Introduction

The Prince Rupert Library is grateful for the financial support it receives from the Province of British Columbia. These grants of almost $87,000 represent almost 10% of our revenue and allow us to strengthen our collections and services, increase our outreach capacities and improve our relations with community partners. Much of the material in this report has been reported before because we are doing similar activities to previous years as the needs are still present.

The Public Library is an important community hub for the residents of Prince Rupert and surrounding area. People of all ages gather here to access information for varied purposes such as pursuing employment, continuing education, and recreation. Public internet access (work stations and Wi-Fi), printing and fax services, children's programming, author readings and our public meeting area are all well-used.

We have a wide array of families living in our community from various cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. We have many First Nations families in our community: 38% identify as Aboriginal, and 47% of children aged 14 and under also identify as Aboriginal. (Statistics Canada). We have several Asian and south Asian communities that continue to grow with the arrival of new immigrant families. These patrons are among the many that will benefit from literacy-based programming for their children, and our specialized ESL collection. We are looking forward to sharing the wealth of the First Nations’ culture with those that are new to our community, as well as those that have lived here for many years. We have a considerable population who have economic barriers and often have no other access than the Library to information and skills development. As other government agencies close their public offices, the library increasingly provides the necessary online access for purchasing commercial fishing licences, pension applications and the like.

The latest statistics (2014-2016) from Dr. Clyde Hertzman’s Human Early Learning Partnership at UBC shows us that 27% of the Kindergarten students in our community during those years were considered ‘vulnerable’ in their ‘Communications Skills and General Knowledge,’ twice the provincial rate and the worst in the province. It also shows us that 27% of the students were vulnerable in their ‘Language and Cognitive Development', which is three times the provincial rate according to http://earlylearning.ubc.ca. Overall, 51% of the students, who are now in Grades One and Two, were diagnosed as ‘vulnerable’ in at least one of the five scales of measurement. Prince Rupert was designated as having the second highest rate of ‘vulnerable’ kindergarten students in the province of B.C.

We had two major changes in 2018 which will be detailed under the strategy of Sustaining our Success in 2018, the signing of a four year contract between the Library Board and CUPE local 105-01 and the establishment of four Board Committees: Strategic Planning Cmte., Grant/ Fundraising cmte., City Relationship cmte., and Library Director/Board Review cmte. We presently use our mission statement to guide us, our services and our collections and it will be incorporating into our strategic plan. However as these committees have just begun their work in 2018 the Library used our mission statement to guide us and here it is:
Prince Rupert Public Library Mission Statement

- **Assemble, preserve and administer**, in organized collections, books and related educational and recreational material, in order to promote, through guidance and stimulation in the communication of ideas, an enlightened citizenship and enriched personal lives.
- **Serve** the community as a centre of reliable information
- **Support** the educational, civic, and cultural activities of community groups
- **Provide** opportunity and enrichment for children, young people, men and women to educate themselves continuously.
- **Seek** continually to identify community needs, to provide programs of service and access to meet such needs, and to cooperate with other organizations, agencies and institutions which can provide programs and services to meet community needs

**Provincial Priorities**

*Fostering Connected Communities*

Library Goals that support this priority

- **Provide** opportunity and enrichment for children, young people, men and women to educate themselves continuously.
- **Seek** continually to identify community needs, to provide programs of service and access to meet such needs, and to cooperate with other organizations, agencies and institutions which can provide programs and services to meet community needs

Programs and/or services that align with this priority

- This is an important priority for us. We have a significant population of people in poverty who have no other affordable access to information or entertainment than the Library. Our goal of Seeking to provide opportunities for all people to educate themselves continuously supports this provincial priority. The following items, services and programs are funded in whole or in part by the Provincial grant we receive.
- Our Userful stations (also known as our public internet computer stations) have allowed our residents over 10,000 sessions in 2018 including users of our free Wi-Fi for our patrons. These services help bridge the digital divide that exists here in Prince Rupert.
- Our 2018 total of adult programs (participants 1271) has slightly increased (4%) over 2017.
- A vital part of our Library is our **Sitka Evergreen ILS**. This allows us to provide our core services of circulation, cataloguing and item discovery.
- We have seen an increase in invigilation requests from the public in 2017 and 2018. We believe that this is a result of two things: one is that our library provides a good environment, low fees and good service while the second is that there is not many other organizations doing
this in Prince Rupert and those that are doing it are considerably more expensive. However, the growth of requests more than doubled from 2016 to 2018, and 2019 so far is looking to remain stable at 2017-2018 levels if not more. The Grant/Fundraising cmte will also be looking at this situation to see if we need to changes to our invigilation process due to the increase of time required by the deputy and chief librarians to do all the requested proctoring.

- Our problem of too much success. While at first glance, too much success would not seem to be a problem. But in the case of our Interlibrary Loan program, (AKA Interlibrary Connect) we had seen significant growth in lending requests to our library while our borrowing from other libraries has stayed level over the past 4 years. These extra requests have increased the labour demands on our ILL staff person and other staff without an specific increase in provincial funding for this program.

Partnerships that support this priority

- Our relationship with Successby6 and Early Years table has strengthened as well. They have given us grants for programs and we have hosted some of the programs/readings that meet their mandate.

Outcomes that were identified

- In 2016 the NWLF agreed to increase the emphasis on the shared First Nations priorities all of our libraries have and there were two immediate outcomes: one of own staff-members worked with our Federation coordinator to build a shared First Nations Resource list for all of the NWLF libraries to use. The second outcome is that our member libraries began to share more with each other, including policy examples, or best practises. We continued this throughout 2018.

- Specific to the above ILL issue: Our lending from 2013 to 2017 increased by over 111%. This is not sustainable and therefore in 2019, I directed our ILL staff person to decrease our lending by saying “no” more frequently. This was done. In 2018 we decreased our lending by 19% of 2017 lending numbers. A small decrease, and we’ll be doing the same in 2019. Our staff member is ambivalent about this because she acknowledges the unsustainable growth in lending without an increase in resources, but she also knows the personal and societal value of the ILL program. If other libraries also cut down on lending, then the ILL program will diminish in value. This demonstrates that any increase the provincial funding to Libraries would be appreciated and more BC residents would benefit.

**Building Capacity**

Library goals that support this priority

- **Support** the educational, civic, and cultural activities of community groups

- **Provide** opportunity and enrichment for children, young people, men and women to educate
themselves continuously.

Programs and/or services that align with this priority

- Another partnership we worked on in 2018 was with CALP (Community Adult Literacy Program). We hosted approximately 20 CALP sessions with an average of 4 students per session.
- Part of the Provincial Grant was used for staffing and for supplies. We have 2 regular preschool programs – Tales for Twos and Story Hour, wherein children are introduced to books, reading and the Library.
- We provided a Summer Reading Club for the community through support from Literacy and Libraries as well as a federal grant from Young Canada Works, through Heritage Canada.
- We also support the Books for Babies program by assembling Book/CD/brochures Packages (which we paid for in part) with a grant from Successby6 which are then distributed at the Prince Rupert Health Unit. Another program we joined Successby6 in was a Storytelling workshop which included 69 children over two days.
- NWLF (North West Library Federation) programs: Leif the Magician brought in 72 students from local elementary schools. Our previous NWLF coordinator retired and we hired a new Coordinator and helped her get on her feet. We also participated in a NWLF sponsored Summer Science show with Darryl Hutcheon in July which brought in 32 students. Finally, the Prince Rupert Library sent representatives to our biennial NWLF meeting in Houston, BC, the Library Director, one trustee and 2 staff members attended and learned much about other Federation libraries and programs.
- We attempted to run an Indigenous Book club in June of 2018, with a focus on “Indian Horse”. We had some interest from a number (3-5) of people and a few meetings were held. Although the response was not as great as we had hoped we are hopeful that we can try another attempt in 2019.

Partnerships that support this priority

- the Books for Babies program was funded in part by the Early Years Table/Successby6 organization. As well the Prince Rupert Health Unit helps us by distributing the items during inoculations.

- We held programs for preschoolers outside of our Library, for example, at the Friendship House (an inclusive organization that exists to provide programs and services to the community at large; doing this with an emphasis on the needs of the First Nations People in the areas of education, culture, health and recreation) on International Childrens day.

Outcomes that were identified

- We have developed a good collection of materials regarding resume and cover-letter writing and interview skills.
- We had an increase in Adult programs in both number of programs and number of attendees. This has resulted in a increase in new groups coming to the library that had formerly not used the library.
**Sustaining our Success**

We, the Library Board, Director and staff have started working on a multi-year strategic plan in late 2018. We are also looking at our relationship with the City of Prince Rupert and asking what works best for the Library and the City. The Board has also started a Grant/Fundraising committee and Library Director/Board Review committee.

Library Goals that support this priority

- **Seek** continually to identify community needs, to provide programs of service and access to meet such needs.

Programs and/or services that align with this priority

- Our Grant/Fundraising cmte. will explore what local, regional and national opportunities exist to enhance library services and service plan development. As well we will be reviewing present library services, fees and fines to see if they are still adequate. This committee will investigate private and public sector funding opportunities, presenting unique collections-supported fundraising opportunities for patrons and maintaining grant writing activity.

Partnerships that support this priority

- The scope of the Strategic Planning cmte. includes increasing our promotional efforts to educate non-library users. We, through the City Relationship cmte. will be working directly with City staff and Council towards a better joint understanding and shared goals; the Board started looking into what is best for the library, ensuring adherence to the Library Act while maintaining good relations with the City of Prince Rupert.

Outcomes that were identified

- We have not yet seen the outcomes of these partnerships specific to the Board’s committee work yet.

**Working Together**

Library Goals that support this priority

- **Seek** continually to identify community needs, to provide programs of service and access to meet such needs, and to cooperate with other organizations, agencies and institutions which can provide programs and services to meet community needs

Programs and/or services that align with this priority

- Different public meetings held in the Library to support local First Nations activities: Haida Nation community meetings, Gitwilgyoots tribal meetings, Gitmaxmak’ay Nisga’a meetings and Cedar Road Aboriginal Head Start (childcare group) tours.
- We support many of the activities of our library federation the NWLF, which consists of seven public libraries from Prince Rupert to Houston, BC.
- A long time practice of giving library tours to school children and Welcome to Kindergarten
sessions has also opened another opportunity working with SD52. In 2018 we hosted a few classes from the Middle School (Prince Rupert Middle School). We had 4 classes over the year, which gave approx. 100 students the opportunity to understand what the Public Library had to offer them.

- Collective Agreement negotiations took up considerable amount of the Board’s and local union members time in 2018, starting in March and completing in September.

Partnerships that support this priority

- We partnered with our Literacy partners Decoda and the North Coast Literacy Network in our annual Literacy Fair at our local mall. We had hundreds of our residents come by our table and learn that we had much more than books.

Outcomes that were identified

- Our staff-member who sits on the Early Years table has increased library awareness in our community and was responsible (partially at least) for an increase in some of the other Early Years partners in using our multi-purpose room for meetings. As well, our staff-member has been on this table from the beginning and provides historical context for the new members.
- Our Library shared goals and work with the Early Years table and regret it’s termination in 2018.
- Our community connections include regular tours for children from the Aboriginal Head Start program. Of course, this opens literacy doors for the children, but an important outcome from these tours is that with each trip, a parent(s) or grandparent(s) gets a tour of the library for the first time and many of these parents/grandparents learn the connection of literacy and parenting.
- The outcome of the Collective Agreement process will lead to long-term stability in staff-management relations and an ability to plan further into the future than if there was no agreement.

2018 was a busy year and we did our best to make good use of the provincial grant we gratefully received. This money allowed us to better serve our patrons. Our collections, infrastructure service (i.e. ILS, Public Access computing network and support) and staffing have been well-supported by these grants, as well as our 2018 focus on increasing awareness of the Library’s role in Prince Rupert.

Thank you on behalf of the staff and trustees of the Prince Rupert Public Library.

Prince Rupert Library