

INTRODUCTION Part 1: Community

The Fort St. James Public Library acknowledges that our work takes place on the unceded homelands of the Dakelh Nations.

Founded by Simon Fraser in 1806 on the shores of Stuart Lake, Fort St. James is the gateway to a chain of rivers and lakes that traverse 400 kilometres of central British Columbia. The population of the Fort St. James area, including the municipality itself, rural areas, and First Nations, is slightly under 5,000 people. There is an established forest industry, a burgeoning mining sector and a growing tourism industry. The downtown core, near the District of Fort St. James office, hosts restaurants, retail shops, banks and a government service office. The library is located right beside the downtown core.

Fort St. James and area have played a significant role in history. Visual reminders of this history are evident throughout the town. Among the more prominent are:

- Fort St. James National Historic Site
- Ancient burial site of Carrier Chief Kwah
- Our Lady of Good Hope Catholic Church
- Monument to legendary bush pilot Russ Baker

Some of the First Nations communities served by Fort St. James include:

- Nak'azdli
- Yekooche
- Binche
- Tl'azt'en (Tache)
- Takla Lake

The town's important cultural, educational, and community institutions include:

- Fort St. James Public Library
- College of New Caledonia
- The Key Resource Centre
- Fort St. James National Historic Site / Friends of the Park
- Community Arts Council / Pope Mountain Arts Centre
- Music Makers
- Fort St. James Senior Association
- Fort St. James Community Foundation
- John Prince Research Forest

INTRODUCTION Part 2: Strategic Plans

The *Strategic Plan 2016-2021* for the Fort St. James Public Library outlines four goals, each with three or more focus areas:

- Community Connections
- Professional Development
- Technology Engagement
- Environment

The Provincial Strategic Plan, *Inspiring Libraries, Connecting Communities (2016)*, is being reviewed, but Libraries Branch is still focused on these similar priorities:

- Fostering Equitable Access to Information and Services
- Developing Skills and Knowledge
- Working Together
- Enhancing Governance

As it has in the past, the strategic goals of the Fort St. James Public Library closely align with those of the Ministry of Education, Libraries Branch.

Connecting the Ministry of Education, Libraries Branch Priorities and the Fort St. James Public Library Strategic Plan 2016-2021

MELB Priorities	FSJaPL Priorities	Notes
<i>Fostering Equitable Access to Information and Services</i>	<p><i>Technology Engagement:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep software as current and relevant as possible • Improve digital equipment for staff and patrons • Increase digital access and digital literacy of staff and patrons • Valuable and easy to use website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Maker Space equipment. • Introduction of Gale Courses. • North Central Library Federation programming to libraries in the region. • Increased usage of WiFi. • Keeping website updated.
<i>Developing Skills and Knowledge</i>	<p><i>Professional Development:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board education • Staff training • Increased staff communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at conferences, webinars, teleconferences, etc.

	<p><i>Technology Engagement:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase digital access and digital literacy of staff and patrons <p><i>Environment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve study areas and reading areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of tools and resources for professional development. • Regular performance evaluations with training goals. • Continued informal technology training.
<i>Working Together</i>	<p><i>Community Connections:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating and strengthening partnerships with community and regional organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint programming. • Strengthened partnerships. • Working with CUPE-4951 to improve workplace environment and expectations.
<i>Enhancing Governance</i>	<p>The library is committed to measuring, reporting, and evaluating all data on services and programs throughout our Strategic Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Policy Manual. • Maintenance and Advocacy of library's budgets. • Promoting Board activities and Board recruitment.

Progress of the Fort St. James Public Library's Strategic Plan:

Community Connections

- The library's Board and Staff continue to meet regularly with community groups to promote sharing knowledge and services.
- The Head Librarian has been talking with a vendor about establishing satellite library services for nearby communities. This is in the exploratory phase.
- The Head Librarian has made preparations for regular school visits, and has met with local school librarians to build relationships.

Professional Development

- The library's Board and Staff continue to attend a number of conferences, webinars, courses, and other learning opportunities.
- Staff evaluations are being performed regularly, with frequent feedback and training opportunities throughout the year.
- The Head Librarian provides casual technology training throughout the day and for projects given to the staff.

Technology Engagement

- The library has acquired a new online learning platform for patrons, which has been well received within the communities we serve.
- Usage of the eCollection, largely Overdrive, has been steadily increasing.
- Community Futures British Columbia has provided the library with a 3D Printer usable by community members. There has been a technical issue preventing staff from making it accessible to the public, but all other policies and procedures are in place.
- WiFi usage continues to increase, but we still have an imperfect data collection method resulting in underreporting.
- Our software is current, but hardware is overdue for replacement.

Environment

- The library has made progress towards opening up our mezzanine space for public use. We still need to purchase some additional furniture and recruit volunteers to help set up and move furniture.
- There were concerns about our care lift not being serviceable, but those have been cleared up.

Kay Dean

Interviewed 2019

"When I was able to go to the library, I was impressed with the friendliness and good service. The collection was great, the staff very helpful, and would order books in from other libraries if we did not have them. Books can be reserved. A nice small town attitude and a modern library with up-to-date technology."

LIBRARY PRIORITY 1: Fostering Equitable Access to Information and Services

A goal of 2018 was to increase programs and services provided to the community. 2017 was a period of significant transition for us, including a shuffling of Board Members, a new Head Librarian, and concerns regarding the usage of our finances. In 2018 we were able to increase the quantity and quality of the programs and services we could provide. This includes three author visits, a more polished Summer Reading Club, and online Gale Courses.

The library is excited to have joined with the NCLF, and NCLF libraries, to provide access to the Gale Courses platform. This has become an important resource that libraries in the North Central are providing to patrons. The College of New Caledonia's Learning Hub has assisted the library greatly with the introduction of Gale Courses. Beyond providing financial support, the

Learning Hub has promoted the platform throughout the community, including with a training session held at the library. These courses have been well received by the community and community groups. For example, Fort Outreach Employment Services, a local WorkBC branch, encourages their clients to improve their skills through the library-provided courses.

We are grateful for the efforts of local, provincial, federal, and international workers and officials who mitigated the effects of the Shovel Lake Fire in our community. While the village of Fort St. James was only under a voluntary evacuation order, many members of the community took the advice of RCMP and other emergency authorities and left their homes. The village and surrounding communities had only minimal, if any, damage at the end of the month.

The Shovel Lake Fire did cause a significant disruption of service in August. We lost a considerable amount of service hours and programs. This especially affected our Summer Reading Club, which lost weeks of activities planned by the Assistant Librarian and Summer Student. We would have had greater usage of the collection, computers, wireless internet, etc., had the fire not caused many members of the community to unexpectedly and suddenly evacuate. We are grateful to the BC Libraries Cooperative, who helped staff remove any fines or fees from items late due to the evacuation.

The library is also grateful to Community Futures British Columbia (Northeast Region) for their donation of a 3D Printer to the library. The library received the 3D Printer in the late Spring of 2018, and started work to make it available to our patrons. The Library Board created a 3D Printer Policy to outline the intent, Terms of Use, and Procedure for public usage of the Printer. The Head Librarian set up the printer and necessary software and accessories, created procedures for staff, and tested the printer. Unfortunately, while walking staff through the operations of the Printer the unit started to fail printing. The issue was brought to Community Futures, who has promised to send a technician to both troubleshoot and to provide instructional sessions for staff and the community. Due to scheduling, including the Shovel Lake Fire and labour matters, the issue was not resolved in 2018. We look forward to providing access to this important technology in 2019 once we are able to reconnect with Community Futures or the Head Librarian can receive other assistance.

2018 Goals:

1. Increase quantity and quality of programs.
2. Provide more digital resources and tools to our patrons.
3. Support the community during the Shovel Lake Fire emergency.

2018 Outcomes:

1. Children's programming was improved from last year, with more staff support and creative activities. Adult programming was also increased, but less substantially. For both Children's and Adult Programming, we must continue to improve the quantity of programs in the future.
 - a. In 2017 we had 399 participants in 30 Children's Programs. In 2018 we had 758 participants in 66 Children's Programs.
 - b. In 2017 we had 71 participants in 12 Adult Programs. In 2018 we had 99 participants in 12 Adult Programs.
 - c. Thanks to grants, such as the Province's Per Capita Operating Grant, we were able to provide more resources for literacy activities, stories, and crafts, as well as refreshments for participants.
 - d. We created a Spanish Language class for children, which should be able to be repeated and expanded in the future.
 - e. We held three author talks from local or provincial authors. One reading was organized through the NCLF, and the author visited all libraries in the region.
2. The library purchased a subscription to Gale Courses through the NCLF, and houses a 3D Printer courtesy of Community Futures British Columbia.
 - a. The library started providing access to, and supporting patron usage of, Gale Courses. Awareness was created through in-person interactions and social media posts, and patrons are being helped to navigate the platform.
 - b. There were approximately 413 hours spent in Gale Courses by patrons throughout the year.
 - c. The 3D Printer is ready for patron usage as soon as a technical issue is resolved and staff are given the chance to run through the procedures a few times.
3. The library was able to help the community in some small ways during the Shovel Lake Fire, even though staff had voluntarily evacuated.
 - a. With the help of the BC Libraries Cooperative, staff ensured that no fines or fees would be processed if caused by the evacuation.
 - b. Staff amplified emergency messaging before, during, and after the fire through the library's social media accounts.
 - c. The library's wireless internet, which is broadcast outside of the library's walls, was left on during the evacuation.

Dave Copley

Interviewed 2018

- Has been coming to the library for 35 years.
- Comes to the library about 3 times per week.
- Very happy with the collection, and uses the Inter-Library Loan service.
- Comes in for the books.

LIBRARY PRIORITY 2: Developing Skills and Knowledge

Developing the digital skills and professional development of the library's Board, Staff, and Patrons is a substantial goal of the Fort St. James Public Library. The Board has sought out professional development through conferences, presentations within the community, and online resources. The Board has also directed the Head Librarian to attend conferences, webinars, teleconferences, and read a variety of online resources. For other staff, the Head Librarian has helped identify the needs of the library and interests of the staff members. Finally, the library continually provides resources and reference help to patrons.

We recognize that Inter-Library Loans are an essential service of all public libraries in the province, but we had only one staff member trained to accomplish this duty. This created issues whenever that staff member was sick, on vacation, or occupied with other duties. Therefore, it was important in 2018 to train additional staff in these duties. With the help of a grant from the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako, we increased a staff member's hours each week for the purpose of learning and performing duties related to Inter-Library Loans.

The library continues to promote the College of New Caledonia's Community Adult Literacy Programmer, who provides, among other things, regular digital literacy skills training. The library is able to provide one-on-one support to patrons, but do not currently have the capacity to facilitate regular classes. The library provides assistance for individual patrons seeking advice for their devices, online platforms, and internet connectivity, which may not be covered by other community groups.

2018 Goals:

1. Continue to access educational opportunities for the Board and Staff.
2. Diversify staff skills so that a service is not reliant upon one individual.
3. Increased staff communication.
4. Improved study and reading areas.

2018 Outcomes:

1. The Board and Head Librarian attended various training opportunities. Other staff attended few training sessions, but staff were given on-the-job training by the Head Librarian.
 - a. Board members attended the BCLA Conference, NCLF Conferences, webinars, and other sessions. These helped increase Board Member's awareness of library initiatives around the province. We intend to continue sending members to conferences, including TOP, in the future.
 - b. The Head Librarian attended various conferences, teleconferences, webinars, and kept up to date through many newsletters and listservs.
 - c. In the past the Head Librarian held Tech Sessions for the staff, but these were inconsistently attended. These were halted in 2018 until regular attendance can be maintained.
 - d. The Head Librarian has discussed training opportunities with staff, encouraging staff to train during work hours. Areas of interest and organizational need, as well as resources, have been outlined.
2. A second staff member was trained in Inter-Library Loan duties.
 - a. The staff member spent about three hours of each week for a full year learning all tasks associated with Inter-Library Loan, Inter-Library Connect, and BC One returns. This involved working with the Assistant Librarian, and updating the procedures associated with the tasks.
 - b. There are still many duties that are reliant upon the Head Librarian. This should be an area of improvement in the future.
3. The Board has made a motion to fund monthly or bi-monthly staff meetings.
 - a. Because of staffing costs, it is not possible to have these meetings during the workday. The time in which staff overlap is scarce. Therefore, we had to set aside Provincial funds to prepare for increased costs not covered by our regular staffing budget.
4. There was progress on the planned mezzanine improvements.
 - a. Some of the required furniture and infrastructure improvements were purchased and installed, but there is work yet to be done.

Tiwi Mukubvu

Interviewed 2018

- Has been coming to the library for 2 years.
- Comes in once about every 2 weeks.
- Happy with the collection, especially all of the DVDs.

LIBRARY PRIORITY 3: Working Together

In 2018 the library continued to work with partners made in past years, as well as to create new partnerships that had not been previously established.

We continued to work closely with the College of New Caledonia's Learning Hub and the Nechako Valley Community Services Society. These groups facilitate the library's weekly Storytime and related programs. Additionally, these groups and the library worked together throughout the year in the Early Years Childhood Development Committee to provide quality programs and resources to parents and guardians in the region.

The library partnered with the Fort St. James Chamber of Commerce to put on a very successful program bringing together candidates for the local election and community members. Library staff used the "Candi-Dating with the Candidates" event previously held by the Prince George Public Library as a guide for the program. We worked with the Chamber, who holds an All Candidates Forum for local elections, to bring in the candidates and promote the event at the library. Beyond the significant benefit of bringing the candidates and community together for one-on-one discussions, we also increased the candidate's awareness of and familiarity with the public library.

The Fort St. James Public Library Association looks forward to working with the Canadian Union of Public Employees. In September of 2018 the Library Administration was given notice that our staff had joined with the employees of the Municipal District to become part of CUPE Local 4951. The library staff went on to vote alongside the Municipal District workers to ratify the notice.

The Library Board, Municipal District, and CUPE have subsequently been meeting regularly to work towards a mutual understanding and the creation of a Collective Agreement. We hope that this new Collective Agreement works to the benefit of each organization's employees and employers. This has been a new process for our Library Board and Management, and has been a major focus of our time and energies.

We are grateful to all of the organizations that supported us through the year, which are too numerous to fully detail in this short report:

- Ministry of Education, Libraries Branch
- North Central Library Federation
- BC Libraries Cooperative
- Municipal District of Fort St. James
- Nak'azdli Whut'en
- Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako

- College of New Caledonia’s Learning Hub
- Nechako Valley Community Services Society
- Early Childhood Development Committee
- Nezul Be Hunuyeh
- Fort St. James Chamber of Commerce
- Community Arts Council of Fort St. James
- Fort Outreach Employment Services
- Fort St. James Secondary School
- Fort St. James Community Foundation
- Community Futures British Columbia
- Employment and Social Development Canada

2018 Goals:

1. Encourage community organizations to use the library’s space and/or resources.

2018 Outcomes:

1. The library continued and increased community participation with the library.
 - a. The Storytime program we provide with the assistance of the Learning Hub and Nechako Valley Community Services had 574 participants throughout the year. In 2017 there were only 299 participants. It has become a fundamental part of the week for many families.
 - b. The library hosted a number of repeated meetings throughout the year, including Children’s Speech Therapy, Parent Counselling, the Gardening Club, and the Television and Radio Society.
 - c. The library and Chamber of Commerce held a very successful program to promote engagement between political candidates and constituents. We were especially excited to have the candidates, some of whom are not library users, explore our facility and meet our staff.

Danny Sutherland	Interviewed 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comes into the library almost every day. - Has been coming to the library for about a year. - Signs out both books and DVDs. 	

LIBRARY PRIORITY 4: Enhancing Governance

The Library Board spent a significant amount of time in 2018 updating all of the Library Policies which were due for review. Policies are reviewed every five years, or as needed. Through the year nineteen policies were reviewed by Board Trustees and the Policy Committee. The Board recognizes the importance of having, and adhering to, strong guiding Policies.

Library staff were asked to participate in a number of Community Needs Assessment meetings throughout 2018. Fort St. James has many resources and groups which are not well known, and there is a desire to bring our resources together. Library staff were able to raise awareness of library programs and services at these meetings. This was especially helpful for promoting the new Gale Courses platform, as well as longstanding programs like the Summer Reading Club.

The Board also recognizes the importance of Board Development and Education. Beyond attending conferences and other educational opportunities, the Board surveyed the community for interest in joining the Library Board. This included raising awareness of what the Library Board does, and what opportunities are given to Board Trustees.

The Library Board continues to be vigilant in overseeing our finances to ensure we are maintaining our fiscal responsibilities.

2018 Goals:

1. Review or revise all policies due for inspection.
2. Use of data informed metrics to enhance the library and community.
3. Continue dutiful management and review of library finances.

2018 Outcomes:

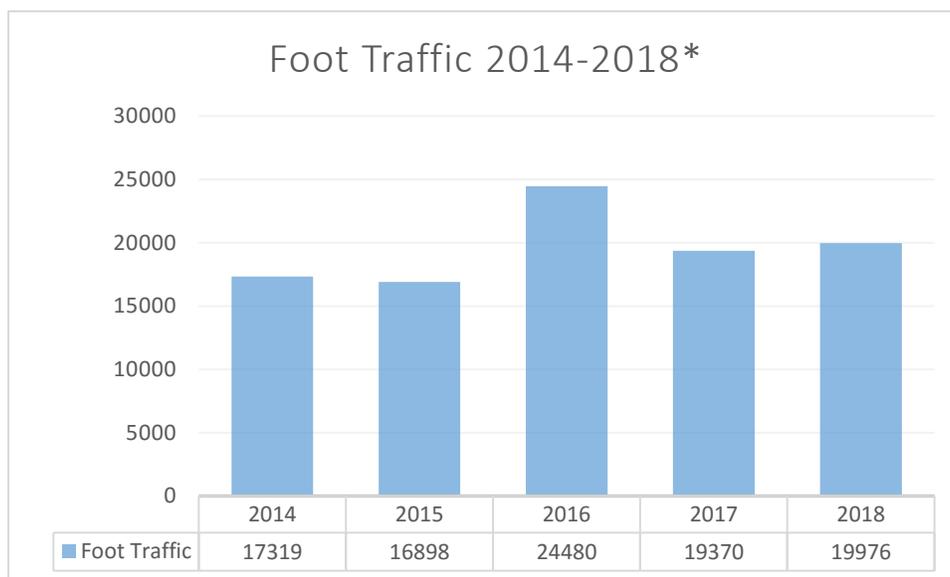
1. The Board created, reviewed, or revised nineteen policies throughout the year.
 - a. There are a handful of policies left due for inspection, but which require staff attention.
 - b. Some policies will need to be revised again next year after the signing of the Collective Agreement with CUPE.
2. The Head Librarian has worked to improve frameworks used in reports to the Board, in decisions of library services, and with regards to community needs.
 - a. The monthly Librarian Reports to the Board have been adjusted to better serve the needs of the Board. This includes providing more useful data and data analysis.

- b. Staff have refined methods by which Collection Materials are purchased, focusing on the areas which receive the most circulation.
- c. The Head Librarian participated in a number of community meetings regarding Needs Assessment and Community Resource Mapping.
- 3. The Board and Head Librarian have continued to be careful with expenses, and seek to find additional funding sources for projects.
 - a. Provincial Grants were largely devoted to current operations of the library, with some going towards expansion of programming and digital services.
 - b. There is some funding held for future projects, such as computer and connectivity upgrades and needed furniture.
 - c. New funding grants were explored, such as Canada Summer Jobs funding for a Summer Reading Club Programming Coordinator position.
 - d. We remain in discussions with local and regional governments regarding increased funding to meet the needs of the community.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY

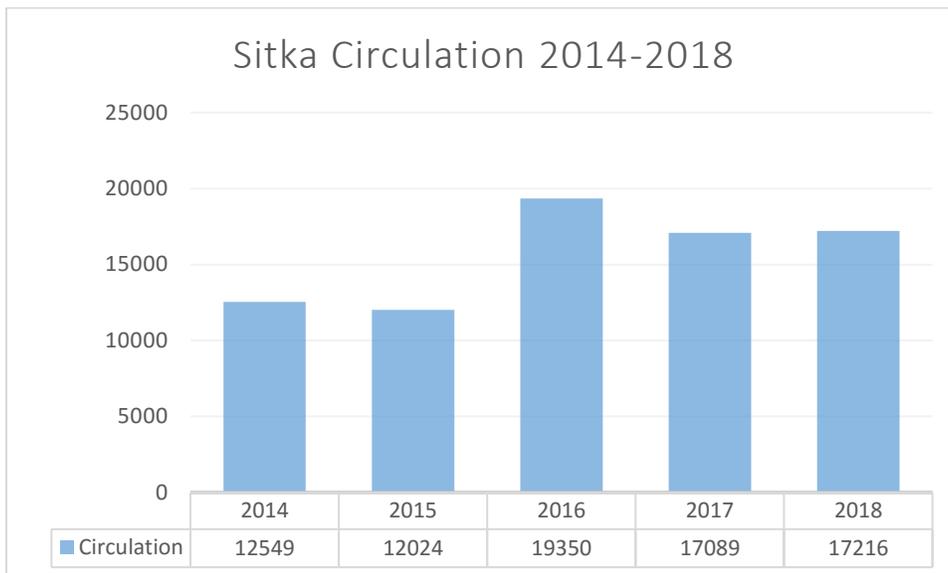
The Fort St. James Public Library saw a small increase in usage across all areas in the last several years. 2016 was an exception, which had dramatic increases which were not sustained. Still, the overall trend is an incremental and sustainable expansion of services used by our community.

Graph 1: Foot Traffic

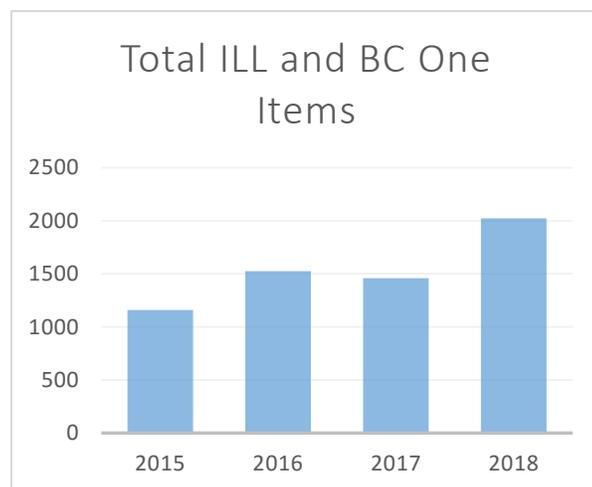
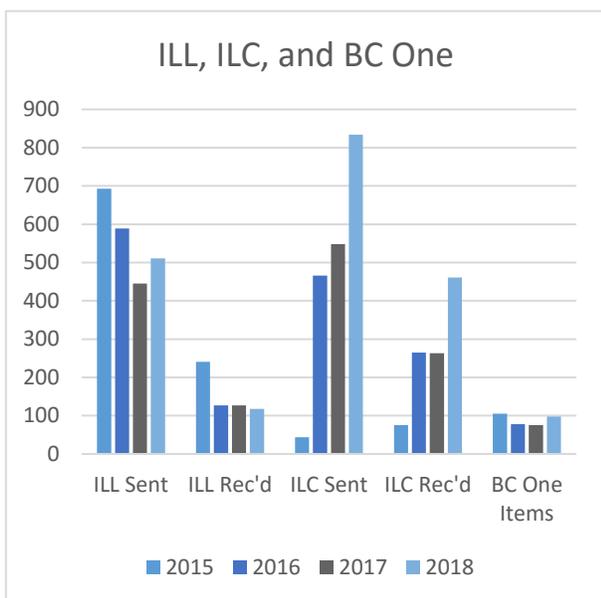


*In early 2017 a different collection method for foot traffic was implemented. This change in data collection method may affect numbers presented.

Graph 2: Circulation



Graph 3: Inter-Library Loans



Inter-Library Loans have made more dramatic increases in usage than foot traffic or circulation. There has also been a notable shift from using the Inter-Library Loan system to using the Inter-Library Connect system. The Fort St. James Library consistently sends more items out to other libraries than we request in for our own patrons.

SUMMARY

2018 was a busy and productive year for the Library Board and the Library's staff.

- Usage of the library has continued a steady upwards trend in services and programs. We are especially happy with the increase in digital services we are providing to the community.
- Professional Development is still a focus of the Board, and there is an interest in ensuring that all staff receive more training.
- We are maintaining, and improving, relations with other organizations and community groups. We are especially interested in partnerships that directly benefit our patrons, but also work with organizations to improve our community generally.
- The Board continues to focus on providing attentive governance and data-driven decision making.
 - The Board spent a great deal of the year reviewing and improving our Policies, as we believe they are a fundamentally important tool for the library's operations.
 - The Board and Head Librarian have also been working to improve our reporting frameworks, and the frameworks used by members of our community.
 - Our finances are being monitored and used for the betterment of our services. Some reserves are held for projects that are coming soon.

The library, including the Board, Staff, and resources, are not as stretched as they were in the past. However, that does not mean that we can become complacent. The library still struggles to provide the level of staffing that the community needs. We also have a lot of work to do with the Municipal District and CUPE to create a Collective Agreement agreeable to both the employees and employers. There is also work to be done in regards to programming, digital services, and facility improvements. While the Board and Staff are proud of what we have accomplished during 2018, we do see the challenges presented to us in the new year.