INTRODUCTION

The Rossland Public Library celebrates its 80th year serving the community in 2019.

Rossland is a ski-resort town with many permanent residents working digitally or at Teck Resources in Trail. There are also seasonal workers at the ski hill who may stay a season or work elsewhere during the summer. Approximately 19% of Rosslanders are under 15 and 13% are over 64. Almost 12% of Rosslanders live alone but only 4% are single parent families.

There are three schools in Rossland: a public school with Grades K - 9; an independent school with Grades 8 - 12; and a French language school with Grades K - 7. There is late French immersion at the public school and 14% of the population speak French.

The library is the living room of the community with both residents and visitors using the space. More than half the local residents have library cards and use them. While usage statistics for 2018

In 2018 the library worked to improve the way it serves its community by reconfiguring the interior space during a three month renovation and developing a three-year strategic plan. The library struggled with completing its strategic plan, a process which took almost a year and a half.

TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO OUR PRINT DISABLED COMMUNITY

Fostering equitable access to information and services

The Rossland Public Library is a member of both NNELS and CELA, providing services to our print disabled community. The provincial funding for NNELS gives a wider selection of materials to this section of our community, many of whom are seniors who are losing vision later in life. In 2018 we delivered to three members who were unable to come to the library. Unfortunately, this is down to two.

Key staff have taken training on the CELA platform with a goal in 2019 to receive further NNELS training. This will enable staff to better meet the needs of our members.
TO OFFER TECHNOLOGY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

*Developing skills and knowledge*

For the third year, we offered a tech drop-in series with the Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy. This is aimed at seniors but anyone can bring a device or laptop and receive help. A number of people come back several times until they are confident with their devices. Sessions have anywhere from one to 10 attendees. Since these sessions only run for six weeks, we time them to fall after Christmas when we find many people are given devices.

At the end of 2017, we purchased two codable robots and in 2018 our “Meet the Robots” sessions were over subscribed. We continue to run programming with the robots and have added to our coding tools. As older children have opportunities to learning coding elsewhere, we are directing our programming at 5 to 8 year olds.

Our new strategic plan recognizes the importance of technology in our world. We are committed to introducing our community to new technology that will enhance their lives. We are developing a group of tech-savvy volunteers and will be investing in staff training to build capacity in this area.

TO PROVIDE EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE TO OUR MEMBERS

*Working together*

The Rossland Public Library takes part in resource sharing both through ILL and ILC. Provincial funding is vital in paying for staff time to manage the resource sharing. As a small library, having access to materials from around the province it vital. It is simply impossible for us, both budget-wise and space-wise, to have everything our community wishes to read.

TO DEVELOP A STRATEGIC PLAN

*Enhancing governance*

In 2017, a grant from the Columbia Basin Trust allowed us to hire a consultant to develop a three year strategic plan spanning 2019 - 21. The plan includes a commitment to update and maintain our policy manual as well as succession planning for both board and staff. There is also a commitment to financial responsibility with regular reporting to major funders such as the Province and the City of Rossland. 2019 sees the third year of a three-year funding agreement with the City. Consistent funding from both the City and the Province has enabled longer term planning.
A PROGRAMME THAT REALLY WORKED: FOSTER LIBRARIANS

As the renovation budget was extremely tight, we were looking for ways to store things without paying for it. Board members took furniture, our treasurer took all the financial documents. We filled an extra bathroom. The biggest issue was our approximately 15,000 books.

Enter: the Foster Librarian programme. Rossland library card holders took up to 100 books out on their card and kept then until we reopened. 10,000 items were circulated this way. The first week we asked for returns, before the library opened, 6,000 came back and by mid January we had them all back.

People enjoyed helping. Some spent time pick out which books were going to stay at their homes for the duration others just took a shelf or two.

Not only did this save money on a storage space but it was great community engagement. It brought interest from local press and CBC Radio.

SUMMARY

The strategic planning process ended up taking much longer than expected due to illness. In the end, the library has a solid three-year plan, taking us to the end of 2021.

The renovation project went smoothly, with few delays. The planning leading up to the closing was the difficult part - where to store materials and furniture, what the staff would be doing and where they would work. In the end, we are happy with our reconfigured space and the comments from the community have been positive.