



*building communities together*

## **2020 Business Plan Library (1660)**

*Wanda Davis, Manager of Library Services*

***Working in partnership with communities, large and small, to offer local, sub-regional, and regional services to ensure that the Cariboo Chilcotin is a socially, economically and environmentally desirable region.***

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### **Department/Function Services**

The Cariboo Regional District Library (CRDL) was established in 1994 after the agreement between the Thompson Nicola Regional District and the Cariboo Regional District for the provision of public library service to the residents of both regions came to an end.

As defined by the Library Act, the Cariboo Regional District Library is an integrated public library system that provides library services, via its fifteen branches, to residents of the Cariboo Regional District. With their library card residents may, in addition to borrowing materials from any Cariboo branch, visit and borrow materials from any public library in BC through the BC OneCard agreement.

CRDL's primary public services include: region-wide lending of print, audio, and video materials; online lending of e-books and e-audiobooks; free access to a variety of digital resources available via the library's website; resource sharing with other libraries; provision of free internet access via public internet stations and wireless local area networks; free meeting space for nonprofit groups; free story time programs for children and special interest programs for adults, some of which involve collaborating with other organizations. Centralized technical services for library branches include ordering, cataloguing, processing and distributing materials, and interlibrary loan support.

The library was established by the Cariboo Regional District Library – Local Service Establishment Bylaw No. 2466. Bylaw No. 2466 stipulates that the requisition for the service cannot exceed the greater of \$1,574,604 or a tax rate of \$0.81508/\$1,000 of assessment. Property owners in rural areas pay on the basis of improvement assessment only, whereas those in municipalities pay on land and improvements.

All directors on the Cariboo Regional District Board are responsible for the governance of the library function. Library services are provided throughout the district, in all electoral areas.

Significant capital projects:

- 2009 completion of the Quesnel Library building
- 2010 completion of the new 100 Mile House Library building
- 2017 replacement of the McLeese Lake Library building
- 2018 re-location of the Bridge Lake Library from rented space in Bridge Lake to a new CRD-owned building located in Interlakes. The branch was re-named Interlakes Library.

## **Business Plan Goals, Rationale & Strategies**

### **2020 Goals**

The overall goal identified in the CRD Library Strategic Plan is to ensure that library users enjoy excellent customer service and an enjoyable and useful customer experience whether using library services in the Library's 15 branches or through the Library's website. Over the next four years, library staff will implement specific goals identified in the CRD Library Strategic Plan, particularly as they coincide with identified strategic initiatives contained in the Cariboo Regional District Strategic Plan.

1. **Goal:** Improve access to the Library's digital collections and other online services by developing an improved library website.

**Rationale:** The CRD Library website is the portal to its digital resources and services and is the 'face of the Library' to the digital world. The existing website, while still functional on a basic level, is outdated and no longer offers the best access to the Library's digital services, which are growing.

**Strategy:** Invite a group of interested library staff members to conduct a scan of public library websites to determine how other libraries serve their users through their websites, to consult library staff about how they think the library website should serve library users, and to use the results of the 2018 public consultation surveys to determine what users expect of the Library's website. Use the results of these investigations to create a 'scope of work' to be used in an RFP for an improved CRD Library website.

**Related CRD Strategic Planning Goal/Objective:** #2 Planning. Intentionally plan services and activities for future needs of residents and community stakeholders.

2. **Goal:** Provide facility/equipment improvements to Area and Community Library Branches.

**Rationale:** Maintain library buildings and ensure essential equipment is replaced/updated as needed; ensure facilities continue to meet the needs of the communities they serve; and support new services.

**Strategy:** Prioritize viable projects that focus on access, safety, comfort, energy conservation, building aesthetics and which meet service delivery requirements. Priorities for 2020 include: (a) Continue to work with the owner of the leased land on which the McLeese Lake Library stands to stabilize the soil on the site of the old

library and to improve landscaping on the site. (b) Continue to address issues that arise in the 100 Mile House Library building; including replacing malfunctioning bathroom fixtures and working with Branch staff to plan how to make better use of the existing space in the mezzanine.

**Related CRD Strategic Goal/Objective:** #3.2.2 Continue to offer Library Services that meet the needs of rural communities.

3. **Goal:** Provide fair, equal and predictable library services to residents throughout the Cariboo Region.

**Rationale:** Results of the 2018 Library survey and discussions with various library users indicate that CRD library branches are applying library procedures in different ways depending on the location. This is confusing and upsetting to library users who visit different branches.

**Strategy:** Priorities for action in 2020 will include: (a) Identify specific procedures that are causing reported issues for library users and begin the process of standardization and related staff training so library users can expect similar treatment regardless of which CRD location they visit. (b) Update the way library staff collect statistics of library and user activity to identify usage trends to support current library services and to help identify future service needs. Report library usage statistics to the CRD Board in the second quarter of each year.

**Related CRD Strategic Goal/Objective:** #3.2.2 Continue to offer Library Services that meet the needs of rural communities.

4. **Goal:** Improve staff access to training in multiple formats.

**Rationale:** With the increasing pace of change in society and in the library sector, it is imperative that library staff maintain a skillset that enables them to provide a high level of service to the public. With library branches widely spread throughout the Cariboo Region, on-going training for library staff has always been a challenge. However, it has become increasingly common for library training to be offered using a variety of technologies, including YouTube, webinars, teleconferencing, and online courses. Training has become more affordable and accessible to all staff regardless of their location.

**Strategy:** Continue with work accomplished in 2019 to produce and implement a training plan for library staff. Actively encourage all staff to access a select list of pre-recorded library training sessions available through YouTube (such as those produced by SITKA on how to use the Library's Evergreen software), to listen to webinars related to the services they offer or may offer in the future, and to attend in-person training when available, as the budget permits. Encourage professional staff to read industry literature to increase awareness of trends in library services that might be of use and of interest to local library users.

**Related CRD Strategic Goal/Objective:** #3.2.2 Continue to offer Library Services that meet the needs of rural communities.

5. **Goal:** Provide a comfortable, welcoming, and useful environment for library users and staff in branches located throughout the region.

**Rationale:** Due to the widespread nature of the region, it is useful to residents to have access to library services in communities throughout the Cariboo Region.

Visitors to branch libraries who encounter an environment that is comfortable, welcoming and useful will be more likely to return for future visits and will have a positive outlook on the organization that provides it.

**Strategy:** Priorities for action in 2020 include: (a) The 2018 Library Services Survey revealed an interest in different hours of operation in a number of locations. Using the results of the 2018 Library Services Survey, determine public demand for changes to hours of operation in the library's branches, particularly in rural areas. Explore ways to adjust hours of operation to meet the needs and desires of local communities. In consultation with local library staff, make any changes that are feasible and that will have minimal or no impact on taxation. (b) The survey also revealed growing concerns by members of the public regarding negative behaviour by individuals and groups in and around library buildings. Some library users expressed their reluctance to enter some library buildings because of concerns for their own safety and the safety of their children. Address these concerns by introducing an official Patron Code of Conduct to assist library staff when dealing with difficult customers.

**Related CRD Strategic Goal/Objective:** #3.2.2 Continue to offer Library Services that meet the needs of rural communities.

6. **Goal:** Improve access to the library's collections and other services.

**Rationale:** The CRD Library's physical collections are an important resource for both recreational reading and for consultation. Some non-fiction collections are particularly time sensitive and must be kept up to date in order to be useful. One of the most sensitive collections the library makes available is legal self-help materials.

**Strategy:** Create weeding guidelines for staff to reference when purging branch collections of out-of-date and worn items and train staff in its use. Following in-house weeding guidelines and those supplied by B.C. Legal Services, implement a plan to remove all out of date legal material from CRD Library branches and replace it with up to date material.

**Related CRD Strategic Planning Goal/Objective:** #3.2.2 Continue to offer Library Services that meet the needs of rural communities.

## 2021 Goals

1. **Goal:** Improve access to the library's digital collections and other online services by developing an improved library website.

**Rationale:** The CRD Library website is the portal to its digital resources and services and is the 'face of the library' to the digital world. The existing website, while still functional on a basic level, is outdated and no longer offers the best access to the library's digital services, which are growing.

**Strategy:** Using the results of the 2020 working group, work with the Procurement Manager to create an RFP to search for a company or individual to create a new library website. Based on results of an RFP, hire a website design company to modernize the library's website so that access to the library's digital services is easy

and convenient for users; and so that the website presents the best possible face of the CRD Library to the digital world.

**Related CRD Strategic Planning Goal/Objective:** #2 Planning. Intentionally plan services and activities for future needs of residents and community stakeholders.

2. **Goal:** Improve staff access to training in multiple formats.

**Rationale:** With the increasing pace of change in society and in the library sector, it is imperative that library staff maintain a skillset that enables them to provide a high level of service to the public. With library branches widely spread throughout the Cariboo Region, on-going training for library staff in the district, in an efficient manner, has always been a challenge. It has become increasingly common for library training to be offered using a variety of technologies including YouTube, webinars, teleconferencing, and online courses. Training has become more affordable and accessible to all staff regardless of their location.

**Strategy:** Continue with work achieved in 2020. As the new library website is loaded, train staff in its use and encourage them to introduce the site to members of the public.

**Related CRD Strategic Goal/Objective:** #3.2.2 Continue to offer Library Services that meet the needs of rural communities.

3. **Goal:** Provide a comfortable, welcoming and useful environment for library users and staff.

**Rationale:** Due to the widespread nature of the region, it is useful to residents to have access to library services in communities throughout the Cariboo Region. Visitors to branch libraries who encounter an environment that is comfortable, welcoming and useful will be more likely to return for future visits and will have a positive outlook on the organization that provides it.

**Strategy:** Priorities for 2021 include: (a) Introduce modern wayfinding and merchandising techniques to branch staff. Encourage staff to implement those techniques to help library users find what they need at the library whether they seek help from staff or prefer to help themselves.

**Related CRD Strategic Goal/Objective:** #3.2.2 Continue to offer Library Services that meet the needs of rural communities.

## 2022 Goals

1. **Goal:** Improve staff access to training in multiple formats.

**Rationale:** With the increasing pace of change in society and in the library sector, it is imperative that library staff maintain a skillset that enables them to provide a high level of service to the public. With library branches widely spread throughout the Cariboo Region, on-going training for library staff has always been a challenge. It has become increasingly common for library training to be offered using a variety of technologies including YouTube, webinars, teleconferencing, and online courses. Training has become more affordable and accessible to all staff regardless of their location.

**Strategy:** Continue with work achieved in 2020.

**Related CRD Strategic Goal/Objective:** #3.2.2 Continue to offer Library Services that meet the needs of rural communities.

2. **Goal:** Provide a comfortable, welcoming and useful environment for library users and staff.

**Rationale:** Due to the widespread nature of the region, it is most useful to residents to have access to library services in communities throughout the Cariboo Region. Visitors to branch libraries who encounter an environment that is comfortable, welcoming and useful will be more likely to return for future visits and will have a positive outlook on the organization that provides it.

**Strategy:** Priorities for 2022 include: (a) Use the results of the 2018 Library Services Survey and other input to develop adult workshops for community learning on topics of interest to the community. Explore local communities for 'experts' willing to volunteer to lead a workshop in their area of interest and expertise. Encourage library staff to participate in adult programming by offering workshops in an area of their personal interest or on specific library services.

**Related CRD Strategic Goal/Objective:** #3.2.2 Continue to offer Library Services that meet the needs of rural communities.

3. **Goal:** Provide facility/equipment improvements to Area and Community Library Branches.

**Rationale:** Maintain library buildings and ensure essential equipment is replaced/updated as needed; ensure facilities continue to meet the needs of the communities they serve; and support new services.

**Strategy:** Prioritize viable projects that focus on access, safety, comfort, energy conservation, building aesthetics and which meet service delivery requirements. A specific project scheduled for 2022 is the cleaning and re-finishing of the logs at 100 Mile House Branch, according to the five-year schedule set in 2017. Work with the Procurement Manager to hire a contractor to clean and refinish the exterior of the 100 Mile Branch Library.

**Related CRD Strategic Goal/Objective:** #3.2.2 Continue to offer Library Services that meet the needs of rural communities.

## **2023 - 2024 Goal**

**Goal:** Continue with long-term goals set in previous years. Continue to move library services forward in step with advancements in technology and user services in the larger library community, as resources permit.

**Rationale:** New technology will continue to change the way library services are delivered and what those services will be.

**Strategy:** Encourage library managers to remain aware of changes and new developments in library services so CRDL services remain up-to-date and continue to offer residents high quality public library services by drawing their attention to forward-looking resources such as webinars, articles, online courses and conference sessions. Continue to work with

regional, provincial, and federal library partners to make these advances available and affordable.

## **Overall Financial Impact**

The requisition level for 2020 is an increase of 3% above the 2019 requisition.

Prior to 2019, library services remained at the same requisition level for many years. However, general costs have risen during that time and budgeted surpluses are becoming lower every year. Of note are rising costs for staffing, travel, and building maintenance. The rising cost of digital resources has been mostly offset by a decrease in the number of print resources that are purchased each year. To offset inflationary costs, the requisition level for 2020 and beyond is expected to require an increase of approximately 3%. This percentage may be lower depending on actual costs and other funding sources that might be identified each year.

The website upgrade project will require the help of a website design firm and will result in funds being added to the 2021 budget.

The 100 Mile House Branch, completed in 2010, is a log structure and as such requires specific, regular maintenance including the re-staining of the logs. This will be a major expense of approximately \$40,000 which will be included in the budget on a 5-year rotation beginning in 2017. That amount is included in the projected budget for 2022.

No major capital projects are planned for 2020.

Major repairs to the Williams Lake Branch, including dealing with tree roots growing into the sewer lines may soon be required. In addition, the branch is aging and soon will require repairs and updates to the interior. When undertaken, these repairs and updates will draw on capital reserves.

Debt obligations relating to the library's Area Library building projects ended in 2017.

Library services had \$625,796 in capital reserves at the beginning of 2019.

## **Significant Issues & Trends**

### Carbon Neutral Commitment

The Cariboo Regional District is a signatory on the Province of BC/UBCM Climate Action Charter and has committed to continuing work towards carbon neutrality in respect of corporate operations.

The Cariboo Regional District Library's contribution to the Carbon Neutral Commitment will be to review proposed projects, activities and services to identify and pursue, to a

reasonable extent, approaches that enable the library to minimize greenhouse gas emissions.

### Access to Services

Remote access to the library's public catalogue, online circulation services, and digital resources is growing in popularity as society shows increased interest in self-service from wherever they happen to be. People want to place holds, renew checked-out material, pay fines, download digital content, update their contact information, etc. without needing to visit the library. The library needs to recognize and accommodate this trend with a website that is up to date, interactive, and easy to use from a variety of devices with screens of varying sizes.

At the same time as interest in digital content and remote access is growing, many people continue to choose to visit library branches in person. The library needs to maintain staff with a high level of knowledge and experience in order to provide relevant and excellent service to both groups. Ongoing training for new services, and new ways of offering training for existing services, is crucial as changes are frequent and constant.

### Technology

Access to reliable, high-speed internet remains a challenge for rural areas across Canada while demand for it continues to grow. In some areas of the region, internet access in resident's homes is a challenge or, in some areas, an impossibility. This, and the fact that access to many necessary government services are increasingly available only online, makes centralized internet access in remote communities a necessity. The non-commercial nature of the public library makes it the perfect location in a community for this service, which includes access to internet stations and printers within our branches, and wireless connectivity for those with laptops, tablets, and smart phones. However, some of the digital services the library now offers are better accessed through an internet connection at home. It is a challenge to library staff whose responsibility it is to introduce new and exciting digital services to remember that a large number of the population they serve will not have access to these services.

Public libraries are increasingly challenged to be at the forefront of emerging information technologies, which either support the delivery of desired services and products (e.g. a top-notch website, social media, and electronic bulletin boards) or which are the desired service/product (e.g. internet wireless services, access to internet stations, advances in internet communications and search capabilities, e-books & e-audiobooks).

While recognizing the need for the library to remain aware of evolving information and communication technologies that have application for current and potential services, the library also recognizes that training opportunities are needed for those who are less familiar with the technologies it employs or will introduce. It is imperative for many that they learn to use and adapt to the applications of such technology in their day-to-day lives. The library, with its free services and training opportunities, can serve to help people cross the



digital divide in which they find themselves. In order to do this, library staff must keep their own knowledge of digital technology up-to-date.

### Partnerships and Collaboration

Working in collaboration with other libraries and with local community groups and agencies has been an ongoing trend for some years now. Practice has shown that cost savings can be significant when libraries that consume similar products and offer similar services band together to negotiate better prices. This has been proven time and again as the library works with other public libraries at the national, provincial and regional level to negotiate prices for such things as Canada Post shipping, digital content, author visits, and technology programming. Similarly, it is more efficient and benefits the community when local agencies offering similar programs and services to the public work together. This is why library staff attend planning meetings of local community agencies and offer the library as a venue for community-based programs; and why professional staff attend meetings of regional and provincial library partners.

### Evolving Library Collections

The Library, like all libraries, is experiencing a gradual decline in or leveling off of use of its physical collections. This can be attributed to the increasing popularity of digital media across all demographic sectors. School students who once flocked to the public library to consult print resources to complete assignments now consult online resources. Funds once spent on these print resources now need to be re-directed to online resources.

DVD collections continue to be highly used in all CRDL branches, even as their popularity decreases in society generally. This is due, primarily, to the current trend of publishing full seasons of popular television shows, the decline of commercial video rental outlets, and the inability of many Cariboo residents to access video streaming services via high-speed internet. Although the CRDL has yet to subscribe to a digital video streaming service, many other public libraries have gone this route and have seen a steady decline in the use of their DVD collections.

The library's local/regional history collections, including information on First Nations culture and history, continue to be very popular. Supporting the continued growth and quality of these collections, in all formats, is a priority.

While the library's print newspaper and magazine collections are still well-used, e-journals and e-magazines are an appealing option for active users of smart phones and tablets. The library currently subscribes to an online database which provides full-text articles from over 190 Canadian newspapers and to a database that specializes in e-magazines.

### Resource Sharing (Interlibrary Loan vs. Interlibrary Connect)

There have been significant changes to resource sharing on a province-wide basis. As predicted, the Interlibrary Connect service that was launched in 2015 has become the resource sharing service of choice for most people due to its simplicity of use and the quick

turnaround of requested material. People can now place holds on books held in any of the more than 50 libraries currently offering Interlibrary Connect without going through the more cumbersome provincial interlibrary loan system. It was predicted that as this kind of resource sharing grew in popularity throughout the province, use of the traditional interlibrary loan system would wane. This has indeed come to pass. Traditional interlibrary loans now represent only a small fraction of the total number of items shared between BC libraries.

The way the new service works has significantly impacted how staff tasks related to this service are distributed. Work that was once centralized at the Network Office is now being done in each branch. Funds for increased postage and other materials have been directed to branches to accommodate the increased number of packages being mailed. This bears watching over the next few years as the popularity and use of Interlibrary Connect continues to grow beyond any historic levels of traditional Interlibrary Loan use. Changes in staffing allocation may be required throughout the region if this trend continues.

### Library Facilities

Over time, the library's branches will transition to meet the changing needs of the communities they serve. Public libraries will require less space for storage of physical collections and will require more "people" space for community meetings, for independent/small group meetings between friends and peers, for programs presented by the library or in partnership with other groups and institutions, or for training sessions held by the library or other agencies. In addition, curated spaces that encourage the exercise of creativity and imagination (Maker Spaces) are a growing trend in public libraries. Currently, there are no Maker Spaces in any CRDL facilities. That could certainly change as space becomes available.

The library's area branches are experiencing more incidents of vandalism. Damage to the buildings has included graffiti (including gang tagging), damaged drywall, blocked toilets and flooding. As evidenced by the increased number of used needles and blood being found, the washrooms in the area branches are being used as drug injection sites. Staff training in 'violence in the workplace' backed up by a strong 'Patron Code of Conduct' has become more important than ever. Vandalism costs to the library, as well as natural wear and tear of facilities, has led to increased costs in building maintenance.

The library's newest large facility, the 100 Mile House Branch, continues to experience a surprising number of building maintenance issues that have challenged the library budget and taken funding and attention away from other projects. In addition, the Williams Lake Branch is now 20 years old and will soon require updating.

### Staffing

Maintaining a staff that is trained to a level where they can continue to offer optimal service during a time of rapid change in the library sector is a challenge. Staff need to continually update their knowledge of library services. For this reason, the CRD Library Strategic Plan will focus on this very important issue.

## Planning/Community Engagement

Public library services are undergoing a transformation in order to meet the needs of a rapidly changing society. The challenge the CRDL faces, along with all public libraries, is to ensure that its facilities and services accommodate the past while anticipating the future. The library's strategic plan will provide guidance and focused direction in the planning of future library services that will inform and work in conjunction with the business plan.

Community engagement remains an important trend in public libraries. The perfect opportunity for the community to engage with library staff, to express their views and contribute to the direction library services will take in the future, is during a strategic planning process. This took place in 2018 when the public was given the opportunity to submit their views through various methods including a paper survey, an online survey, Questions of the Day, and short face-to-face discussions with library staff.

## **Measuring Previous Years Performance**

Library services lost several key staff in 2019 that resulted in lengthy searches for qualified replacements. While those searches took place, other library managers spent a considerable amount of time filling in for the missing staff. That had a major impact on progress on 2019 goals. The choice was made to focus on maintaining day-to-day operations and to work on business plan goals as time and staff were available. Some progress was nonetheless made on a number of 2019 business plan goals.

- 1. Goal:** Complete the Strategic Plan for the Cariboo Regional District Library.
  - Significant progress was made on the Library Strategic Plan in the first quarter of 2019. Staff and community engagement surveys were completed by the end of December 2018 and the Strategic Planning Committee began to consolidate survey results and work on establishing goals. Unfortunately, this progress came to an abrupt halt with the unexpected departure of one of the committee members due to illness. The remaining committee members spent the next five months taking turns travelling to the 100 Mile House Library to ensure day to day operations continued without interruption. As a result, progress on the Strategic Plan came to a temporary halt. In mid-August a new library manager was hired and has been undergoing training. The new library manager joined the Strategic Planning Committee and work on the plan resumed in October.
- 2. Goal:** Provide facility/equipment improvements to Area and Community Library Branches.
  - The Library Services Manager and the Manager of Procurement met with the owner of the land on which the McLeese Lake Branch Library stands to discuss upgrades to the grounds. The owner agreed that the plans presented to him were viable and to provide the CRD with a quote for the work. Meanwhile, the owner used heavy equipment to move a number of large stones to prevent people from

parking on the still unstable ground where the old library used to stand. Although funds for this project are in the 2019 budget, if the work is not completed by the end of 2019, the funds will be moved to 2020.

- Following a safety audit of public library buildings, a number of changes were implemented in workspaces in 100 Mile House, Quesnel and Williams Lake branches. Changes included the installation of mirrors to give staff better visibility within the branches, gates to discourage public access to staff work areas, and panic alarms.
  - Due to increased incidents involving groups of people ‘hanging out’ outside the Williams Lake Library and safety concerns expressed by library staff and the public, one of the tables with attached benches has been removed from outside the library, and one of the electrical outlets decommissioned.
- 3. Goal:** Provide Cariboo-Chilcotin residents with improved access to digital content, including e-books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines, and video.
- Digital content continues to be available to library users in the Cariboo. New licenses were negotiated for all existing digital products in 2019 by the B.C. Libraries Cooperative.
  - Responsibility for keeping the library’s webpage up to date was assigned to the Library Technician (Cataloguer) located centrally in Library Support Services in the Network Office as part of the updated job description for that position.
- 4. Goal:** Improve staff access to training in multiple formats.
- A significant portion of the staff engagement survey conducted in late 2018 dealt with staff training. Library staff provided input on topics they would like to be included in a training plan as well as how they would like to see training delivered. Library managers have begun to use that information to develop a multi-year training plan for library staff.
- 5. Goal:** Update the job description for the Cataloguer.
- Completed. An extensive search to replace the Cataloguer who retired in May concluded with the hiring of a new Cataloguer in October. The new Cataloguer began work in October and currently in training.