INTRODUCTION

The Sunshine Coast Regional District is bound on three sides by water and on the fourth side by mountains. No road connect the district with the rest of the province but relies on ferries and aircraft to access the lower mainland or the northern reach of the Sunshine Coast and Powell River.

The Sechelt Public Library serves a catchment area of over 16,000 people (District of Sechelt Community Profile 2018) as well as resource shares with the Gibsons & District Public Library. Citizens travel up and down this coastal area utilizing services, including both libraries, in all areas. Together we serve a population of 29,970. The area also contains two reading rooms which are funded directly by their local area governments and are run by volunteers. The Pender Harbour Reading Centre receives provincial interlibrary loan services brokered by the Libraries Branch.

A popular vacation and retirement destination, tourism and the arts are emerging sectors but forestry and mining are still strong. According to Statistics Canada 2011 reporting, 83% of the catchment area population is 15 years old and older. The 50+ cohort in our catchment area is 20% larger than the same provincial cohort. The 75+ cohort in our catchment area is 80% larger than the same provincial cohort.

The Sunshine Coast prides itself on a strong sense of community, collaboration and resource sharing. The Sechelt Public Library has a reciprocal borrowing agreement with Gibsons and District Public Library, located 23 km to our south. With the move toward patron directed interlibrary loans using SITKA, the library’s ILL services have increased substantially. This has tremendously improved access, while at the same time has necessitated increased operational capacity. A member of Public Library InterLINK, the library also participates heavily in a coordinated interlibrary loan system between the federation members. In addition, the library provides space to the District of Sechelt Community Archives.

Challenges

The library faces a space challenge with overcrowding, which contributes to issues of accessibility in the public areas and staff workroom. A consultant’s report in 2011 – 7 years ago – described the library as having grown “to the point of bursting.” The library does not possess its own programming or meeting space and relies on booking various venues in the community.
Our space is dated, with decades old furniture, florescent lighting and outdated shelving. The library shares a municipal building with the District of Sechelt.

2018 was a time of significant change for Sechelt Library. The Chief Librarian resigned her position in March and a new Chief Librarian came on board in late July. Sechelt Library signs five year funding agreements with its three funding bodies and all efforts were put into funding negotiations as our agreement is set to renew with the 2019 budget cycle. As a result of our efforts, we are hopeful that there will be a significant change in the level of funding Sechelt Library receives. While this change will not give us parity with provincial libraries that serve similar populations, it will allow us to move forward in a positive and constructive manner.

The strategic plan for Sechelt Library was delayed from 2018 to 2019 due to the lack of a Chief Librarian for several months and the pressing needs of funding negotiation. Strategic planning is now due to take place throughout 2019 with a new plan in place for 2020.

Despite these challenges, the library remains a community hub with increases in adult programming attendance and increases in foot traffic. There was a grass roots movement in the spring and summer of 2018 which resulted in a petition signed by over 1800 residents asking for fair funding for the library. We are also beginning a Capital Campaign this year to help us move forward with renovations to address the challenges of the space. With the confidence and backing of our community, we know that Sechelt Library has a vibrant future that will allow us to work in partnership with other community organizations to address the needs of our population and create a better Sunshine Coast.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIBRARY PRIORITY 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fostering equitable access to information and services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Library goal:**

- To provide the public with access to the digital world and to give them the knowledge and resources they need to be successful
- To provide equitable access to connectivity
- To provide training and support for people to participate fully in society

**Program:** Beginners computer classes

**Service:** Internally loanable laptops & iPads

**Partnerships that support the priority:** TELUS & District of Sechelt

In 2018, Sechelt Library received funds from TELUS and the CIP (Community Investment Program) grant from the District of Sechelt to purchase laptops and iPads for the purpose of
making them available to the public. These items were made internally loanable during 2018 to provide digital access for those who do not have access through their own devices or Wi-Fi.

This service was paired with a new library program aimed at novices so that they could gain basic computer and internet skills. This program was a result of customer feedback from other computer programs that proved to be too difficult for those with little to no experience. In this six week course, patrons move at their own pace through online instruction while our Technology Coordinator is present to help with any difficulties or to explain concepts that are unclear.

This program not only helps with hands on skill development but also provides a social space for learners to share knowledge and progress with each other. They learn by doing, but also gain confidence and ease through the social aspect of learning together. Creating a positive learning environment for something that often causes stress in participants significantly alters the outcomes of the program.

Outcomes:

- Digital inclusion through training and access to both devices and wireless.
- Bridge inequities of access to technology.
- Enabling patrons to be comfortable with the continued use of new technology, as well as contributing to an increase in digital comfort overall.

LIBRARY PRIORITY 2

Developing skills and knowledge

**Library goal:** To provide the public with access to current technology AND to assist library patrons to become competent in using technology.

**Programs:** Makerspace programming for kids

Makerspace programming for families

**Partnerships that support the priority:** TELUS and District of Sechelt (CIP grant)

In 2018, Sechelt Library began Makerspace programming for both children and families through materials purchased thanks to TELUS and CIP grants and previously purchased materials donated by Friends of the library. These materials allow the library to offer a menu of services that fall under different skill building areas:
Robots: Dash, Dot, Cue, Ozobots

3D building: Keva blocks, Lego, MakeDo

Electronics: Squishy Circuits, Circuit Scribe

Programming: Makey Makey, Nintendo Switch Labo, Bloxels

These programs allow participants to experiment and play with technology they often would not have access to. Creating a family makerspace program that requires parental involvement also encourages families to form bonds and create a shared understanding of technology. Experimentation, trial and error and prototyping are key ways to introduce participants to design and learning outside of a school context.

Outcomes:

- Providing open access and use of resources and tools that help people create content and learn by doing.
- Creating flexible, multipurpose spaces to gather, study, learn and share.
- Transforming information into the implementation of new skills and competencies.

LIBRARY PRIORITY 3

Working together

Library goal: Overcome barriers to library use for isolated seniors

Program: Sechelt Library at Home

Partnerships that Support the Priority: Better at Home

As mentioned in the introduction, the District of Sechelt and surrounding areas have an above average senior population. The library remains committed to serving our patrons through every stage of life and is determined to find ways to serve isolated seniors. As a small library with minimal staff, outreach to isolated seniors is not possible without sustained partnerships. In 2018, Sechelt Library joined forces with the Better at Home program which has a team of volunteers who visit seniors in Sechelt. By joining resources, the library is able to use the volunteers of Better at Home to deliver library materials to their pre-existing customers. This is the perfect partnership that allows the library to add to the quality of life of isolated seniors by joining resources with an organization already designed to reach that demographic.
Outcomes:

More seniors in our community are aware of and able to access services that successfully meet their needs and aspirations.

Seniors are better able to age in place through continual cognitive engagement.

Seniors in our community experience decreased isolation caused by financial and physical barriers.

Working together – Please see “Success Stories” for another illustration of meeting this priority.

LIBRARY PRIORITY 4

Enhancing governance

Library goal: Demonstrate value of Sechelt Library to funders

2018 marked the end of Sechelt Library’s five year funding agreement with its three funders: District of Sechelt (DOS), Sechelt Indian Government District (SIGD) and the Sunshine Coast Regional District (SCRD). The aim of the previous five year agreement (2013-2018) was to achieve per capita parity with similar sized libraries in the province. Despite the noble intent behind the agreement, parity was not achieved. Instead, the funding gap for Sechelt Library grew in the intervening years of the agreement.

With the end of the agreement in sight, the Sechelt Library Association engaged in a concerted effort to demonstrate the value and impact of the library to its funders. Work done by the Association to create extensive documentation regarding the pressing operational needs of the organization and presentations to both the public and elected officials to demonstrate a compelling vision for a future with a well-funded library have all helped to propel the library into the public eye. The library has been incredibly lucky to exist in a community that demonstrates its love for the library on an almost daily basis. Customer comments, a grassroots led petition for increased library funding and continual letters to the editor have worked in tandem with the Association’s efforts to raise public awareness about the library and to gain support for increased funding.

The work done in 2018 will see final results in the budget decisions made in 2019. We are hopeful that these extensive efforts have demonstrated the benefit and value of investing in our library. We are planning for a vibrant future for the library that focuses on meeting the
ever growing needs of our population and we are eager to continue the work of raising awareness of our impact in our community.

Outcomes:

- Effective strategy for demonstrating library value
- Increasing the profile of Sechelt Public Library

SUCCESS STORIES FROM BC’S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Reconciliation programming – partnership with the Syiyaya Movement

The Syiyaya movement is a Reconciliation Movement for all living within the shíshálh homelands, jointly created by Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents of the Sunshine Coast. The library has been honoured to partner with this movement by offering programming at the library that works toward the goal of reconciliation. Three programs that have been done in concert include Blanket Exercises, a weaving project that took place in the library and a three week program where residents were invited to watch the APTN (Aboriginal Peoples Television Network) show “First Contact” – with dialogue following the program.

Blanket exercises have been done all over the country and provide kinetic learning of the history of colonization. This generates understanding of how we got to be where we are as a nation and provides a backdrop of the attempted destruction of First Nations culture and identity. We were pleased to host two sessions of this important work.

Part of reconciliation involves working toward understanding First Nations culture and respecting traditional cultural practices. In the summer of 2018, Sechelt Library was honoured to host Master Weaver Shy Watters as she created a blanket entitled “Paddling Together.” This blanket was designed by Shy and was created with the help of community members as they engaged with Shy and learned the very basics of weaving with cedar strips and wool. Conversation around this cultural practice helped create understanding and respect.

The third project we engaged in with the Syiyaya movement was a three week session in the Fall of 2018 that involved watching APTN’s “First Contact” – a show that takes several Caucasian Canadians who have a limited and negative perceptions of First Nations people and introduces them to people living in reservations across the country. This show documents the personal journey of Caucasian Canadians grappling with misperceptions, mistruths and negative stereotypes. Each episode was followed with dialogue circles to discuss what was seen – the emotions and the issues that arose from the program.
Outcomes:

- Brand the library as a trusted partner in Reconciliation with our First Nation community.
- Create a dialogue with our community around topics of Reconciliation.

For more information, please contact Elle Archibald at 604-885-3260

SUMMARY

2018 was a transitional year for Sechelt Library. With a change in leadership and a focus on funding issues, the library was still able to successfully serve its growing population.

Key findings for 2018 revolve around listening to what our community wants from the library. We have clearly heard that our community wants more adult programs that reflect both the daily as aspirational needs of our population.

These needs encourage us to continually seek out new partnerships and to grow our community through linking with other organizations and subject matter experts. We are stronger together and can grow exponentially through combining resources.
Sechelt Library recognized the need to measure outcomes in 2018 and investigated participating in Project Outcome in order to demonstrate our impact. This will be realized in 2019 when we join Project Outcome and we look forward to providing quantitative results to qualitative goals.

The ongoing challenges for our library remain funding and space. We continually strive to demonstrate our value to our funding partners and are encouraged with the tone of our conversations and the support we have received thus far. We believe that we will continue to make headway with our funding issues over the next few years.

The same is true for our space issues. The library is beginning a capital campaign for renovations and we hope to address our pressing space needs in the next few years.

Regardless of the ongoing needs of the library, we continue to be the heart of our community. With a grass roots petition as well as continual letters to the editor asking for increased library funding and expressing the personal value people receive through their involvement with the library, we are assured that the library is increasingly valued in this community and we look forward to meeting the needs of this growing population.