INTRODUCTION

The City of North Vancouver (the “City”) is a small community located at the base of the mountains on the North Shore. It is bounded to the south by the Burrard Inlet, and the District of North Vancouver to the east and west. With a land area of approximately 12 square kilometres, the City supports a population of approximately 53,000 people. Due to its central location on the North Shore, relatively high density, transit accessibility with a SeaBus connection, and proximity to Vancouver’s central business district, the City is recognized as a Regional Town Centre within the Metro Vancouver region.

The City of North Vancouver’s population continues to grow at an annual rate of about 2% per year. Recent census documents tell us that 67% of the population speaks English or French, with 32% identifying English as a second language. The most predominant languages after English are Farsi, Tagalog, Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Korean and Spanish. We have a large contingent of newcomers in the community due its relative affordability. Settlement support and services are in high demand. Other trends show that the population is aging, over 16% of the population is over the age of 65 and it is predicted that this percentage will increase. At the same time, there are more young people than ever and this population is growing at one of the fastest rates in Metro Vancouver.

The City’s Official Community Plan (OCP), adopted in 2014, provides direction while balancing the diverse needs of the community. City Council is currently working on a Strategic Plan to complement the OCP and provide focus and direction for its current four-year term. Key issues in the community include mobility, transportation, sustainability, access to child care, access to affordable housing and social connectedness. Our library actively seeks to support municipal priorities and strategies.

North Vancouver City Library (NVCL) is a 36,000 square foot single-site library system, located in the heart of the City. Situated on the civic plaza across from City Hall, in one of the densest neighbourhoods of the City, it is easily accessible by many City residents. It is within walking distance for many residents and school children; 58% of our daily customers walk to the facility. We are located close to a thriving elementary school and in the midst of a number of condominium developments and a busy business corridor on Lonsdale Avenue. We have many daily visitors of all ages, who come to the library as their community hub.

In 2017, the Library Board and staff undertook in-depth research on major drivers of change in our community and environment, and engaged with stakeholders and residents about their library use, needs and aspirations. The result was a new mission, vision and strategic priorities, captured in the new 2018-2021 Strategic Plan.

**Mission:** We foster the love of learning in all its forms, connecting people to ideas, experiences and one another.

**Vision:** We will be the welcoming, vibrant hub of a thriving community by empowering growth, sparking curiosity, fostering creativity and innovation and galvanizing community potential.
Strategic Priorities:

- Inspire Learning, Discovery & Creation
- Create Vibrant Spaces
- Honour Indigenous Perspectives
- Enhance Access & Inclusion

Strategic Goals and Accomplishments

2018 was the first year of our new Strategic Plan. As a result, our work focused on foundational initiatives to lay the groundwork for future projects, as well as readily achievable initiatives that responded to strong community demand and could be completed with available resources.

Key accomplishments in 2018 included:

**Inspire Learning, Discovery & Creation**

- Launched online learning tools – Solaro and Career Cruising – to support school-age and lifelong learning
- Promoted conversation about emerging technologies in the Issues That Matter series with programs on artificial intelligence, drones and fake news
- Piloted coding, STEAM and digital content creation programming for children and teens, in partnership with Canada Learning Code and The Cinematheque
- Launched new Creation Stations for audio and video production and editing

**Create Vibrant Spaces**

- Launched our book bike, Spokes 'N' Words, with a program of summer outreach throughout the community
- Completed a community engagement about extending library services for the Lower Lonsdale community and identified barriers and priorities for service
- Worked with consultants to comprehensively review the library’s functional program and make recommendations to address space allocation, accessibility and customer comfort

**Honour Indigenous Perspectives**

- Adopted a territorial acknowledgement protocol as a necessary first step in reconciliation
- Coordinated experiential workshops for Trustees and staff on reconciliation and the historical timeline
- Supported staff attendance at pole raisings, blessings and canoe ceremonies in the community
- Initiated relationships with members of Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations

**Enhance Access & Inclusion**

- Supported democratic engagement through municipal all-candidates meeting, panels on electoral reform and participation in We Vote North Shore initiative
- Promoted cross-cultural connections by distributing Library Small Grants to residents as seed money for programs and initiatives to promote learning, understanding and friendship
- Audited physical, policy, language, mobility and other barriers to access in order to identify opportunities to increase inclusion and access
NVCL SERVICES & PROGRAMS ALIGNED WITH PROVINCIAL STRATEGIES

LIBRARY PRIORITY: SPOKES ‘N’ WORDS
Provincial priority: Fostering equitable access to information and services

Our library is a community living room, loved for its light-filled spaces. As library use evolves, the layout of the library needs to evolve as well. Rapid change and growth in our community has translated to greater demand for free, welcoming, accessible space like ours. Yet access to our central location is still a challenge for many.

Library goal that supports the provincial priority:

**Strategic Priority:** Create Vibrant Spaces

**2018 Goal:** Pilot bicycle library and pop-up libraries to increase library presence throughout the community and promote library services

Program/service that supports the provincial priority:

Despite North Vancouver City Library’s central location and 72 open hours, many community members struggle to access our services. In spring 2018, we introduced Spokes ‘N’ Words, a “book bike” designed to take the library outside of our physical walls to underserved neighborhoods in a sustainable, fun and engaging way that the community can connect with.

Spokes ‘N’ Words is an e-assist tricycle with a cabinet on the rear that can be stocked with books, storytime props and more. When Spokes ‘N’ Words pulls in, customers can borrow and return library books and materials, get a library card, participate in storytimes, and receive information about library programs and services. Spokes ‘N’ Words features an umbrella for sun and rain protection as well as a Wi-Fi hotspot for on-the-spot tech questions. Spokes ‘N’ Words is powered by its rider with the help of an e-assist motor that is necessary to get the book bike up and down North Vancouver’s steep hills.

The bike was built by Pedal Positive, a small company based in Colorado who specializes in custom bicycle projects, and features a custom graphic wrap designed by Nanaimo-based design team Backyard Creative.

**Partnerships that support this priority**

The book bike is a partnership program between the Library and the City of North Vancouver’s “PLAY” placemaking initiative, a pilot project arising out of the City’s Business Development and Community Services departments that focuses on transforming public space into vibrant, fun locations that inspire creativity, connect community, and brings residents together.

In addition, the Book Bike team worked closely with local community groups to create a calendar of events for the library to connect with community. Our partners included:

- City of North Vancouver
• North Vancouver City Fire Department (Hot Summer Nights)
• PNE (Library Day at the PNE)
• Loutet Farm (Farm Family Day)
• Local schools
• Local businesses

Outcomes

Through the Spokes ‘N’ Words Book Bike and our partnership with PLAY the library connected with our community through new, often unexpected, positive experiences. We were able to attend events and create spontaneous pop-up library experiences in typically underserved neighbourhoods across the City of North Vancouver. Key outcomes included:

• From June to September 2018, Spokes ‘N’ Words participated in 17 major festivals and events around the City of North Vancouver including the Canada Day parade, Hot Summer Nights, Fun City Festival, Long Table lunches, Caribbean Days Festival, Pride on the Pier, PNE Day, Farm Family Day, Rivers Day, Loutet Farm, and more. We also attended smaller more intimate gatherings such as community barbeques and neighbourhood block parties.
• During these events the library engaged in over 700 interactions, registered 30 new library members, checked out 75 books, registered 10 new Seed Club members, and checked out 35 packets of seeds.
• At each visit, our librarians connected with curious customers, promoted library services and answered questions. We customized our programming and material selections for each event and always made sure to include books, audio books, and DVDs for a variety of ages and interests.

These events strengthened relationships with our community partners and with City staff. In addition we improved the library’s profile in the community through sustainable, fun, creative activities and events, as well as extensive local, social and national media exposure including national television coverage.

LIBRARY PRIORITY: RECORDING BOOTH & POST-PRODUCTION CREATION STATIONS

Provincial priority: Developing skills and knowledge

*Key skills for learning in the 21st Century include creativity, collaboration, communication and critical thinking. The North Vancouver City Library aspires to be a creative hub and an engine for community innovation, empowering discovery and inspiring creativity.*

Library goal that supports the provincial priority:

**Strategic Priority:** Inspire Learning, Discovery and Creation

**Library 2018 Goal:** Launch audio and video creation equipment and instruction to encourage digital content creation
Service that supports the provincial priority:

The Library unveiled its newest Creation Station – a recording booth and multimedia editing station – in June 2018. The 10’ x 14’ sound booth is equipped with all the equipment and software users need to get started on creating their own audio or video content.

Video equipment includes cameras, microphones, lighting, and green screens. Audio equipment includes a digital audio interface, microphones, stands, shock mounts, midi keyboard, and headphones. A variety of recording and post-production software is offered including Adobe Premiere Elements and Premiere Pro, Audacity, Pro Tools, and several virtual sound libraries.

To support and inspire the community to use the recording booth, staff developed extensive instructional materials as well as programming to highlight this new service. Staff conducted tours of the sound booth and the equipment available, and created Quick Start Guides – often with links to supporting content in Lynda.com and other online resources – for audio recording, video recording, and various software tools.

Partnerships that support the priority:

The recording booth was made possible by generous donations from local schools, businesses and individuals as well as a significant contribution from the City of North Vancouver.

Since we launched the booth, we have begun to connect with partner organizations to develop programming that makes use of these new resources and inspires storytelling and creativity, including:

- Cinematheque – camps and pro-d activities on media literacy for young people
- Members of the Squamish First Nation – to record a social media campaign in support of their recent band election
- Carlile Youth Concurrent Disorders Centre – for music recording activities with their youth

Outcomes:

Initial assessment shows high uptake and strong usage. In its first six months of operation, the recording booth was in use during 79% of its available time (increasing from 43% in the first month of service to upward of 85% by year end). 254 customers booked sessions and logged nearly 700 hours capturing their audio and video creations.

We surveyed customers who used the recording and editing stations and learned they used them for a variety of reasons: to film and produce promotional videos, rehearse job interviews, record their own music, create their own audiobooks, create heritage and memory projects, and – most popular of all – to record podcasts.

User survey results at year-end showed that:

- 79% of users agreed that “the Recording Station inspired me to create something new, and/or tell my stories in a new way”
• 72% agreed that “I was able to accomplish the goals and/or projects I set out to accomplish in using the Recording Station”
• 100% agreed that “I would recommend the Recording Station to my family and friends”.

LIBRARY PRIORITY: RADON DETECTION KITS
Provincial priority: Working together

The North Vancouver City Library values working together. We work in collaboration and partnership, recognizing we are stronger together. We work toward common goals and collective impact while building on our unique strengths. We believe in the power of partnerships.

Library goal that supports the provincial priority:

Priority: Sustain our fundamentals, the resources, infrastructure and activities that support everything we do.

2018 Goal: Develop, implement and share a program to lend radon detection kits to support community health and maximize capacity among libraries in our region.

Program that supports the provincial priority:

In 2018, the North Vancouver City Library was approached by a research team from Simon Fraser University’s Department of Health Sciences to discuss making radon detection kits available to our community. The intent of this citizen science initiative was threefold: to increase awareness about this potentially dangerous gas; to encourage people to test their homes to see if they were being exposed to high levels of radon; and to gather data about radon levels in our geographical area. Working in conjunction with Health Canada and the BC Lung Association, the SFU-based research team hoped to extend this program throughout the North Shore, the Sea-to-Sky corridor and the Sunshine Coast.

As the first point of contact, staff at North Vancouver City Library offered to coordinate ordering, receiving, cataloguing, processing, and distributing of a startup collection of 43 Radon Detection Kits for all 11 library systems in the target regions. Each kit contains a digital radon detection meter; instructions about how to use the meter; information about radon; resources about monitoring and reducing exposure; and contact information for Health Canada for following up and providing valuable research data. The kits were funded jointly through a Health Canada grant and a donation by Airthings, a Norwegian-based company that manufactures radon detection devices.

Partnerships that support the provincial priority:

The radon detection kits were distributed to a total of 11 library systems, all of which now make these devices available to their communities. In addition to North Vancouver City Library, the other systems who have partnered on this project include:

• North Vancouver District Public Library
• West Vancouver Memorial Library
• Bowen Island Public Library
• Gibsons & District Public Library
• Sechelt Library
• Powell River Public Library
• Pemberton & District Public Library
In addition, we worked closely with SFU’s Department of Health Sciences, Health Canada, the BC Lung Association, and Airthings in order to make this project a reality.

Outcomes achieved:

Through this project, our library contributed its capacity to develop model policies, procedures and catalogue records to share with partner libraries and facilitated the acquisition, packaging and processing of the kits and their contents. This enabled partner libraries to roll out the new service quickly and with limited investment of time, and saved the time of our research partners, who would otherwise have had to contact each library system individually. We were also able to coordinate the launch and promotion of the new program through local media. Key outcomes included:

- Strengthened relationships with neighbouring library systems.
- Diversified our collections to include non-traditional resources that reflect the changing and developing needs of our communities.
- Developed new partnerships with academic (SFU’s Department of Health Sciences), government (Health Canada), and health-based (the BC Lung Association) agencies.

Beginning with their launch in November 2018, our five kits were borrowed twenty times by year-end (the loan period is four weeks to enable sufficient data capture); as of February 2019, 30 customers are on the waitlist to borrow a kit.

The success and popularity of this service has led partner libraries to consider increasing the number of kits they make available to their members. We have also been approached by other library systems in the province who are interested in introducing these resources into their collections, and we have shared our knowledge and experience with these agencies.

LIBRARY PRIORITY: EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Provincial priority: Enhancing governance

The North Vancouver City Library acts with purpose, seeking to focus our energy where it makes the greatest difference. We start with the end in mind and use evidence to support our decisions.

Library goal that supports the provincial priority:

**Priority:** Sustain our fundamentals, the resources, infrastructure and activities that support everything we do.

**2018 Goal:** Develop an evaluation framework for the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan to illustrate progress and demonstrate impact.

Program that supports the provincial priority:

In January 2018, the North Vancouver City Library Board endorsed an evaluation framework for the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan that would enable trustees to fulfill their responsibilities to monitor and evaluate the library’s effectiveness in achieving its strategic priorities.
As a public service organization, the Library is mission-driven rather than profit-driven. It can therefore be challenging to define success and measure progress. Goals achieved and projects completed don’t tell the whole story. Usage metrics together with outcome metrics can describe the impact of our activities and provide compelling data to illustrate success.

The evaluation framework defines a small number of outputs and outcomes for each of our four strategic priorities, enabling trustees to assess progress on our strategic priorities and toward our vision.

Data was collected via year-end surveys of our customers, staff and partners – in addition to our routine usage metric collection. These surveys can be used annually to assess progress.

Partnerships that support the priority:

In developing the evaluation framework, North Vancouver City Library sought examples from other libraries, and adopted a model based on work shared by Vancouver Public Library.

Outcomes achieved:

Since 2018 was the first year of the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan, it was also a baseline year for our evaluation framework. As we track changes over the four years of our strategic plan, we will be able to measure the impact of our activities and initiatives.

At the end of 2018, we were able to report the following strategic indicators:

**Inspire Learning, Discovery & Creation:**
- 92.3% of library customers feel inspired to learn more as a result of using the library
- 76.2% of library customers believe the library is an important source of support in navigating technological change
- 781 library users attended a technology class
- 1,248 creation station sessions were booked for digitization and multimedia production
- 30,874 online courses were taken through Lynda.com and other library subscription services

**Create Vibrant Spaces:**
- 479,382 people visited the library
- 93.2% of visitors feel the library is welcoming and comfortable
- Library staff connected with 11,347 residents at events outside the library’s walls

**Honour Indigenous Perspectives:**
- 88.5% of staff reported increased knowledge about reconciliation and Indigenous history and experiences as a result of participating in workshops
- 76.5% of staff reported feeling better able to provide culturally sensitive services to Indigenous community members
- 657 items were borrowed from our adult First Nations collections

**Enhance Access and Inclusion:**
- 89.9% of library customers reported a greater sense of community belonging as a result of their use of the library
- 355 people attended programs focused on dialogue and community connections
1,854 people attended programs focused on newcomers and language learning
529,734 digital visitors browsed our website, searched the catalogue or accessed ebooks and subscription e-resources online

Service Metrics:

- Library cardholders borrowed 626,646 items – an average of 17 items per borrower
- There were 218,019 computer and wireless sessions
- We hosted 1,117 programs for 35,257 children, teens and adults
- Community groups used library meeting rooms to host 508 workshops, meetings, support groups and other functions
- Library staff assisted 40,697 customers with in-depth instruction and research support – an average of one tough question every five minutes
- We worked with 92 community and library partners to plan, coordinate, share information and deliver service in our community
- 92% of our partners report that connecting with the Library amplifies their impact in the community

LIBRARIES IN ACTION – SUCCESS STORIES FROM BC’S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Spokes ‘N’ Words – the North Vancouver City Library Book Bike
Link: https://www.nvcl.ca/using-the-library/spokesnwords
Description & Outcome: see above (page 3)
Contact info: Mikale Fenton (Head of Community, Program and Service Development), mfenton@cnv.org, 604-983-7354
Creation Station – Recording Booth
Link: https://www.nvcl.ca/using-the-library/creation-stations/recording-station
Description & Outcomes: see above (pages 4-5)
Contact info: Kat Lucas (Acting Head, Digital Services), klucas@ncv.org, 604-998-3461

SUMMARY

Following the launch of a new strategic plan in January 2018, the focus for the year was moving forward on new priorities. We enjoyed the excitement of celebrating ten years in our well-loved, light-filled building – as well as media attention and enthusiastic community response to our new book bike and recording booth.

Behind the scenes, staff worked hard to set the groundwork for future projects. Following up on feedback received from the community and stakeholders during our strategic planning process, we initiated conversations with constituents of the Lower Lonsdale neighbourhood to learn more about their barriers and aspirations for library services in their area. We also worked with City Facilities staff and architects to begin the work of reimagining the library’s layout to meet the community’s current and emerging needs and address persistent issues around noise, comfort and usability. This foundational work will inform priorities and projects over the remaining three years of our 2018-2021 strategic plan, and beyond.

As the community continues to grow, and as use of the library continues to shift from short, transactional visits to longer stays for learning and community connection, we are experiencing pressure on our capacity to meet community needs and expectations. New or expanded services like digital literacy programming, seniors and accessible services, and community-based library service delivery are in high demand, but will be difficult to achieve without additional resources.