

The *Strategic Plan 2012-2015* for Fort St. James Public Library (FSJPL) continues to address the original eight priorities identified in the planning process. The eight priorities therein identified are:

1. Updating technology
2. Staffing
3. First Nations presence and involvement
4. Services for children and youth
5. Enhancing and developing sustainable partnerships
6. Community outreach
7. Diversifying the collection
8. Library services

The Ministry of Education, Libraries branch (MELB) set out 4 priorities for 2015. The four priorities were:

1. equitable access to library services for all British Columbians
2. Increased supports for education transformation (outside school walls).
3. Support for the BC Jobs Plan by improving outcomes for job seekers in BC.
4. A focus on collaboration between libraries and other partners.

In 2016 Fort St. James Public library will be updating the library's Strategic Plan for 2016 – 2020. The priorities set out by MELB will be used to guide the library's new strategic plan.

The following table offers a correlation between the Departments priorities and those set out in Fort St. James Public Library's *Strategic Plan 2012 – 2015*.

Correlation between Ministry of Education, Libraries Branch Priorities and Fort St. James Public Library Strategic Plan 2012-2015.

MELB PRIORITIES	FSJPL STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITIES	NOTES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equitable Access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Nations presence and involvement • Services for children and youth • Community outreach • Diversifying the collection • Library services 	<p><i>5 of the library's priorities fit here because each features as a key component in equitable access. Community Outreach supports all 4 provincial priorities as it is during outreach that we hear from the community regarding the issues behind the Department's 4 priorities but especially issues regarding equitable access.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for Educational Transformation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Outreach • Services for children and youth 	<p><i>Through school tours and school visits the library makes students and parents aware of library collections, programs and services. Our summer reading club, for example, helps children retain reading skills over the summer months. We are currently talking with various schools about making library visits and programs a regular part of the school year.</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for BC Jobs Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating technology • Services for children and youth • Library services • Community outreach 	<p><i>The library has upgraded its computer system and all computers now host the most edition of MS Office for the use by the public. Individuals preparing and printing off resumes, cover letters and other job related materials are a daily presence in the library.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration between Libraries and Other Partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing and developing sustainable partnerships 	<p><i>Collaboration with educational and First Nations organizations is a significant goal at FSJPL. The librarian and the board have devoted time and effort to see productive collaborations in both settings.</i></p>

Public Comment 1:

Moise Mattess Tache Interview Tuesday March 8, 2016

I am single guy and live in Tache. The College of New Caledonia where I attend the Construction Craft course has a bus to and from the reserve for students. Some weekends I stay with relatives in town and visit my 3 kids. I have a boy 8 and two girls aged 11 and 13. I have been bringing them to library every week for a while now. We read, play with toys and visit. My teenage daughter reads books from the teen area. She loves that stuff. A month ago I got my first library card so we can take home books and DVDs. Each child gets a turn to pick the movie we take home. It's very helpful. We bond and have fun together. I like coming here with my kids because it's a safe place, very welcoming. We feel very good about coming to the library. When I'm going to CNC it's an affordable way to entertain the family.

Equitable Access.

There were a range of initiatives at Fort St. James Public Library that support Equitable Access. Some of the initiatives undertaken in 2015 that support this goal include:

- Operating systems and MS Office packages were upgraded on all public and staff computers to provide all community members with up-to-date computer access and software
- Upgrade of all printers available to the public and staff so anyone in the community can print off resumes, forms and other documents
- Continuous redesign of topical displays to help users find books and other materials more quickly and easily (e.g. ESL books, seasonal information and First Nations history and culture)
- Completion of our participation in Sitka's Shelf Ready Purchasing Pilot Project to free up staff time for public service and programs (e.g story times and language instruction)
- Significant increase in the number of Large Print copies of newly published titlesⁱ

- Suppling books and other literacy materials to the community through the Key drop-in, an initiative of CNC

Two Specific Goals to Highlight in Support of Equitable Access in 2015

Goal 1: That the library establish new collections that help meet the needs of community members with difficult circumstances

Goal 1 required the library:

- To apply for grants to enhance service and collections for segments of the community which we wanted serve more fully
- To use those funds specifically to establish a toy collection and a health-focused collection readily available to the community but especially low income families and people with health needs

In 2014 a board member, April Hilland, applied for several grants to help establish both a toy collection and a health and fitness collection. Both collections were successfully established in 2015 with funds from the 2 grants. Both collections are, of course, available to the whole community but were of particular use to low income families and people with health conditions. The toys have become a key factor for some families visiting the library regularly, with some families reporting that their children specifically ask to go to the library to play and read. Many of these families are new users. Some are using the library for the first time ever. The health and fitness collection (which included some equipment such as exercise bands, yoga blocks and weights) has also brought a range of users into the library. There has been a notable use of this collection by seniors and people with health issues such as diabetes, heart disease cancer and mental illness. These outcomes are what we aimed for and our expectations were met. Community feedback about these collections has indeed been very positive. However, there was also an unexpected outcome that we did not initially anticipate but which provided clear evidence of an additional community need. When patrons saw the new materials they asked if we could acquire more family movies and feature films along with the health and fitness DVDs that were being added. The Head Librarian and the Assistant Librarian worked on doing just that, with the outcome that our DVD collection has grown considerably as has community traffic in the library. As this report will make clear other factors played a key role in this growth in library use in 2015 but the DVD collection appears to have been the initiative that sets things moving. Many families who come in for movies are also taking out reading materials. Community outreach, collaboration with other organizations and continuous feedback from the community all played a significant role, of course.

Goal 2: That Staff and Board reflect the full diversity of our community

Goal 2 required us:

- To recruit board members from across the spectrum of age, ethnicity, gender, profession and socio-economic level
- To recruit staff that also reflect this diversity

Outcome:

- Increased use of the library by the whole community
- A marked increase in new users and a return of many users who had not visited the library in years
- A marked increase in First Nations users
- Enlargement of a collection valued by the community.

Key Partnerships

- Healthier Communities
- District Office
- UBC Coop student program
- Early Childhood Development Committee (ECDC)
- The Key (CNC)

Outcomes

- Service enhancement to groups with specific needs
- Increased use of the library
- Many new users, many of them first time users
- Board and staff that include parents with young children, students, new citizens, First Nations, educators and retirees

Support for Educational Access.

Fort St. James is fortunate to have good schools (K-12) and post-secondary access via the College of New Caledonia (CNC). We are working to provide complementary services to those offered at the schools. We are careful to communicate that our services are in no way in competition to those offered by educational institutions. Demographic changes have forced the closing of one elementary school. Meetings with teachers and educators from schools on the reserves have indicated a severe shortage of library materials. Initiatives are underway to promote reading in the area, especially to First Nations. The library also continued to supply literacy materials to the community through the Key drop-in (an initiative of CNC).

This report will provide information on 2 goals from 2015 in this area.

Goal 1: To aid reserve schools in the acquisition of materials and to foster literacy in the First Nations community throughout all age groups

Meetings with Tl'azt'en Education Manager Dr. Laurie Bizero and teaching staff from Tache were conducted and are still in process in 2016. There are significant challenges. Funding is a key issue for native schools. Meetings with Corrina O'Bee at CNC are also underway with a view to promoting literacy as a recreational activity in the whole community. For the last three years the library has promoted the First Nations Reads program. The library acquires all titles on the First Nations Reads reading list. The Head Librarian is working with CNC staff to promote this initiative in Fort St. James and area, but especially at CNC itself. It is hoped that work undertaken in 2015 to this end will lead to significant outcomes in the future.

Goal 2: To provide opportunity and experience to UBC MLIS students via the student coop program

Our goal is to expose librarians in training to the reality of library work in small towns and rural areas, and, hopefully, to recruit librarians to take up work in towns like ours.

Programs/Services

- First Nations Reads
- Donations of books and DVDs to Eugene Joseph School
- Tours for children from reserve schools
- UBC Student Coop opportunities for MLIS students

Key Partnerships

- College of New Caledonia
- The Key drop-in
- Tl'azt'en Educations Services (Tache)
- UBC MLIS Program

Outcomes

- New materials in reserve schools
- CNC students and community members encountering opportunities for life-long education
- Experience for UBC MLIS students and exposure to rural librarianship
- Forging new initiatives for literacy and life-long learning

Public Comment 2:

Jimmy Tylee Fort St. James Interview March 10, 2016

I've been using the library since I finished rehab about 3 years ago. A bad car accident 21 years ago left me with less ability, disability really. I'm on disability. Things were difficult after the accident. My marriage didn't make it and I drank too much, spent a lot of time in detox. Life seemed really bleak. I'm straight now, though. I read now too and the library makes that easy to do. History, rock and roll biographies, nature, local history, outdoor living and wilderness survival – that's the sort of stuff I read. I also read the newspaper each time I come in. A person has got to keep track of what's going on. DVDs for entertainment and newspapers and books for education. That's what I like.

Public Comment 3:

John Antoine Fort St. James Interview March 11, 2016

I'm 60 and I'm on EI. I'll be retiring in a few years but I'm looking for work until then. I think I got my card in 2013. I come in to read the paper almost every day these days to keep myself up on what's going on. I come in every day or two for videos, mostly action movies but also stuff about life and its challenges.

BC Jobs Plan.

The major service Fort St. James Public Library provides to job seekers is access to online services, word-processing and access to email and faxing. Many residents go to larger centers for employment support. There

are, of course, students from CNC who use our facilities as well. It is not uncommon, for example, for individuals to do employment oriented testing such as Serving It Right tests via computers in the library. Individuals using the services of Fort Outreach Employment Services often use our facilities because we are open evenings and weekends and have more computer stations available.

Upgrades to computers, software and printing were undertaken in support of a full range of community needs but these improvements were definitely undertaken with job seekers in mind.

Goals/accomplishments

- To upgrade computers, software and printers for use by job seekers

Programs/Services

- Provide computer and internet access to job seekers throughout our hours of operation
- Provide print and fax services

Key Partnerships

- College of New Caledonia
- Fort Outreach Employment Services

Outcomes

- Job seekers accessing online services
- Job seekers preparing resumes and cover letters
- Job seekers accessing services outside the hours of employment services

Public Comment 4:

Maria Andrea Cajal Fort St. James Interview March 11, 2013

Flora [staff member fluent in Spanish] is helping me because this is my first time here. My English is not good. I'm from Argentina and my husband and I have work visas. His work is at the Biomass plant. Very new here. May be immigrating, not sure yet. Books and videos will help me learn English. Hearing English in the movies helps me learning. I made films in Argentina. I am getting a library card today. It will help me. Very nice library.

Collaboration between Libraries and Other Partners.

The library continued to partner with a wide range of organizations in 2015. The following organizations were especially important partners:

- North Central Library Federation (NCLF)
- BCLibraries Cooperative

- Fort St. James Early Childhood Development Committee (ECDC)
- Law Matters
- United Way of Northern British Columbia
- Healthier Communities
- District of Fort St. James

Goals/accomplishments

- To increase community awareness of the library and its partners
- To increase library traffic
- To encourage increased library use

While we did not have any specific goals for partnerships in 2015 apart from our ongoing commitment to collaboration with a full range of organizations, the year of 2015 highlights how collaboration is a significant element in our success as a public institution. For example, grants from United Way of Northern British Columbia (via initiatives undertaken by ECDC) and Healthier Communities (via grant initiatives undertaken by the District of Fort St. James) aided the library in improving collections and services to our community. Also our Summer Coop student from UBC represented the library at various venues during the summer of 2015. These public presentations along with additional public attention to library services and collections due to the establishment of a toy collection and health related DVDs made such an impact on library use that the last quarter of 2015 saw a substantial increase in library traffic and use. The positive feedback within the community because of these collaborations brought about a multiplier effect that brought more citizens into the library, many for the first time or after years of absence. The increase in users was such that we had to implement a New User Category to aid new patrons in developing their library skills because library use was new to them and their families. Some programs like story times and movie nights are being revived in 2016 due to these efforts and actions in 2015.

Programs/Services

- Enhanced library collection
- Increased library usage by all patrons
- Introduce community members to the full range of library services
- Act on the community feedback especially with regard to the need for films and DVDs

Key Partnerships

- Fort St. James Early Childhood Development Committee (ECDC)
- UBC MLIS
- United Way of Northern British Columbia
- Healthier Communities
- District of Fort St. James

Outcomes

Greater partnership with other organizations
Greater community involvement in the library and its collections, programs and service
Greater diversity in library users, board and staff

Public Comment 5:

Mathew Joseph Yekooche Married with 4 kids. Interview March 11, 2016

I live way out in Yekooche but I have a car. My son Derek and I both have cards. The whole family is busy with work and school so it's nice to get books and DVDs here. We come in once a week to get reading material and movies. We get a selection of movies for my wife and I and for the kids to watch during the week. I've watched more than 100 films from here. The roads between here and Yekooche aren't very good, especially in Winter so it's nice to be able to come in to the library whenever I can. I read a lot, fiction and nonfiction. I like science fiction especially. I'm lucky to get in here because many people out there cannot get into town because they don't have vehicles or a license. The library is helpful for us but we need more library service in Yekooche too.

ⁱ Approximately 1 in 10 new titles ordered are also ordered in large-print (new policy in 2015)