, mindfulness workshops and chronic pain management support groups. As a trusted and objective disseminator of accurate information, GDPL has become an integral part of VCH's ability to link and bring education to the community.

GDPL continues to work closely with School District 46 to enhance each other's services. The GDPL Child and Youth Librarian communicates regularly via the SD46 newsletter to parents and staff to ensure people are aware of the databases and resources the library has that can assist students of all levels with their academic work. Regular field trips to the library are scheduled by primary teachers at which library cards are distributed. There are no fines on juvenile items which has increased circulation.

Partnerships with the Sunshine Coast Makers and Sunshine Coast Tech Hub have resulted in monthly repair cafes, and the spring and summer digital literacy programming. These partnerships are thriving and many future endeavours are being considered in collaboration with these partners. Another key advancement of GDPL in 2018 was its establishment as a key proponent of the sharing economy on the Sunshine Coast. In

addition to the Repair Café, the sunshine coast seed collective continues to offer its Spring Seed Library alongside educational workshops on gardening, seed saving and food preservation. 2018 was the first year GDPL also hosted a Dragon's Den style Environmental Forum at which local participants pitched their sustainable living practices.

The Sunshine Coast Literacy Coalition allows GDPL to work closely with other key stakeholders in literacy including Capilano University, The Sunshine Coast Festival of the Written Arts, the Sechelt Public Library, the Sunshine Coast Community Resource Centre and the Sechelt First Nation. For family literacy week in 2018, the coalition provided a day of free concerts with Charlotte Diamond that families greatly enjoyed. GDPL also works closely with Welcoming Communities to offer language groups and resources to new Canadians. GDPL continues to actively promote engagement in the Truth and Reconciliation process. GDPL hosted a workshop in 2018 with Squamish Nation storyteller and activist Tsawaysia, and worked closely with members of the Squamish Nation in 2018 to plan for a Kairos blanket exercise that took place in January, 2019.

GDPL works closely with the Sunshine Coast Regional District; the SCR D is both a funder and a community partner. Many of the initiatives of the SCR D such as education on emergency preparedness and earthquake preparedness are delivered at the library. Likewise, GDPL works in partnership with the Town of Gibsons and local media to disseminate important information to the community such as water restrictions and status, bear aware strategies, and community composting.

Partnerships that support this priority:

Town of Gibsons
Sunshine Coast Regional District
Sunshine Coast Literacy Coalition
School District 46
Squamish Nation
Sunshine Coast Festival of the Written Arts
Sunshine Coast Makers
Sunshine Coast Tech Hub

Outcomes:

Reduced social isolation
Increased computer skills
Increased employment skills
Increased civic engagement
Increased participation in lifelong learning
Increased connections to community
Increased capacity for economic and community development
Increased awareness of sustainable living practices
Increased community capacity to deal with natural emergencies.

4. Government Priority: Sustaining our Success: Enhancing governance and demonstrating impact

Library Strategic Directions and Goals that support this priority:

Build Community

We will:

- Continue to be a hub, connecting people to each other
- Support staff and volunteers to meet their full potential
- Identify and remove barriers to library services
- Evaluate the impact library services have on our community

Invigorate People and Culture

We will:

- Celebrate our diverse community
- Participate in ongoing learning about Truth and Reconciliation
- Provide resources that support people to further their education, develop employment skills and grow local businesses

Programs & Services that align with this priority:

Some key accomplishments of the board in 2018 were the completion of revisions to the the board policy manual, and the development of the new Strategic Plan. The board has also developed a Strategic Plan Committee to oversee implementation of the strategic goals, and to work in collaboration with the Library Director to further develop comprehensive metrics and tools to effectively evaluate GDPL's services The GDPL board actively connects with InterLINK, the BCLTA and other networks to stay connected with the broader library community.

In 2018, GDPL sent the Library Director and 2 staff to the BC Library Conference. This was a great training opportunity for staff, and it identified the need for further professional development to be organized for the entire staff team to participate in. Free online training is constantly encouraged amongst staff, and GDPL staff take regular trainings offered by the BC Library Cooperative.

The ability of GDPL to demonstrate the impact of its services on the community is a main focus for the new Library Director

Partnerships that support this priority:

BC Library Cooperative
InterLINK
BCLTA
BCLA

Gibsons Library Foundation

Outcomes:

Increased efficiency of library services
Increased community profile of the library
Increased diversity of patrons

Summary

In summary, 2018 was an important year for the Gibsons and District Public Library. New programs, resources and opportunities have come to the library, and GDPL has engaged a wider cross-section of our community than ever. GDPL accomplished some important milestones including negotiating a new 4 year collective agreement with Staff to the development of our new 2019-2022 Strategic Plan.

As housing becomes more expensive and rental options are increasingly being overtaken by tourist ventures, there is an increased demand on the library for services to people living with homelessness and/or living in poverty. In expectation of the role increasing, GDPL is preparing its staff, resources and facility to be able to best meet the needs of this vulnerable population whilst also ensuring the safety and positive experience of the library by all patrons.

The digital divide that exists on the Sunshine Coast is another phenomenon that GDPL continues to address. Working in close partnership with SD46 and the Sunshine Coast Tech Hub, the library continues to offer support and training to the people who are in most need of increased digital literacy. The increase in visits to the library and in circulation are major accomplishments for GDPL, and the library will continue to strive to keep this trend towards greater participation. As the Gibsons and District Public Library sets its sights on implementing its new strategic plan, it continues to strive to provide excellent library services that allow people equal and full access to the resources, services and support they need to move forward.

The Gibsons Library is recognizing the changing role of municipal library. It is a centre of learning, knowledge and community gathering—the ideal of what a library should be, especially for a small town with limited resources.

—Patrick Bocking, Superintendent School District 46