



BPL Board Agenda

Regular Meeting

Date Thursday, April 17, 2025
Time 6:00pm
Location Community Room
 Tommy Douglas
 7311 Kingsway Burnaby BC

Chair Anna Lu

We respectfully acknowledge that Burnaby Public Library is located on the unceded territories of the [xʷməθkʷəy̓əm \(Musqueam\)](#), [Skwxwú7mesh \(Squamish\)](#), [səlilwətaʔ \(Tsleil-Waututh\)](#), and [kʷikwəʔəm \(Kwikwetlem\)](#) Peoples. Each Nation has distinct histories and distinct traditional territories that fully or partially encompass the city.

We encourage you to learn more about the Host Nations whose ancestors have occupied and used these lands, including parts of present-day Burnaby, for thousands of years.

AGENDA	TIME	PAGE NO.
1. Agenda		
1.1 Motion to receive Agenda.		
2. Minutes		
2.1 Motion to adopt the minutes of the regular meeting held February 20, 2025 as circulated.		
3. Reports	10 min	
3.1 Board Chair (verbal)		
3.2 Council Liaison (verbal)		
3.3 InterLINK Representative (verbal)		
4. Items for Decision		
4.1 December 24 hours	10 min	3 - 7
4.2 Proposed Policy Changes	10 min	8 - 16
5. Items for Information		
5.1 Co-chair resignation (verbal)	10 min	
5.2 Territorial acknowledgement	5 min	17- 18
5.3 Multilingual services strategy	20 min	19 - 50

AGENDA	TIME	PAGE NO.
5.4 Library use during economic downturn	10 min	51 - 52
5.5 Anti-racism	10 min	53 - 57
5.6 Strategic plan report 2025 Q1	10 min	58 - 75
 6. Other Business		
 7. Next Library Board Meeting		
May 15, 2025 at 6:00pm at McGill.		
 8. Adjournment		
8.1 Motion that the regular meeting adjourn and that the Board resolve itself into an in camera meeting from which the public is excluded to consider financial, bargaining, and Picard Trust matters.		



TO: CHAIR AND TRUSTEES
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

FROM: BRANCH MANAGER, TOMMY DOUGLAS LIBRARY
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY

DATE: APRIL 17, 2025

SUBJECT: DECEMBER 24 HOURS

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Library Board close all library branches at 4:00pm on December 24.

REPORT

BACKGROUND

At the March 2023 Library Board meeting, trustees approved a recommendation to open library branches until 5:00pm on December 24 instead of 1:00pm.

That decision was made to bring the library in line with Burnaby City Hall, which had decided in 2022 to close at 4:45pm instead of 12:00pm. Other factors influencing the board’s decision included:

- December 24 is not a statutory holiday.
- Burnaby is a multicultural city. Residents and employees celebrate many different religious and cultural holidays, and practices.
- Many public spaces are closed on December 24, and the public library is one of the few non-commercial spaces available to community members.
- With the library closing at 1:00pm, full-time staff were getting paid for a full day, while part-time and auxiliary staff were only paid for the hours they worked.

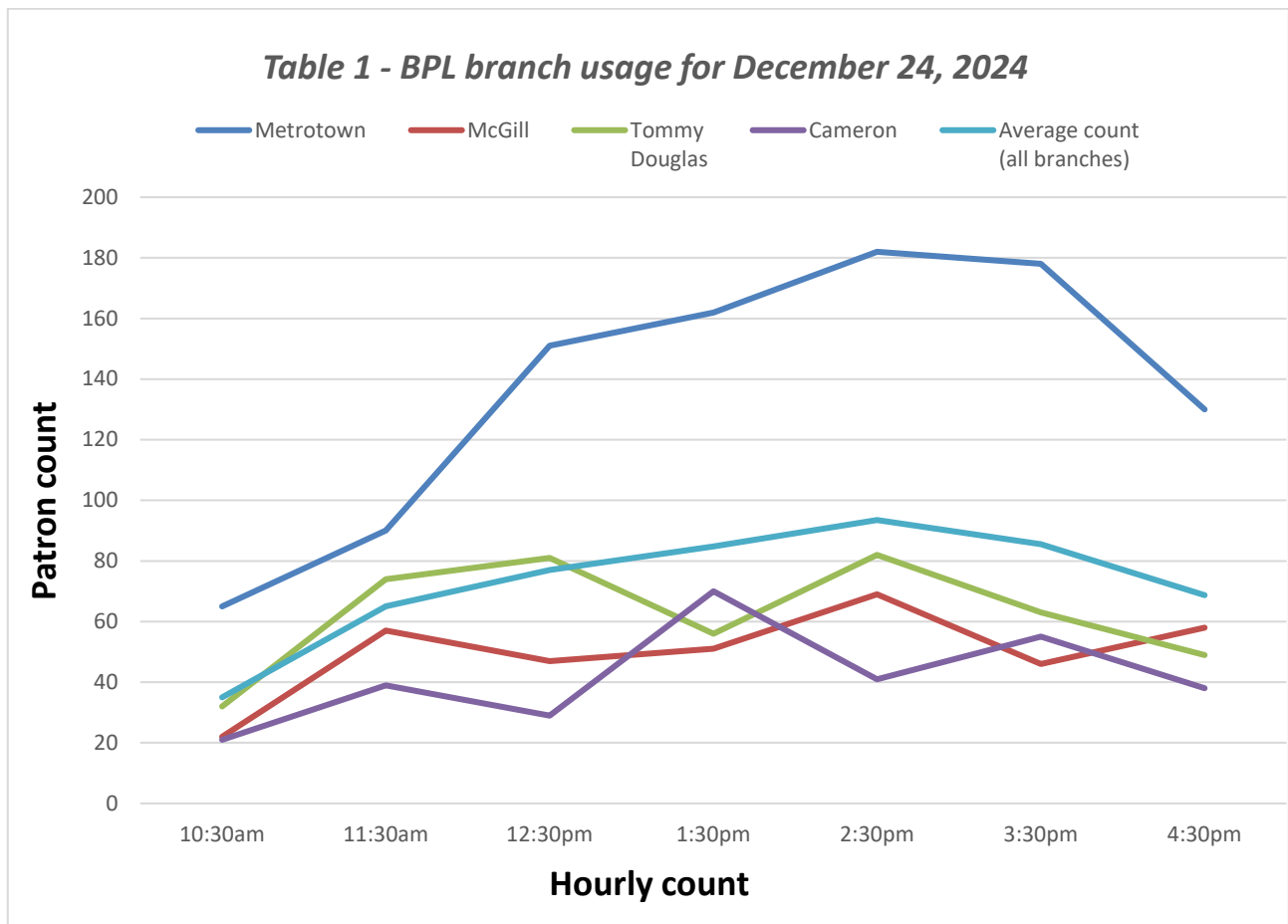
When the Library Board approved the 5:00pm closure in March 2023, they asked the Chief Librarian to evaluate the decision after December 24, 2024 (libraries were closed on December 24, 2023 as it fell on a Sunday). Those results are presented here.

EVALUATION

The completed 2024 evaluation consisted of:

1. counting the number of patrons present each hour at each branch
2. asking staff to share patron feedback and their own observations
3. reviewing Burnaby recreational facilities' and other InterLINK library systems' approaches to December 24 opening hours

1. Footcount



As Table 1 shows, the pattern of foot traffic at McGill, Metrotown and Tommy Douglas was similar throughout the day, and not unlike a typical Saturday or Sunday. There was a spike in the late-morning and then another mid-afternoon, with the level of activity then dropping off as the evening approached. For Cameron, the traffic pattern reflected its new location inside Lougheed Mall, with an increase in foot traffic at around lunchtime, a dip in the early-mid afternoon, and a further peak at 3:30pm.

A total of 3,292 patrons were counted system-wide on the day. For perspective, this is comparable to the daily totals on two more recent, random Tuesdays in January (28th) and February (11th), which were 3,692 and 4,103 respectively (both with 8:00pm closings, versus the 5:00pm closing on December 24).

As indicated in Table 2, below, the number of patrons using each branch throughout the day was significant, averaging 291 each hour across all four and reaching a high of 374. And while a 20% overall decline in numbers did occur between 3:30 and 4:30pm, and accelerated further thereafter, some 275 patrons remained towards closing, not insignificant and more than the first two hours of the day.

Table 2 – Hourly patron counts per branch for December 24, 2024

Time	Metrotown	McGill	Tommy Douglas	Cameron*	Average count	Total per hour
10:30am	65	22	32	21	35	140
11:30am	90	57	74	39	65	260
12:30pm	151	47	81	29	77	308
1:30pm	162	51	56	70	85	339
2:30pm	182	69	82	41	94	374
3:30pm	178	46	63	55	86	342
4:30pm	130	58	49	38	69	275
Average	137	50	62	42	73	291

2. Patron feedback and staff observations

Patron comments recorded on the day mostly comprised of people asking what hours we were open, with little further comment. One patron sympathized with staff working until 5:00pm, and mentioned 3:00pm as an alternative closing time that would still provide the public with plenty of time to use the library, while also providing staff time with a greater opportunity to celebrate without pressure. One other patron expressed concern that they would not be able to get to the library before 5:00pm in order to print a document.

Staff observations from all four branches indicated several trends across the system for the day – more families than usual visited, patrons were mostly dropping off books and picking up holds – not lingering, regular computer users were present while students studying were not, printing demands were high as usual, children’s computers were used less than usual, attendance was lower than expected in the two programs held on the day, and numbers in the branches began to decline noticeably around 3:45pm and more so around 4:20-4:30pm.

3. Comparison with other facilities

Burnaby City Hall is open until 4:45pm on Christmas Eve.

City of Burnaby recreation facilities were generally open between 7:00am and 4:00pm on December 24, with some variation due to the variety of activities being accommodated.

Nine InterLINK library systems responded to an informal survey sent out by the Chief Librarian. Responses are shown in the table below.

Table 3 - Summary of December 24 practices for InterLINK library systems

Library system	December 24 closing time
Coquitlam	3:00pm
North Vancouver City	1:00pm (open longer in extreme weather)
North Vancouver District	1:00pm
Port Moody	3:00pm
Richmond	3:30pm
Surrey	2:00pm
Vancouver	5:00pm (except Carnegie, regular 9:00pm closure)
West Vancouver	Closed on 24th
Whistler	3:00pm

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the information presented in this report, BPL senior staff reviewed the following three options for future library closing times on December 24;

- a) **3:00pm** – foot traffic had begun to drop off at this time, and the hour would be in line with several other Lower Mainland systems. However, it would not reflect the closing times of Burnaby City Hall or most Burnaby recreation centres. BPL would likely have to pay regular staff for a full shift, but have them work less than a full shift.
- b) **4:00pm** – foot traffic had dropped off more steeply by this time. 4:00pm would also align with most City of Burnaby recreation facility hours in 2024 and permit staff to finish a little earlier (4:15pm) than usual. BPL might still need to pay regular staff for a full shift, but have them work less than a full shift. Staff consider that this option represents the best balance between public demand for library facilities and services, and staff work-life balance.
- c) **5:00pm** – a significant number of patrons remained in the library as of 4:30pm in 2024 (the last time we counted patrons), however, the branches were much quieter than most of the rest of the day. 5:00pm is closer to normal library Friday to Sunday closing times and matches most closely with City Hall's 4:45pm closing. In addition, regular staff can work a whole shift with minimal adjustment.

Staff recommend that the Library Board close library all branches at 4:00pm on December 24, beginning in 2025.

Linton Harrison
BRANCH MANAGER, TOMMY DOUGLAS LIBRARY
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY



TO: CHAIR AND TRUSTEES
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

FROM: CHIEF LIBRARIAN
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY

DATE: APRIL 17, 2025

SUBJECT: PROPOSED POLICY CHANGES

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT The Library Board approve changes to the Board Roles and Operations and the Use of Library Space policies, as outlined in this report.

REPORT

Following discussion at the February 2025 Board meeting, trustees directed the Chief Librarian to bring proposed revisions to BPL Library Policies, to:

- Include information on an appeals procedure for patron complaints
- Update information on delegations to the Library Board
- Include information on role and conduct of the public in Library Board meetings

Staff reviewed the Use of Library Space and Board Roles and Operations policies, and recommended changes to the policies based on the board's direction. Staff reviewed the City of Burnaby delegation policy and policies from neighbouring libraries. Staff also reviewed the policies for any other potential changes.

The following changes are recommended to the Use of Library Space policy:

- expand the existing **Restricting Access to Library Services** section to create a new **Use of Library Services and Spaces** section
- Move information about the requirement of users to follow the Library's Code of Conduct from the **Use of Library Space by Outside Agencies** section to the Use of Library Services and Spaces section
- Include a new paragraph in the **Use of Library Services and Spaces** section to outline a process for users who have concerns about library spaces and services.

The new paragraph includes a provision for the Chief Librarian to inform the Library Board chair of significant concerns and staff responses, but does not include an appeal process similar to that of individuals who are suspended from library service.

The following changes are recommended to the Board Roles and Operations policy:

- Clarify that all Library Board appointments are made by City Council
- Gather information on public attendance at Board meetings under a new **Public Attendance at Board Meetings** section
- Add language about the requirement of library users to follow the Library's Code of Conduct to this new **Public Attendance at Board Meetings** section
- Add language to the **Public Attendance at Board Meetings** section clarifying that members of the public who attend Library Board meetings can only speak if invited to do so by the meeting chair
- Add language to the **Public Attendance at Board Meetings** section prohibiting people from bringing in signs, placards or flags into Board meetings
- Change the **Public Attendance at Board Meetings** section to include language that items for discussion must fall within the Library Board's jurisdiction and mandate, and add a provision that the Board Chair will determine whether it is appropriate for the Board to hear the delegation
- Change the **Public Attendance at Board Meetings** section to increase the notice period from 7 to 14 days to allow for the delegation topic to be included in the Board Agenda that is sent out 7 days in advance
- Change the **Public Attendance at Board Meetings** section to add requirements that delegates include information about who will attend the delegation, the topic to be discussed and the purpose of the delegation, and to add a requirement that a delegation submit any written or presentation materials 7 days in advance
- Gather the information about *in camera* meetings under a new **In Camera** section
- Move the requirement to appoint an InterLINK representative and alternate to the **Library Board Roles** section

The revised policies, using track changes, are appended to this report.

Beth Davies
CHIEF LIBRARIAN
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY



A3. Board Roles and Operations

Objective

The purpose of this policy is to establish how the Burnaby Public Library Board operates and to define roles and responsibilities of individual trustees and the Chief Librarian.

Policy Statement and Details

Library Board Appointments

The Library Board member appointed from City Council holds office for one year, or for the remainder of the year during which the trustee is appointed, and shall be eligible for reappointment.

The eight regular members of the Library Board are appointed by City Council for a term of two years and are eligible for reappointment to a maximum of four complete terms.

Any vacancy on the Library Board arising from any cause other than the expiration of the term for which the trustee was appointed shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term only, by an appointment to be made by City Council.

Library Board Roles

Following the inaugural meeting of the Library Board but no later than the Board's February meeting, the Board shall elect from among its members a Chair and a Vice-Chair. These officers shall be elected for a term of one year and may be eligible for re-election for not more than two additional one-year terms.

Following the inaugural meeting of the Library Board, but no later than its February meeting, the Board shall appoint an InterLINK Board Representative and an alternate.

The Chief Librarian, or designate, is the secretary to the Board and shall be present at all Board meetings, except those meetings or portions of meetings that deal with the Chief Librarian's salary or performance review. The Chief Librarian is a non-voting member of the Library Board.

Board Meetings

The Library Board must meet at regular intervals at least six (6) times a year. ~~Regular meetings of the Library Board shall be open to the public.~~ Copies of regular meeting agendas and minutes of the Library Board shall be available for public information.

A majority of all the members of the Library Board is a quorum. No motions may be made or passed without quorum.



Public Attendance at Board Meetings

Regular meetings of the Library Board shall be open to the public.

Attendees must follow the Library's Code of Conduct, which states that users must be respectful, safe and responsible, and that racism, transphobia, homophobia, and any other form of discrimination, harassment and verbal abuse will not be tolerated.

Members of the public who attend Library Board meetings can only speak if invited to do so by the meeting chair.

No placards, signs or flags can be brought into Library Board meetings.

Reports, petitions and other submissions by the public to the Burnaby Public Library Board must be submitted to the Chief Librarian's office in writing not less than ~~seven~~fourteen (714) days prior to the regular monthly meeting of the Board.

Persons wishing to appear before the Burnaby Public Library Board as a delegation must make written application to the Chief Librarian's office ~~indicating the substance of their enquiry or brief~~ not less than ~~seven~~fourteen (714) days prior to the regular monthly meeting of the Library Board. The application must include the name of the delegation, the organization they represent (if applicable), the topic to be discussed, and the purpose of the delegation. Presentations to the Board by delegations shall be limited to ten (10) minutes, with additional time for questions of the delegation from trustees at the discretion of the Chair.

Reports, petitions, submissions and delegations must fall within the Library Board's jurisdiction and mandate. The Board Chair will determine whether it is appropriate for the Library Board to receive a report, petition or submission, or to hear a delegation.

Upon approval, the delegation presentation shall be limited to ten (10) minutes, with additional time for questions of the delegation from trustees at the discretion of the Chair. Any written or presentation materials must be submitted to the Chief Librarian's office seven (7) days prior to the meeting at which the delegation will appear.

In Camera Meetings

The Board may hold an in camera meeting only if the subject matter being considered is related to:

- the security of the Library
- personal information of an individual, including an employee of the Library
- the Chief Librarian's performance and pay review
- proposed or pending property acquisition
- labour relations or negotiations
- litigation, potential litigation or other legal matters



Burnaby Public Library Board Policy

- any matter that would cause financial or economic harm to the Library or to the relationship between the Library and the government or other public bodies

A motion to move in camera shall include the reason for holding the meeting in camera.

Minutes of any in camera meeting shall be available only to the Chief Librarian and members of the Board, subject to the provisions of the BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Board Committees

Committees act in an advisory capacity and exist to assist the Board in fulfilling its governance responsibilities.

There are three standing committees of the Board:

- The Finance Committee reviews operating, capital and endowment fund budgets and actuals
- The Planning and Advocacy Committee guides the library's strategic planning process and reviews large-scale promotion or advocacy work
- The Personnel Committee leads the hiring process for the Chief Librarian position, recommends Chief Librarian appointments to the Board, conducts an annual performance review of the Chief Librarian, reviews matters pending arbitration and reviews proposed collective agreements

Following the inaugural meeting of the Library Board but not later than its March meeting, the Board shall appoint from among its members a chair and members of standing committees. Each committee shall have a minimum of three members and a maximum of five members, inclusive of the Chair.

Each committee shall develop and maintain terms of reference, a calendar of meetings and a list of deliverables.

Ad hoc committees may be established by motion of the Board to deal with special matters before the Board. Ad hoc committees may have any number of members. If not appointed by the Board, the Committee Chair will be elected at the committee's first meeting. Upon completion of its assignment, an ad hoc committee shall be discharged by motion of the Board.

A quorum shall be a majority of committee members present. Recommendations to the Board can only be made through committee meetings where quorum was present.

The Chair of the Board shall be a member ex officio and shall participate and vote as any other member. The Chair of the Board is not counted when determining the number of members required for quorum.

The Chief Librarian, or designate, is the secretary to all committees of the Board and shall be present at all committee meetings, except those meetings or portions of meetings that deal with



Burnaby Public Library Board Policy

the Chief Librarian's salary or performance review. The Chief Librarian is a non-voting member of Board committees.

~~Following the inaugural meeting of the Library Board, but no later than its February meeting, the Board shall appoint an InterLINK Board Representative and an alternate.~~

Last Reviewed: ~~2023-09-21~~ 2025-04-18

Signed: _____

~~Sarah Bartnik~~ Anna Lu, Library Board Co-Chair



C4. Use of Library Space

Objective

The purpose of this policy is to regulate use of library space.

Policy Statement and Details

The BC Library Act authorizes the Library Board to make rules for regulating the use of its facilities and services by the public. The Library Act also authorizes the Library Board to suspend library privileges for breaches of library rules and to exclude from the library anyone who behaves in a disruptive manner, damages library property or otherwise contravenes the Code of Conduct.

Restricting Access to Use of Library Services and Spaces

Users of library spaces, including community rooms, must follow the Library's Code of Conduct, which states that users must be respectful, safe and responsible, and that racism, transphobia, homophobia, and any other form of discrimination, harassment and verbal abuse will not be tolerated.

Staff only restrict access to library services or premises when an individual's behaviour is demonstrably disruptive. Where feasible, individuals are to be given the opportunity to change inappropriate behaviour prior to sanctions being imposed.

Information on individuals banned for more than one month will be provided to the Library Board. A ban of more than three months must be approved by the Library Board. Suspended individuals may appeal their ban to the Library Board, and will be informed of the right to appeal in writing.

Users that have concerns about library spaces and services should first talk to staff. If users want to take their concerns further, they can contact the relevant Manager or Director. After discussing their concerns with a Manager or Director, users who want to take their concerns further can contact the Chief Librarian. Operational concerns will not generally be brought to the Board, although the Chief Librarian will inform the Board Chair of significant concerns and staff responses.

Use of Library Space by Outside Agencies

Library space is primarily intended for library purposes, including programs conducted, initiated or co-sponsored by the library that align with our values and goals. The library may permit use of space by City of Burnaby departments, Burnaby based not-for-profit community groups and other not-for-profit community groups for meetings and programs of an informational, educational or cultural nature.



Burnaby Public Library Board Policy

Permission to use library space or facilities does not imply library endorsement of the group making the booking, their beliefs or their activities.

Users may not charge an admission fee, fundraise or solicit donations, sell items, or market services without prior approval of the Library Board.

Books by authors speaking at library events may be sold.

The Library expects that groups using library space comply with federal, provincial and municipal legislation, regulations and bylaws.

~~Users of library spaces, including community rooms, must follow the Library's Code of Conduct, which states that users must be respectful, safe and responsible, and that racism, transphobia, homophobia, and any other form of discrimination, harassment and verbal abuse will not be tolerated.~~

If, in the opinion of the Chief Librarian or designate, the use of library space by any group presents, or potentially presents, a risk of significant disruption to library users, library staff or library property, then the Chief Librarian or designate shall have the discretion to refuse or cancel such a booking.

Notice Boards and Distribution of Free Materials

Public notice boards and the distribution of free materials may be provided as a community service.

Material that is primarily commercial will not be displayed or distributed unless it fulfills a cultural, educational or recreational role.

Material promoting an individual political party or politician will not be displayed or distributed.

Religious material will not be displayed or distributed unless it promotes a specific, dated event.

Posters, flyers or handbills promoting a fundraising event for not-for-profit organizations may be posted and/or distributed as space permits.

Displaying or distributing materials does not constitute library endorsement of content.

Canvassing and Research

The library will not permit outside agencies or individuals to personally solicit donations, survey or study library users, or petition library users on library premises except in special circumstances upon the approval of the Board.

Election Campaigning

Election campaigning inside library space is prohibited. All Candidates Meetings may be held in library spaces and limited distribution of material promoting an individual political party or politician may be permitted within a meeting room in which an All Candidates Meeting is held.



Burnaby Public Library Board Policy

Election campaigning outside libraries is governed by the City of Burnaby's Election Campaigning Policy.

Filming, photography and audio recording on library premises

Filming, photographing and audio recording of library staff and users on library property is not permitted without prior written approval of the library. Filming, photography and audio recording by an individual is allowed in library spaces provided it does not include unrelated staff or patrons, that it respects the privacy of library staff and users, and does not disrupt library services.

Last Reviewed: ~~2024-12-12~~2025-04-18

Signed: _____

~~Sarah Bartnik~~Anna Lu, Library Board Co-Chair



TO: CHAIR AND TRUSTEES
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

FROM: CHIEF LIBRARIAN
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY

DATE: APRIL 17, 2025

SUBJECT: TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT The Library Board receive this report for information.

REPORT

The City of Burnaby has developed a revised territorial acknowledgement in consultation and collaboration with Host Nations on whose unceded territories the City of Burnaby is now located, including the [xʷməθkʷəyəm](#) (Musqueam), [Sḵwxwú7mesh](#) (Squamish), [səlilwətał](#) (Tsleil-Waututh), and [kʷikwəłəm](#) (Kwikwetlem) Peoples. The City has also updated its [Guidelines for Territorial Acknowledgement](#).

Burnaby Public Library has adopted the same territorial acknowledgement, with the one change of replacing “City of Burnaby” with “Burnaby Public Library.”

We respectfully acknowledge that Burnaby Public Library is located on the unceded territories of the [xʷməθkʷəyəm](#) (Musqueam), [Sḵwxwú7mesh](#) (Squamish), [səlilwətał](#) (Tsleil-Waututh), and [kʷikwəłəm](#) (Kwikwetlem) Peoples. Each Nation has distinct histories and distinct traditional territories that fully or partially encompass the city.

We encourage you to learn more about the Host Nations whose ancestors have occupied and used these lands, including parts of present-day Burnaby, for thousands of years.

BPL has updated the territorial acknowledgement on our internal and external websites and social media. We will include the new territorial acknowledgement on print materials going forward, although for reasons of fiscal responsibility, and on the advice of the City of Burnaby’s Director of Indigenous Relations, we will not be reprinting existing materials until we run out of copies.

BPL is also using the new territorial acknowledgement in introducing programs and in opening meetings. In keeping with the spirit of the new territorial acknowledgement, staff are being encouraged to learn more about each of the Nations, and to share their learning with each other.

Beth Davies
CHIEF LIBRARIAN
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Multilingual Services Strategy

Final Report

Prepared by Emily Guerrero

March 2025

Contents

- Introduction 3
 - History and Context of Burnaby 3
 - Background and Scope 3
 - Multilingual Services in Libraries..... 4
- Environmental Scan 5
 - External Scan 5
 - Internal Scan 6
- Consultation and Themes 9
 - Staff Consultation 9
 - Key themes 9
 - Community Consultation 10
 - Key themes 11
- Priority Languages 14
 - Process and Themes..... 14
 - Priority Language Matrix..... 19
- Recommendations 20
 - Goal 1: Create guidelines and structures to embed multilingual services into our work 21
 - Goal 2: Appropriately staff multilingual work 23
 - Goal 3: Increase awareness of existing programs and services 25
 - Goal 4: Assess and update multilingual strategy 26
 - Summary Recommendations 27
- Appendix A: Draft Framework for Launching New Language Collections 29
- Appendix B: Draft Evaluating Ideas Tool for Planning Multilingual Services 31
- Appendix C: Operating Plan Projects and Recommendations 32

Introduction

History and Context of Burnaby

The City of Burnaby is located on the unceded territories of the [xʷməθkʷəyəm \(Musqueam\)](#), [Skwxwú7mesh \(Squamish\)](#), [səlilwətał \(Tsleil-Waututh\)](#), and [kwikwəłəm \(Kwkwetlem\)](#) Peoples. hə́nqəmińəm and Skwxwú7mesh Sníchim are the first languages of these territories, ones that have become critically endangered because of the assimilation policies and cultural genocide enacted by settler communities in BC. There is ongoing work at the City of Burnaby to build Government-to-Government relationships with the Indigenous nations whose territory the city is situated on, and to work towards truth and reconciliation across the City.¹

Burnaby as a city is demographically unique and deeply diverse. It is one of only eight cities in all of Canada that does not have a majority ethnic group, and 67% of residents are visible minorities (the second-highest percentage in all of Metro Vancouver). The city has one of the largest numbers of community members who are refugee and refugee claimants in BC. There are 120 languages spoken in Burnaby as of the 2021 Canadian Census, and over 30% primarily speak a language other than English at home.²

A full history of Burnaby languages is not possible within the scope of this report. One effort that is important to recognize is work that the City of Burnaby is undertaking to review, acknowledge and apologize for its historic discrimination against people of Chinese descent. The City's Chinese-Canadian Reconciliation Advisory Group is creating recommendations for the city to guide this, and some of these may overlap with recommendations within this report.³

Background and Scope

One of Burnaby Public Library's 2024-2027 Strategic Plan goals is to *Provide library services to people in their preferred languages*. Over the past few years BPL has developed some services in languages other than English, but the library has not developed a comprehensive strategy nor consulted significantly with the community.

In Fall 2024, BPL began a six-month project to develop a strategy for Library services in languages other than English. This work started with researching existing services at BPL and consulting directly with community members in Burnaby using a community-led model.

The scope of the project was to assess current BPL services and community needs, identify priority language communities in Burnaby, and create a strategy for how the library designs and delivers services in patrons' preferred languages. Designing and delivering specific services was out of scope. Services for hə́nqəmińəm, Skwxwú7mesh Sníchim, and other Indigenous languages were out of scope as these need to be developed alongside ongoing work towards reconciliation and Indigenization, and in relationship with Host Nations. Services in American

¹ [Indigenous History in Burnaby Resource Guide](#). Burnaby Village Museum. 2019.

² [Building Belonging in Burnaby](#). June N. P. Francis, Kristina Henriksson, and The Co-Laboratorio. 2023.

³ [Reconciliation with the Chinese-Canadian community](#), City of Burnaby webpage. 2023.

Sign Language were out of scope, but work on translation services in ASL will be looked at in an upcoming project to develop a framework to make programs more accessible.

A note on language: one question that has come up several times over the course of the project is what to call this work. In this report, I've landed on the imperfect "Multilingual Services" when discussing Library services that cover multiple languages, as well as services that are delivered in a single language that is not English. This is the current term that is most common in libraries in Canada. In its imperfection, "multilingual" does work as a reminder that there are other possibilities than defaulting to English. As much as possible when writing this report I use "language" and "language speaker," without qualifiers.

Multilingual Services in Libraries

In areas of Canada where English is the majority language, library services in other languages is often limited. In the external environmental scan I conducted, the primary focus is usually on collections, programs aimed at young children, and settlement services aimed at adults.

When researching models for what a multilingual strategy could look like in Burnaby, I found several articles that questioned why English is the default language when we plan library services.⁴ I also came across an article written by two former Burnaby Public Library librarians which argued for library workflows that are designed to already have multiple languages and community input woven through them.⁵ Together, these library workers are pushing back on the idea that services in other languages are extra, or somehow outside the usual work that we do. In all these writings, there is also a very clear need to have staff with language skills involved in developing services, to ensure that the library is offering useful and culturally relevant services to all patrons.

These four key ideas ground the strategy that has been developed in this report:

1. Don't assume that English is the default language for library services
2. Create workflows to encompass many languages
3. Work with Burnaby's diverse language communities to design relevant services
4. Create opportunities for staff with language skills to design and deliver library services

⁴ "[Multilingualism, Neoliberalism, and Language Ideologies in Libraries](#)," Ean Henninger, 2020; "Entre mundos y fronteras: An exploration of the visibility and value of linguistic diversity within the LIS workforce," in *Borders and Belonging: Critical examinations of library approaches toward immigrants*. Denisse Solis and Jesus Espinoza, 2021.

⁵ "We See You: Increasing inclusion and empowerment of immigrants by liberating library workflows from institutional biases rooted in colonial frameworks," in *Borders and Belonging*. May Chan and Jorge Cardenas, 2021.

Environmental Scan

External Scan

To learn more about how other public libraries offer multilingual services, I conducted an environmental scan. I looked at BC, other areas of Canada, and urban centres in the United States with diverse linguistic communities. I reached out directly to other library systems through the Canadian Urban Libraries Council and through the BCLA's Multicultural Service Interest Group. Most of the information below is pulled from library systems' public websites.

Due to time limitations I focused on programs and public-facing work, and did not do a review of technical services. Similarly, I focused on library systems where English is the majority language, and did not look into libraries in areas of Canada where the majority language is French or an Indigenous language.

One major theme is that there isn't a single standard approach to multilingual service design and delivery.

- At Surrey Libraries, there is a Manager, Multicultural Services. The Manager keeps a close eye on community trends, and sets priorities for the upcoming year on a rolling basis depending on needs and opportunities. The role takes on projects across departments, and helps guide the work system-wide.
- In one large Canadian urban library system, there have been specific staff positions that are focused on Chinese Language services. Staff did a mix of public service, programming, and technical service duties in these roles.
- Many people I talked with described things as being “done off the side of the desk,” meaning that staff who have language skills are working extra, on top of their usual job responsibilities. The other similar theme was of programs that were designed and championed by one single individual, but not iterated across the system or continued once the staff with language skills moves into a new position.
- Several systems including the Toronto Public Library have language in the collective agreement to compensate staff who do collections and cataloguing work in a language other than English. TPL also has provisions for staff who do not have an MLIS to do cataloguing work, and be paid at the pay grade for librarians.
- When looking at multilingual programs being offered, the most common was children's storytimes. There also are some limited programs for adults, primarily focused on technological skills and settlement services. An exception is Richmond Public Library, which offers a wide range of programs aimed at adults in Cantonese and Mandarin, including book clubs, health talks, and tax information sessions.
- There are many public libraries who are working to provide resources for Indigenous language learning and revitalization. Edmonton Public Library offers nêhiyawêwin beginners classes; Winnipeg Public Library has story time in Anishinaabemowin; and West Vancouver Memorial Library has collaborated with knowledge keepers to create

Skwú7mesh Sníchim language learning kits. In Masset, on Haida Gwaii, the Vancouver Island Regional Library is in the process of building a new library which will have a Haida language learning hub.

- On the public library websites that I reviewed, most systems organize their programs by a single language. One exception is Oakland Public Library. At that library, many programs are listed under both English and Spanish, if the librarian running the program is bilingual and able to assist in either language.
- Several other Canadian library systems are starting work on similar projects to look at how they deliver multilingual services, including Richmond Hill in Ontario.

Internal Scan

I also conducted an environmental scan at BPL, to learn more about the services BPL already offers. I wanted to learn about how these services are designed, and if there are recent changes to how BPL does the work. To gather this information, I had conversations with staff leading the work, and looked at reports and past projects.

Public Service

- Public Service staff with language skills often use these skills while working with the public. This happens while in the branch, at the service desk, during programs, and on community visits. Staff can choose to have languages they speak in addition to English printed on their name tag.
- Children’s librarians are leading storytimes and family social hours in four languages (Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, and Japanese). Children’s librarians are also working with community partners who offer storytimes in Cantonese and Tigrinya.
- Recently, an Adult Public Service Librarian led a Spanish Book Club program. The event was very popular. Patrons shared a lot of feedback about other kinds of Spanish programming for adults they would like.
- Community Librarians with language skills have built relationships with Spanish and Korean speaking communities. The librarians visited parents’ groups, seniors’ meet-ups, food banks, and led library tours.

Communication and Signage

- On BPL’s website, there is a prominent “Language” icon which has options to translate the website into six languages. The translation tool is built into the website, and it is possible to use it to translate into many additional languages.
- Public computers have translation options in many languages. There was an update to the screen that patrons see in 2023. Part of that update made it easier for patrons to access the translation feature.

- When translations are needed, the Public Engagement and Awareness (PEA) team has an ongoing relationship with MOSIAC. MOSIAC has pre-existing relationships with local translators, who they contract to conduct the translations.
- Library administration staff maintain the Staff Language Bank. This document tracks staff at BPL with language skills (spoken and/or written). Participation is voluntary and the bank is updated yearly.
- As much as possible, wayfinding signage within the Library is communicated via symbols rather than text, to increase accessibility across languages. The locations of the non-English language collections are marked by signs in the languages themselves on large signs above the shelves. There are also signs on the end of aisles with the language name followed by an English translation.

Collections

- BPL's multilingual collections have expanded significantly in the past few years. Prior to 2021, BPL had nine collections (Chinese, French, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Panjabi, Persian, Russian, and Spanish). The Chinese and French collections were catalogued, while the remaining six collections were uncatalogued and largely reliant on donations. Starting in 2021, there was a project to evaluate and expand the language collections. The six uncatalogued collections were catalogued and expanded.
- Since 2021, the Library has added eight additional multilingual collections: Arabic, Bosnian, Croatian, Hindi, Portuguese, Serbian, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.
- Chinese and Korean materials can be purchased through local suppliers. Material is added to the collection on an ongoing basis. For the other collections, the library works with a supplier, who then delivers books a few times a year. Because of Canadian copyright law, the library can only purchase books that have Canadian distribution rights. This can limit what books we are able to purchase and add to the collection.
- Some of the language collections are catalogued by BPL staff with language skills. For the rest of the collections, the cataloguing department works with the book supplier to contract the cataloguing. All language collections (including English) are catalogued to the same in-house cataloguing standards.
- When the Canadian Census comes out every five years, the Collections department looks for growing language communities. Once there are 1,000 or more residents who primarily speak the language at home, Collections staff will explore adding a new language collection.
- The My First Languages kits are part of the Children's collection. Each kit has different children's books and audio material, aimed at supporting early language learning and cultural connection. These are available in the seventeen languages we have as collections, as well as twenty-three additional languages: Albanian, Amharic, ASL, Bengali, Bulgarian, Burmese, Dari, German, Gujarati, Haitian French Creole, Hebrew,

Hungarian, Indonesian, Kurdish, Polish, Pashto, Romanian, Somali, Tamil, Thai, Tigrinya, Ukrainian, and Urdu.

- It has been challenging to add multilingual books and audiobooks to BPL's digital library. The vendor only offers materials in a very limited amount of languages. Collections staff has been able to add materials in Chinese and French. BPL is able to offer digital magazines and newspapers in a much wider range of languages through PressReader and Chinese E-Magazine Service (Qikan).

Consultation and Themes

Staff Consultation

During the Staff Consultation phase, I connected with more than 50 staff members. I had individual interviews with 17 staff members, and I attended four meetings (Children's, Teens, Adult Public Service Librarians, and the Anti-Racism Working Group) to connect with an additional 23 staff. My goal was to learn more about how BPL currently organizes and plans services in languages other than English and to gather ideas and input from staff across the organization.

Staff were asked to share:

- What services in additional languages are offered by their work unit, and how these services are designed and delivered
- Organizational strengths, challenges, and pain points
- What questions they have
- Any community needs that they have identified

Throughout the staff consultation, there was a strong desire to improve and expand multilingual services at BPL. Staff drew many connections between this work and the larger commitments to equity, accessibility, and community-led practices that guide BPL's work. There was broad consensus that offering services in languages other than English was important across all departments. One point which was identified by several staff was the importance of designing services that are specific to the library, and not duplicating work that community organizations and settlement services are already offering.

Key themes

How do we build multilingual services into our ongoing procedures and workflows?

One question that came up throughout the consultations was how to build better workflows for multilingual services into existing departments and procedures at BPL.

Staff shared uncertainty about how to provide community feedback to collections staff, and about the process for bringing an existing language collection to a branch that doesn't currently have one. There was a strong interest in incorporating community needs into collections work, but there are currently not a lot of documented procedures about how to do this.

Staff involved in program development shared that it can be hard to know what to prioritize. There was a lot of interest in working with community partners, alongside a need to do so in culturally competent ways. Several staff identified the need to create workflows that are flexible and can respond to emerging needs and communities. They also identified the need to build in an assessment of any recommendations that come out of this report.

How can we staff this work?

One major theme was the importance of having staff with language skills as well as cultural understanding lead the design and delivery of services. Many people brought up the foreign language bonus that currently is in the Collective Agreement and suggested expanding it for staff who deliver public service. There was also strong interest in finding ways that Information Clerks could participate more in programs and community visits. Several staff asked about the BPL Staff Language Bank and voiced being unsure of how to use it or how it is maintained. Staff who use language skills while working with the public shared stories about how valuable these skills are for relationship building with patrons. They also identified that there can be challenges to this work, especially if the staff member is the only language speaker available. Patron interactions can run long, and information clerks are sometimes asked questions that are outside of their class specifications.

Staff shared examples of how they have seen multilingual work done previously, both at BPL and in other BC Public Libraries. The work usually happened in two ways: libraries have a specific role, such as Chinese Language Librarian, and staff are hired to offer those specific services. In this model, the individual staff often does work across multiple departments and responsibilities. The other model that was described was staff with language skills designing and championing specific services. This often ends up being extra labour on top of regular duties and doesn't have the support around to continue if that employee leaves the position. There was a strong desire to design a more flexible, integrated model, so that staff are supported to design and deliver services as part of the regular duties of their position at the library.

How can we promote our existing services?

The topic of translation and promotion came up several times. There is a strong interest in promoting our collections and programs in other languages. One pain point that was identified is not knowing enough about the contents of our collections and the reading trends of different language communities to be able to describe them accurately. There was also uncertainty about working with staff who have language skills to conduct translations.

There were questions about how to make sure that translated promotional materials end up being visible to the communities who would be interested, and in community spaces where they will be visible. Children's and Teen librarians shared that having "about the library" flyers translated would be helpful for community visits, and staff who work at the Information Desk shared similar thoughts about being able to pass on information when people are registering for library cards.

Community Consultation

During the Community Consultation phase, I connected directly with community partners and patrons to learn more about what they want from BPL. These conversations took place in a few different ways. I attended department meetings, held 1-on-1 interviews, and visited BPL programs to chat with patrons who were attending.

The conversations were open-ended and led by the community partners. I started all the conversations by sharing that one of BPL's strategic plan goals is to provide library services to communities in their preferred language. I then talked about my role leading the project, and how we wanted to hear directly from community members about where they connect with other language-speakers; what kinds of programs or services they want; and any ideas they have for the library. I was also interested in what language communities might need more support in Burnaby. Below are summaries of the key themes from these conversations.

My thanks to members of the following Burnaby groups who took time to meet with me and share feedback about this project:

- Burnaby Neighborhood House
- Burnaby School District, Settlement Workers in Schools
- Burnaby Family Life
- Immigrant Advisory Council, BFL
- New to BC, Library Champions
- City of Burnaby, Social Planning

Key themes

Accessibility

- **Evenings and weekends:** Many, many people expressed the importance of evening and weekend programs for all ages. These are the times that are the most accessible for families with school-age children, parents who work during the daytime, and adults who work in the daytime.
- **Immigration status:** There are lots of settlement organizations who work with newcomers and immigrants in Burnaby. Most of them receive funding from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada that limits them to only working with people with Permanent Residency. They can sometimes offer limited services to people with other immigration statuses, but there is significant need for resources for non-PR holders. One strength of the library that multiple people shared is that our services are open to all and not connected to immigration status.
- **Privacy:** Some people in Burnaby who do not have permanent residency may have unstable status, status that's expired, or are in the process of applying for refugee status. Even for community members who have permanent residence or are citizens, the bureaucratic processes of accessing current government ID can be challenging. A strength of the library that many people noted was our strong privacy policies, our independence from other governmental organizations, and BPL's policies around not requiring ID to get a library card. It was shared with me that some community members have had difficulty when they first tried to get a library card without ID, and that it is important to have ongoing staff training about our "No ID, No Problem" approach.

Belonging and collaboration

- ***Finding language in the library:*** Community members emphasized that they feel the most belonging in the branches where they see themselves. These are the branches where they find their languages in the collections, can interact with staff who speak the same language, and attend programs (both library-led and community events).
- ***Physical space:*** The physical space of the library helps people feel belonging. Many patrons shared stories of visiting with their children and the value of a space to meet up with friends and their extended community. One community member mentioned a recent Burnaby Art Gallery satellite show at McGill and shared how information about it was widely circulated among Arabic speaking community in Burnaby.
- ***Connections in the community:*** Many people mentioned existing visits from community librarians, teen and children’s librarians. Even when the visits are entirely in English, these connections outside the walls of the library and in community members’ own spaces help build relationships between different language communities and the library.
- ***Collaboration:*** Many people expressed a desire to participate or lead programs and events, both in collaboration with the library and as independent events. I shared information about the community rooms and the soon-to-be launched program proposal form, and there was a lot of interest in both. This theme directly echoes a finding from *Building Belonging in Burnaby*. Seniors who participated in the research shared wanting public spaces “to provide support, spaces and assistance to allow self-organizing of culturally and racially appropriate events, including recreational, entertainment and physical activities.” (p. 44).

Services: accessibility and systems navigation

- During the community consultation, two distinct themes emerged about library services. The first was that multilingual services are needed for accessibility and to support inclusion for communities facing multiple systemic barriers. The topics that people shared a need for were primarily around systems navigation and education.
- This need was often connected to language communities which have been recently growing in Burnaby and may not have as many established community organizations to support them. Other barriers to service included being monolingual in a language other than English, having lower English language proficiency, and a lack of permanent residency status.
- ***Key takeaways:***
 - Education around scams and media literacy is a need, as well as computer skills classes.
 - Learning about rights in BC, especially labour rights and tenants’ rights, was identified as a high priority need.

- Employment skills and support navigating the employment process, especially for non-PR holders.
- For families, opportunities to connect with other parents and support services were identified.
- Tours of the library in their language were brought up multiple times.
- This theme closely aligns with BPL’s community development approach and offers insight into how to develop services that help reduce barriers for community members Burnaby.

Services: cultural connection

- The second major theme that emerged was that multilingual services are needed for cultural connection and building a sense of belonging in the city of Burnaby. This need was expressed across all language communities I met with. Communities that emphasized this need above the previous one tended to be ones with large populations and long ties in Burnaby. They also tended to be communities who are more likely to be Permanent Residents or Citizens and have English fluency but still want services in languages that connect them to their communities.
- **Key takeaways:**
 - Opportunities for families with school-age children to connect and practice language skills with one another was a high need.
 - Opportunities to learn more about raising multilingual children and maintaining language skills was identified several times.
 - There was a strong interest in programs that emphasize gathering, connecting, and sharing stories over educational classes.
 - Book clubs and storytelling programs were mentioned several times.
 - Teens are very interested in volunteer opportunities and summer programs.
 - There was a strong interest in materials other than print books. Audiobooks, music, DVDs, and magazines were mentioned by almost every language community. There may be opportunities for increasing findability of existing library resources in these formats, along with adding to the collection.
 - Audiobooks were specifically mentioned multiple times by community members interested in services for seniors.
- This theme closely aligns with BPL’s values of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility, as well as the strategic plan goal to connect the community.
- Consultation and relationship building with Indigenous communities in Burnaby was out-of-scope of this project, but there is a need for further exploration of how the library can support hən̓q̓əmiṇəm and Skwxwú7mesh Sníchim language speakers and learners.

Priority Languages

Process and Themes

A key part of developing BPL's Multilingual Strategy has been identifying priority Burnaby languages for the library to develop and deliver services in. Priority languages doesn't mean that other languages in Burnaby are not important, or that BPL shouldn't develop services for them. It means we are taking a community development and equity-based approach to how we develop and deliver library service.

The most common approach to designing multilingual services is to look at what languages are spoken by the most residents, and prioritize services based on community size. This is straightforward, but it doesn't give a lot of information about what kinds of services are needed. It also doesn't take things like community needs and barriers into consideration. To identify priority languages, I needed to find additional themes to look at.

I started by looking at these data sources:

- Stories, trends, and needs identified by community partners and patrons
- Stories, trends, and needs identified by library staff
- Recent population statistics from Statistics Canada and Simply Analytics
- Recent published reports from the City of Burnaby and community partners, including New to BC and the Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table.

From these sources, I identified five common themes that impact Burnaby's different language communities:

1. The number of language speakers in Burnaby
2. Recent growth of community size
3. Many community members who exclusively speak their mother tongue
4. Many community members who are not permanent residents
5. Communities with fewer existing supports in Burnaby

Looking at all five themes together, I created a matrix to identify priority languages for BPL to design and deliver services in. Below, I go into more depth about each theme. The matrix is shared at the end, in fig. 4 and fig. 5.

Themes 1 & 2: Community Size and Recent Growth

Definition & Importance:

These are two different themes, but they are closely related.

1. **Community Size** is the number of language speakers in Burnaby (fig.1)
2. **Recent Growth** refers to language communities in Burnaby that have grown the most over the past four years (fig. 2)

In the 2021 Census, there were 20 language communities in Burnaby with more than 500 speakers. Looking at the most recent data estimates from 2024, it's clear that communities are growing at different rates. Community size is an important consideration and gives us information about what language communities may have a higher demand for library services. Recent growth is also important because it gives us information on communities that the library may not have connected to before, and that may be in need of additional resources and services in the city.

Process

Statistics Canada collects information about languages in a few different ways. Two of them are **Language spoken most often at home** and **Mother tongue**.

- People can choose more than one **language spoken most often at home** when responding to the census. This may be someone's first language or an additional language. This category gives us information about the languages people in Burnaby are speaking day-to-day.
- **Mother tongue** is someone's first language that they learned and still understand. They may not use it day-to-day, and it may not be the language they speak the most at home. Even if it's not a language that is used daily or primarily, first languages can be very important for cultural connection and belonging.

For **Community Size** I used data from the 2021 Canadian Census for language spoken most often at home, as this gives us information about what languages are spoken the most day-to-day (fig.1). Statistics Canada conducts a comprehensive Canadian Census every five years; the next census will take place in 2026, and data won't be available until early 2027.

To learn more about **Recent Growth** I compared data sets from the 2021 Canadian Census and SimplyAnalytics, a powerful data mapping and analysis tool that can estimate current population sizes. It is not able to estimate language spoken most often at home, but it does have estimates for 2024 Mother Tongue household population in Burnaby. I pulled this data set and compared it to the data from the 2021 Canadian Census for Mother Tongue household population in Burnaby. Comparing the data side-by-side, I analyzed the percentage in population change from 2021 to 2024 to look for communities that are growing faster. These are the communities that have had the most significant increase in population size relative to 2021 statistics (fig. 2).

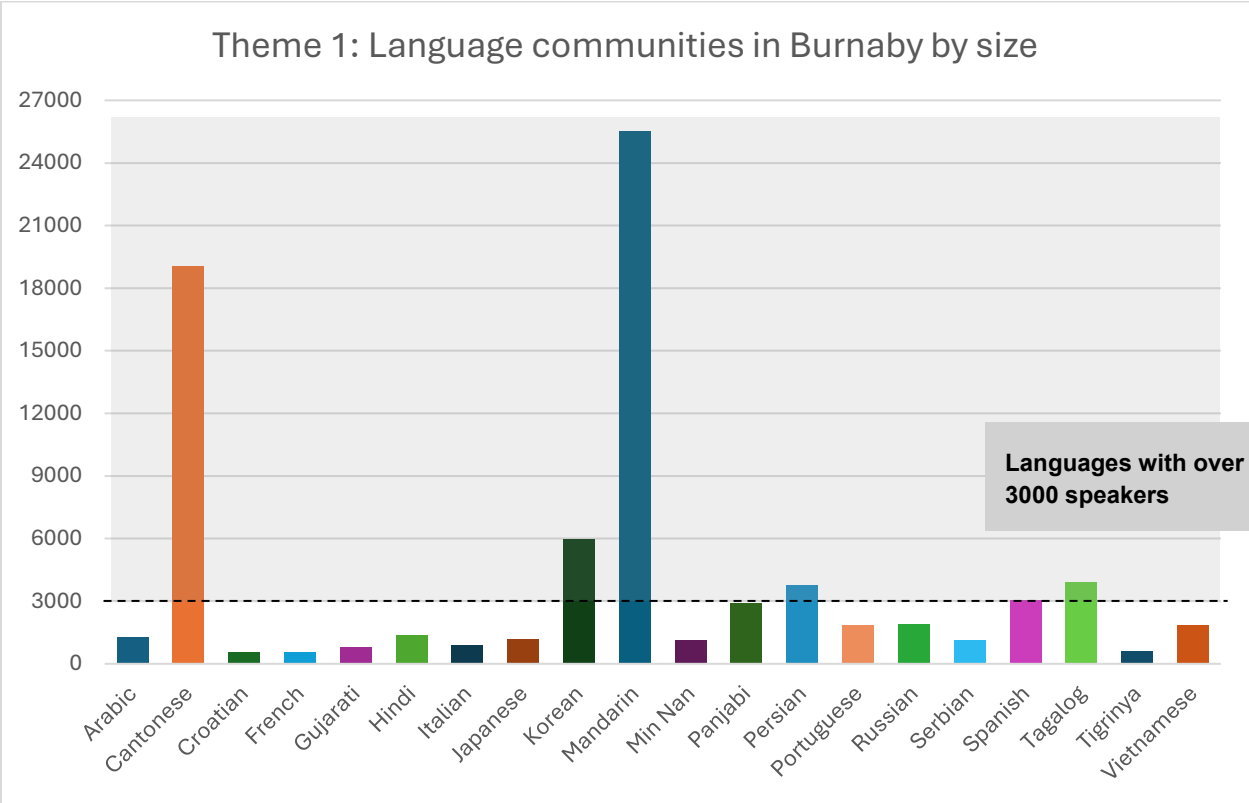


Fig. 1

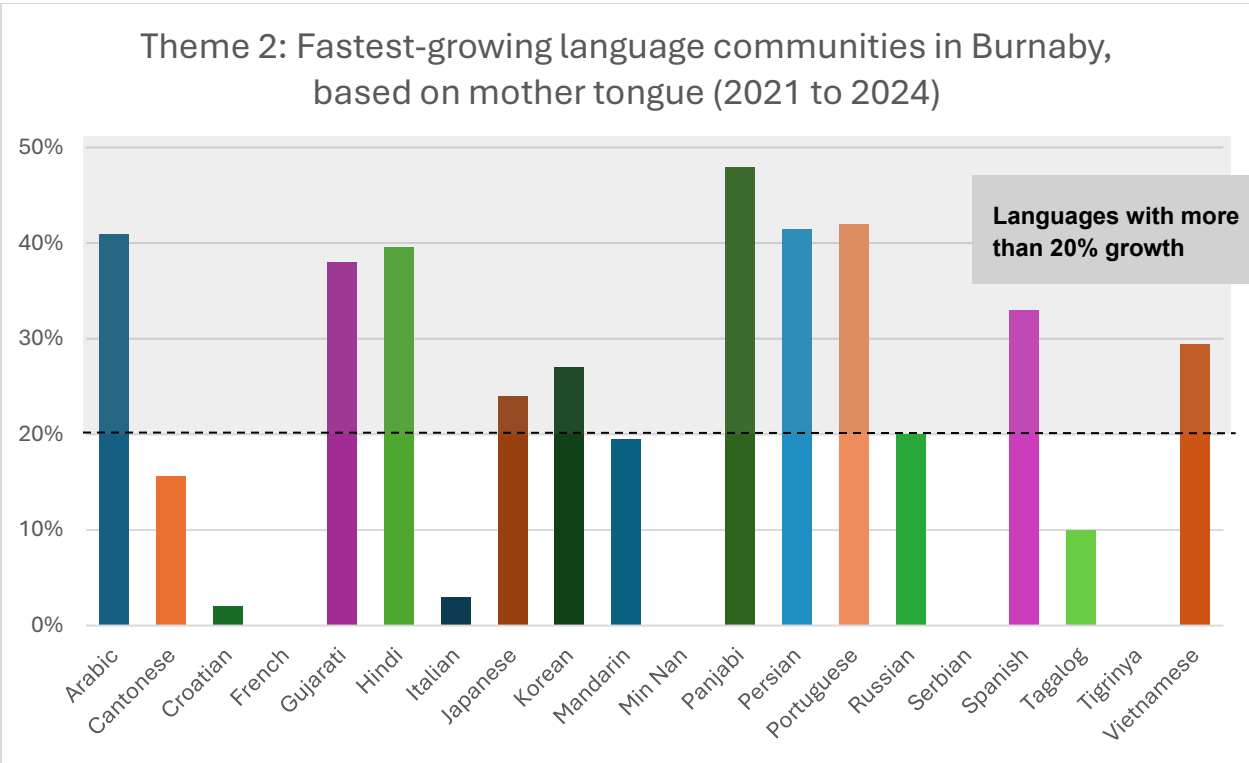


Fig. 2 **There were no 2024 data in SimplyAnalytics for Tigrinya, Min Nan, Serbian, or French.

Theme 3: Many community members who exclusively speak their mother tongue

Definition & Importance:

This theme is about language communities which have many members who speak their mother tongue and do not speak English.

Looking at this theme gives us information about equitable access. Language communities with a higher percentage of members who always or usually speak their mother tongue face significant barriers to accessing library services. Community partners shared a lot of information about different communities who predominantly speak their mother tongue. These communities often face additional barriers in employment, education, and systems navigation.

Process

To develop this theme further, I relied primarily on community and staff consultations. I went through all the data from community, patron, and staff conversations and hand-coded references to any language community with more folks who mostly or always speak their mother tongue.

Burnaby language communities mentioned the most are **Arabic, Cantonese, Korean, Mandarin, Persian, Spanish, and Tigrinya**.

I did find some limited quantitative data on this theme. Statistics Canada collects information about “Mother tongue by knowledge of official language,” which is available in the 2021 Census. This is a dataset that breaks down people’s knowledge of one of Canada’s official languages (English and French), organized by their mother tongue. I looked at the data for language speakers who do not speak English or French, and compared that number to the total number of mother-tongue language speakers to get this percentage. This gave me some statistical information about the percentage of a language community who only speak their mother tongue. This data isn’t available just about Burnaby; the most granular data is for census metropolitan areas, which covers the whole of Metro Vancouver. Communities can vary a lot city by city and this data doesn’t perfectly align with what I heard about Burnaby, but these statistics are an interesting overview.

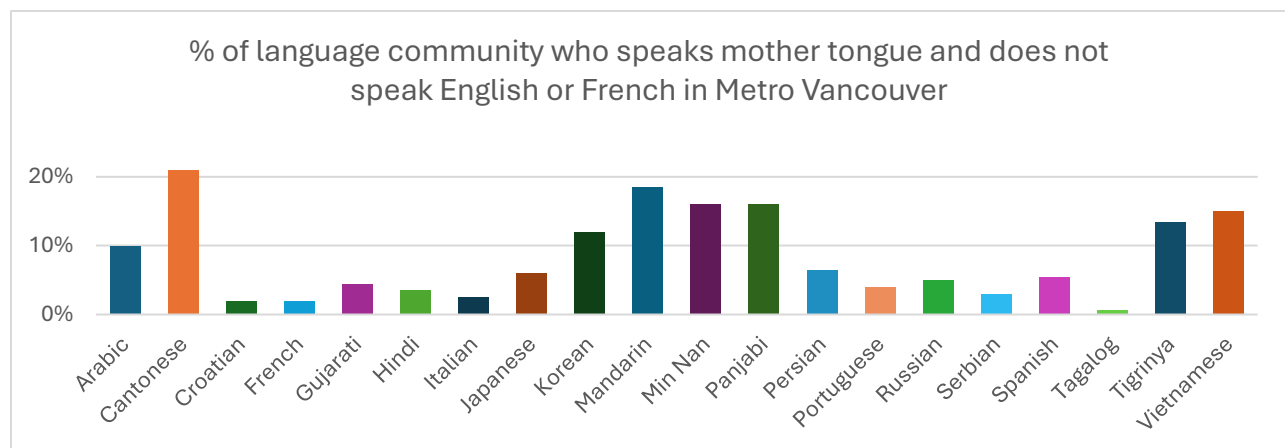


Fig. 3

Theme 4: Many community members who are not permanent residents

Definition & Importance

This theme is looking at Burnaby language communities with higher percentages of members who are not permanent residents or citizens in Canada. These community members often have very limited access to social service supports. Most settlement services in Burnaby are limited to supporting people with permanent resident status. It can also be difficult for community members to access employment, healthcare, and services for children. In conversations with community partners, this was identified as one of the largest barriers to accessing existing services in Burnaby.

Process

It is difficult to gather statistical information on language community in Burnaby with non-permanent immigration status. The most relevant data from Statistics Canada about “Mother tongue by immigrant status and period of immigration and number of languages known,” but this data isn’t available just about Burnaby; the most granular data is for census metropolitan areas, which covers the whole of Metro Vancouver. This is also a category of information that can change rapidly based on federal immigration quotas and caps, so it is very difficult to assess how the statistics from 2021 may have shifted between then and now.

To develop this theme, I relied on the community and staff consultations. I went through all the data from conversations and hand-coded references to language communities with a higher number of people who are not permanent residents.

Burnaby language communities mentioned the most are **Korean, Panjabi, Persian, Portuguese, and Spanish.**

Theme 5: Communities with fewer existing supports in Burnaby

Definition & Importance

This theme is looking at language communities in Burnaby that have fewer existing supports in the city. This includes both institutional support (a lack of programs or services offered by the City and local non-profits in languages), and community support (lack of community organizations, dedicated community spaces, and cultural supports). In the consultation conversations, this theme was identified as one that contributes to communities having much higher barriers for accessing library services.

Process

To develop this theme, I relied on the data from community and staff consultations. I went back to my notes and hand coded them, looking for data about communities who have less dedicated existing community groups and spaces in Burnaby, and who are facing the highest barriers to accessing library services. By far, **Arabic, Spanish, and Tigrinya** came up the most. Other language communities mentioned were **Gujarati, Korean, Persian, and Panjabi.**

Priority Language Matrix

Taking the themes above, I've collected and weighted the data to create the following priority language matrix. There are three areas:

1. *Priority language communities to connect with*

- These are Burnaby language communities that are growing, and may have a higher number of members who predominantly speak their mother tongue (themes 2 and 3). These communities tend to have a higher number who do not have permanent residence and were identified as facing the most barriers during community consultations (themes 4 and 5).
- These are Burnaby language communities to focus on building community relationships with and developing services.

2. *Large language communities in Burnaby*

- These are larger language communities in Burnaby with longstanding ties to the city (theme 1)
- These are language communities to focus on building community partnerships with and developing services.

3. *Other growing language communities in Burnaby*

- These are language communities that are smaller in size and were not identified as facing multiple barriers, but are growing quickly in the city (theme 2).
- These are language communities to focus on retaining existing connections, and developing services for as community needs are identified.

1 Priority language communities to connect with	2 Large language communities	3 Other growing language communities in Burnaby
Arabic Korean Panjabi Persian Spanish Tigrinya	Cantonese Mandarin Tagalog	Gujarati Hindi Japanese Portuguese Vietnamese

Fig. 4

		THEME 1	THEME 2	THEME 3	THEME 4	THEME 5
		More than 3000 speakers	More than 20% growth	Many mother tongue speakers	Many without PR	Fewer existing supports
1 Priority language communities to connect with	Arabic		●	●		●
	Korean	●	●	●	●	●
	Panjabi		●		●	●
	Persian	●	●	●	●	●
	Spanish	●	●	●	●	●
	Tigrigna			●		●
2 Large language communities	Cantonese	●		●		
	Mandarin	●		●		
	Tagalog	●				
3 Other growing language communities in Burnaby	Gujarati		●			●
	Hindi		●			
	Japanese		●			
	Portuguese		●		●	
	Vietnamese		●			

Fig. 5

Recommendations

Pulling together the themes from the staff consultations and the community needs assessment, I've organized the following recommendations under 5 themes. These are intended to be practical, actionable, and all with the goal of giving BPL's multilingual service focus and making sure they meet the needs of the Burnaby community.

Goal 1: Create guidelines and structures to embed multilingual services into our work

Staff across all departments and worksites shared a desire to bring more multilingual services into their work. Embedding policy and structure around multilingual services into our work will help staff be able to develop services that meet the needs of Burnaby language communities.

A. Conduct community consultation at the start of any new language collection

During the planning of any new language collection, build community consultations and needs assessment into the launch plan. This will help ensure that the collections we are building fit the needs and wants of language speakers in Burnaby. See Appendix A for a draft workflow.

Responsibility: Librarian 2, Collections

B. Incorporate an assessment tool when designing a new multilingual service or program

When designing a new multilingual service or planning a program, use the assessment tool to help guide and clarify the process. The draft assessment tool (see Appendix B) builds on the existing Evaluating Ideas programming framework, with additional questions about positionality and relationships with language communities. The content of the draft assessment tool may overlap with deliverables from the Anti-Racism Framework project. Once finalized, the assessment tool could be incorporated into the existing Evaluating Ideas Framework, or exist as separate guidelines.

Responsibility: Adult Public Services Coordinator and Children & Teen Services Coordinator

C. Set yearly goals and benchmarks for multilingual programs

Programs at BPL happen in a few different ways. Librarians design and lead programs, the Library works with outside partners to plan partner programs, and members of the public can propose programs directly to the library. Implementation of the recommendations 2A and 2B also will provide more staffing capacity for planning and leading multilingual programs. To support the planning and delivery of multilingual programs, the Adult Public Service Coordinator and Child and Teen Services

Coordinator should set yearly goals and benchmarks (for example, 30% of all BPL programming will happen in languages other than English). Coordinators can use the priority language matrix alongside newly identified community needs and the operating plan to set goals and strategies.

Responsibility: Adult Public Services Coordinator and Children & Teen Services Coordinator

D. Assess and clarify procedures for adding new multilingual collections

There is currently uncertainty among front-line staff about how new multilingual collections are created - both brand new collections, and new collections of existing languages in a branch. Collections staff similarly identified a lack of documented procedures within the collections department. Assessing and clarifying the procedures for adding new multilingual collections will create workflows that are more responsive to growing and newly-identified language communities. Possible areas to look at include: mechanisms for public-facing staff to collect and pass on community feedback they receive to the Collections department; procedures for assessing and allocating new locations for existing language collections; and how the different collections operate across the Adult, Teen, and Children's collections.

Responsibility: Librarian 2, Collections

E. Incorporate regular evaluation into existing multilingual collections

The existing multilingual collections were created without substantial community consultation. To support regular evaluation, create a workflow so that current multilingual collections are being evaluated with a community consultation and needs assessment component, on a schedule and on an individual basis. The evaluation may follow a similar model to recommendation 1A.

Responsibility: Librarian 2, Collections

F. Build in multilingual services into upcoming 2024 - 2027 Operating Plan work

BPL's current Strategic Plan was the result of extensive community consultation. Building on the Strategic Plan, BPL's 2024 - 2027 Operating Plan includes several upcoming projects that provide opportunities to include multilingual components, as the Library works to implement the goals and priorities of the whole strategic plan. These are outlined in Appendix C.

Responsibility: Senior Staff

Goal 2: Appropriately staff multilingual work

It's important to build ways for staff with language skills to lead and contribute to services for Burnaby's language communities. Staff who are using language skills at work should be supported to do this work, and be adequately compensated.

A. Create opportunities for Information Clerks to assist with running programs and attending community visits

Work with Information Clerks to develop opportunities and workflows for Information Clerks with language skills to assist with programs, classes, and community visits. As part of the reclassification that happened in 2020 with the implementation of the Public Service Staffing Model, the information clerk class specification now includes assisting Librarians in conducting programs and workshops. This is an underutilized part of the role of Information Clerks and was brought up in multiple conversations with Info Clerks about the project.

Responsibility: Director, Public Service and Manager, Community Development

B. Create opportunities for Auxiliary Librarians to lead programs

Work with auxiliary librarians who have language skills to develop opportunities and workflows to be more involved in proposing and leading programs in languages they speak. Currently, auxiliary librarian shifts are only scheduled for public service and cataloguing shifts. During the Public Service Staffing Model review, auxiliary librarians expressed a strong interest in expanding the types of work they can do.

Responsibility: Adult Public Services Coordinator and Children & Teen Services Coordinator

C. Create training and support for staff who use language skills in public service roles

Work with staff who currently use language skills in their role to design a segment of the upcoming Customer Service Training. This will support staff who have language skills in navigating using those skills while working with the public. Assess if further training is needed for supervisors, and if any further supports are needed for staff.

Responsibility: Director, Public Service

D. Clarify use and maintenance of Staff Language Bank

Clarify the intended scope and use of the staff language bank. Confirm procedures for updating the document. Create a summary description of the language bank and update the current document.

Responsibility: Manager, Human Resources

E. Prioritize hiring staff with language skills that reflect the community of Burnaby

Explore options for taking language skills into consideration when hiring staff. Consider setting parameters around language populations in Burnaby, provisions for revising parameters, and weights for specific branch locations.

Responsibility: Chief Librarian

F. Create a Foreign Language Premium for Public Service work

The Collective Agreement contains language that guarantees a Foreign Language Premium for staff who use a language other than English when working on the library collection. Recommendation is to create a model for a language bonus for staff who work with the public. This could be an increase to staff hourly rate, as currently exists, or a flat rate, similar to the First Aid premium. Consider setting parameters around language populations in Burnaby, and provisions for revising parameters and exceptional circumstances.

Responsibility: Chief Librarian

G. Expand the capacity of the collections department

Currently, all seventeen multilingual collections are in the portfolio of one part-time Collections Librarian position. Expanding the staffing capacity of the collections department will better support the ongoing community consultation and evaluation work stemming from recommendations 1A and 1F. This could look like expanding the current part-time Multilingual Librarian position to full time, or the creation of a new position that is focused on community development and collections work.

Responsibility: Director, Collections and Technology

Goal 3: Increase awareness of existing programs and services

The diversity of different language communities in Burnaby provides unique opportunities for promotion and connection.

A. Create informational materials about the library in languages other than English

BPL currently offers a pamphlet called “Questions and Answers” that has information about how the library works in English. Work with language speakers in Burnaby to identify key questions they have (or had) about the library and the library services that are most relevant and create physical material that can be shared. Focus on the communities in the “priority languages to connect with” and “language communities with large populations and/or high needs” areas of the priority language matrix.

Responsibility: Public Engagement & Awareness Coordinator

B. Make the translation options on BPL's public website more visible

BPL's public website has a prominent option for translation, but it's currently unclear whether it is possible to translate the site into more than the six listed languages. Create an addition to the existing page to make it clearer that other translations are possible. Assess the current languages available to see if it meets community demographics from an equity lens.

Responsibility: Public Engagement & Awareness Coordinator

C. Create a workflow for translating regular important information for patrons

BPL has been working to streamline how we use signs in the library. There are certain situations that we still regularly rely on printed signage for communication with patrons (when a computer is out of order, when the internet is down, and when there are planned branch closures are some examples). Assess how to best provide translations for these signs, based on branch demographics and size of language communities. Focus on the communities in the “priority languages to connect with” and “language communities with large populations and/or high needs” areas of the priority language matrix.

Responsibility: Public Engagement & Awareness Coordinator

D. Promote programs and services with community partners and in community spaces

Librarians should continue building relationships with community partners and regularly share upcoming programs and services during visits, at interagency meetings, and through email. Librarians should use knowledge from community mapping to promote programs at community hubs and spaces.

Responsibility: Librarians

Goal 4: Assess and update multilingual strategy

This strategy report provides a snapshot of community needs and staff concerns as of February 2025. Assessing the recommendations from this report and expanding consultation with Burnaby language communities in the next strategic planning period will give insight into next steps and new priorities.

A. Plan and resource more consultation with multilingual communities during strategic planning

During the consultation phase for the current strategic plan, there was limited engagement in languages other than English. For the next strategic plan, build in more community consultation for other language communities in Burnaby and resource this work to better embed community needs and priorities into the operating plan.

Responsibility: Chief Librarian

B. Plan an assessment of this strategy and update to the Priority Language Matrix in 2027

The goal of this strategy is to provide equity-based direction to how BPL develops and delivers multilingual services, connected to the goals in the current strategic plan. In 2027, assess the implementation of this strategy and update the Priority Language Matrix, to coincide with the development of BPL's next strategic plan.

Responsibility: Chief Librarian

Summary Recommendations

Goal	Recommendation	Responsibility
Create policy and structures to embed multilingual services into our work	1. A: Conduct community consultation at the start of any new language collection	Librarian 2, Collections
	1.B: Incorporate assessment tool when designing a new multilingual service or program	Adult Public Services Coordinator; Children & Teen Services Coordinator
	1.C: Set yearly goals and benchmarks for multilingual programs	Adult Public Services Coordinator; Children & Teen Services Coordinator
	1.D: Assess and clarify multilingual Collections procedures	Librarian 2, Collections
	1.E: Incorporate regular evaluation into existing multilingual collections	Librarian 2, Collections
	1.F: Build in multilingual services into upcoming 2024 - 2027 Operating Plan work	Senior Staff
Appropriately staff multilingual work	2.A: Create opportunities for Information Clerks to assist with running programs and attending community visits	Director, Public Service; Manager, Community Development
	2.B: Create opportunities for Auxiliary Librarians to lead programs	Adult Public Services Coordinator; Children & Teen Services Coordinator
	2.C: Create training and support for staff providing multilingual public service	Director, Public Service
	2.D: Clarify use and maintenance of Staff Language Bank	Manager, Human Resources

	2.E: Prioritize hiring staff with language skills that reflect the community of Burnaby	Chief Librarian
	2.F: Create a Foreign Language Premium for Public Service work	Chief Librarian
	2.G: Expand the capacity of the collections department	Director, Collections and Technology
Increase awareness of existing programs and services	3.A: Create informational materials about the library in languages other than English	Public Engagement & Awareness Coordinator
	3.B: Make the translation options on BPL's public website more visible	Public Engagement & Awareness Coordinator
	3.C: Create a workflow for translating regular important information for patrons	Public Engagement & Awareness Coordinator
	Promote programs and services with community partners and in community spaces	Librarians
Assess and update multilingual strategy	Plan and resource more consultation with multilingual communities during strategic planning	Chief Librarian
	Plan an assessment of this strategy and update to the Priority Language Matrix in 2027	Chief Librarian

Appendix A: Draft Framework for Launching New Language Collections

Develop Proposal:

Once a possible collection is identified, start developing a proposal. Things to consider:

- Is this an entirely new collection or do we have similar items already (new formats in existing languages; new audience for existing language collections, etc)
- Are materials available? If a new language, connect with vendor to ask about availability of materials.
- Does it meet an identified community need? How often is this asked for, by how many people? If this hasn't been identified as a public need, has something similar been a success for another institution/library or group?
- Is this a growing community in Burnaby? Is the community facing barriers to accessing library services? Look at the priority language matrix for factors to consider.
- Connect with Branch Managers, Community Librarians, Teen Librarians, Children's Librarians, and staff who are language speakers to gather input.
- Which branch should the collection live at? Consider needs and geographic locations of language speakers.

Review Proposal and Develop Project Plan:

- Include outline of research to date and any future research needed
- Identify possible stakeholders
- Make connections to community and strategic plan
- Establish budget – either a one-time purchase or ongoing budget for maintenance and refreshing the collection
- Work collaboratively with internal stakeholders (Branch Managers, Home Library & Accessible Services staff, Community Librarians) to establish needs and the scope of the collection.

Establish scope and budget:

- Connect with internal stakeholders (Branch Managers, Community Librarians, Teen Librarians, Children's Librarians, and staff who are language speakers) to gather further input, and to help identify community stakeholders. Possible sources: community groups; Burnaby school district; interagency meetings; settlement services.

- Meet with community stakeholders to consult about content and scope of collection.
- Possible scoping questions:
 - i. Popular genres
 - ii. Recommended reading levels to purchase
 - iii. Formats
 - iv. Specific titles or topics to purchase
 - v. Needs for children's or teen collections

Review collection

Review collection after 3 months, 6 months and 12 months.

- Check in with internal stakeholders to see how things are going at 6 and 12 months.
- Work with community stakeholders to establish an initial assessment plan. Possible options: arrange a tour of the new collection once it's on the shelves; share the collection's records in the library catalogue for them to browse remotely; arrange a follow-up meeting or visit after 6 months.

Appendix B: Draft Evaluating Ideas Tool for Planning Multilingual Services

Does it address a community need?

- Did this idea come from connecting with Burnaby language speakers?
- Will this idea remove barriers for language speakers in Burnaby?
- How do I know that this is a preferred way that language speakers want to access library services?
- What's the relationship to the current priority language matrix?

Is it library specific?

- Is the service already being offered to language speakers by other organizations or groups in Burnaby?
- Is the library uniquely positioned to work with the language community?

Is it achievable and feasible?

- What is my knowledge of the language? What is my relationship to the language?
- Can I connect with language speakers to test a prototype?
- Is the library already connected to community partners?
- Where can I promote and share the service to reach language speakers?

Does it meet a strategic plan goal?

- Does the idea align with a goal in the current strategic plan?
- Is there already an initiative or project within the organization that is working on this or something similar in other languages? Can I collaborate?

Appendix C: Operating Plan Projects and Recommendations

Project	Recommendation
<p>Cultural celebrations BPL spaces have the potential to celebrate Burnaby’s diverse culture through events and displays, building on the success of the Diwali event at Metrotown in 2023. This project would identify key cultural and other celebrations that the library can showcase.</p>	<p>Explore opportunities to provide programming in Burnaby languages as part of the planning.</p>
<p>Accessible services This project will look at spaces, programs and services for people with disabilities and neurodiversity, and include both developing new services and spaces, and make existing services and spaces more inclusive.</p>	<p>Explore options for language translation including ASL at programs.</p>
<p>Readers’ advisory strategy Develop a strategy that includes booklists and services that connect readers of all ages to collections in all formats and languages.</p>	<p>Include consideration of how to deliver reader’s advisory in Burnaby languages.</p>
<p>Self-serve checkout replacement Replace aging self-serve checkout machines.</p>	<p>Explore language interface options when project moves forward</p>
<p>Facilitate brave dialogues on big issues Support staff to develop programs that enable people to have brave dialogues on big issues like climate change and intellectual freedom.</p>	<p>Develop programs with staff or community partners in Burnaby languages, guided by the priority language matrix and community needs.</p>
<p>Develop services and programs that advance goals in the strategic plan</p>	<p>Look at the current offerings, and plan options in other languages (see specific needs)</p>
<p>Customer service training Develop and deliver customer service training for public-facing staff.</p>	<p>Work with staff who currently use language skills in their roles to design a segment of training, focused on using language skills while working with the public.</p>
<p>Evaluate staffing levels Evaluate staffing levels across branches and departments, and across opening hours, to better serve patrons.</p>	<p>When evaluating staffing levels, consider the impact of the implementation of recommendation 2.A.</p>



TO: CHAIR AND TRUSTEES
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

FROM: LIBRARIAN 1, CATALOGUING
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY

DATE: APRIL 17, 2025

SUBJECT: LIBRARY USE DURING ECONOMIC DOWNTURNS

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT The Library Board receive this report for information.

REPORT

This report is in response to a question asked by trustees at the February 20 board meeting regarding increased use of public libraries during economic downturns.

Referred to as the “librarian’s axiom”, anecdotal evidence has long supported the belief that there is an increase in public library use during economic downturns. Until recently, there has not been much data to confirm or refute this belief. Two studies done in the 2000s provide statistical evidence that public libraries do see an increase in use during periods of recession.

A [study](#) published in 2002 in *American Libraries* conducted by the Library Research Center (LRC) of the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library & Information Science for the American Library Association analyzed circulation data from 1997 to the end of 2001 from 18 public libraries in large cities in the United States. Data for visits was found to be insufficient to allow analysis. Establishing an average of monthly circulation based on data from January 1997 to December 2000, the researchers created a ‘trend line’ to project circulation for the next 12 months.

LRC found that circulation increased significantly in all months after March of 2001, a period identified by the National Bureau of Economic Research as a recession. “Circulation is 8% above trend in March 2001, the date when the recession officially began. It stayed well above trends, an average of 9.1% above, for the rest of the year.”

A more recent, and larger, [study](#) published in *Public Library Quarterly* in 2023 by Michael R. Mabe analyzed data on both circulation and library visits before and during the ‘Great Recession’ (2009-2011). The researchers used existing data gathered by the Library Journal Index of Public Library Service and included statistics from over 500 public libraries in the United States that had received a star-rating by *Library Journal*.

This study found that both circulation and visits to the library increased during this period of recession. “The average increase in use during the Great Recession ... circulation increased by 1.14 per capita annually or 13.3% and visitors increased by 1.17 per capita annually or 26.8%.” This data appears in Table 21 in the article. Finer analysis by size of budget showed some variations in these results however, no library was found to have a decrease in usage during the recession period. These results are discussed in more detail on pages 525-529 of the article.

Lastly, while not a study of circulation or library visits, a study conducted by New York Public Library, published in 2024 as [Libraries & well-being: a case study from the New York Public Library](#), contains data that might also be of interest to the Board.

Using a survey, NYPL library patrons across the library system were asked a number of questions relating to the impact of the library on their well-being. When looking at the data as it related to income level, they found “the positive impact of libraries on well-being is highest for patrons living in lower-income communities”. Income level was established by looking at each respondent’s zip code as it related to the relative wealth of one neighbourhood versus another in New York City. The report provides greater detail on the analysis of the data collected as it pertains to income-level on pages 28 through 30.

Andrea Gorgec
LIBRARIAN 1, CATALOGUING
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY



TO: CHAIR AND TRUSTEES
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

FROM: CHIEF LIBRARIAN
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY

DATE: APRIL 17, 2025

SUBJECT: ANTI-RACISM UPDATES

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT The Library Board receive this report for information.

REPORT

Background

BPL hired consultants to conduct an anti-racism climate audit in 2021. This audit highlighted areas of concern and potential action to address issues of racism at BPL. The audit was shared with staff and the Board in [July 2021](#).

Staff developed a series of anti-racism commitments that were shared with staff and the Board in [March 2022](#). Although both the audit and commitments are focused on anti-racism, many of the actions and commitments concern inclusion, equity and diversity more broadly.

The 2024-2027 Strategic Plan, developed by the BPL Board in 2023, included a new value: Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility. The plan also includes goals to:

- Develop library services that serve the diversity of people living in Burnaby
- Provide library services to community members in their preferred language
- Engage library users in advancing equity issues
- Celebrate Burnaby’s diverse communities in library spaces
- Weave equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility into BPL’s culture and governance
- Create a supportive environment where members of equity-deserving groups can lead and shape the organization.

An update on BPL’s anti-racism work was last shared with the Board in [December 2023](#). In February 2025, the Board received a delegation from a patron about service and inclusion at the library, and Board at its in camera meeting directed staff to report back on how BPL is currently and could be addressing issues of racism in the library.

Anti-Racism Commitments

1A. Address racial inequity at exempt level through BC Human Rights Commission special hiring program.

The BC Human Rights Commission approved a BPL preferential hiring program to recruit exempt staff who are Indigenous, Black or people of colour. The program began in November 2021, and a mid-point assessment was completed and approved in 2024. The mid-point report was presented to the BPL Board in [June 2024](#). Seven competitions have been conducted so far, and all have had a high-quality pool of IBPOC candidates who are performing well and who are still with BPL. Further communication with staff and board will happen at end reporting point, at which point BPL can apply for an extension of the program. It should be noted that this action addresses racial representation, but does not address racial equity.

1B. Offer two annual scholarships of \$2,500 to BPL staff who are Indigenous, Black or people of colour enrolled in library school.

Following Board approval of a proposal to change the scope of its existing Picard Trust scholarships, BPL began offering these scholarships in 2022. Two scholarships were awarded in each of the years 2022, 2023, and 2024. The 2025 process is in progress. The scholarship is open to Burnaby residents in addition to BPL staff. The scholarship applies only to candidates in a Master’s of Library or Information Studies program, and not to candidates in Library Technician diploma programs.

1C. Develop, support and create safer spaces for staff who are Indigenous, Black or people of colour to share experiences.

A staff group worked from May 2023 to March 2024. Group members met to brainstorm, research, and create in-person and online engagements with racialized staff. Recommendations were shared with all staff in March 2024. A second phase of the project to implement recommendations was initiated and an update provided to senior staff in February 2025.

1D. Work with staff who are Indigenous, Black or people of colour to review and revise hiring, interview, evaluation and promotion practices.

External consultants were hired to examine current BPL processes and report findings and recommendations to address gaps. Consultants met with staff in late 2023, and shared recommendations in early 2024 to be implemented over the next 3 years. Human Resources staff have worked with management, staff and the union to implement many of the recommendations in the report, and the remainder are on track to complete by end of 2026.

1E. Actively support professional development opportunities for staff who are Indigenous, Black or people of colour.

This project will begin in Q2 2025.

1F. Train supervisors in anti-bias hiring practices.

This training was originally scheduled for January 2025, but has been postponed to April 2025 due to consultant availability issues. Work with the consultants will include a train-the-trainer component to ensure that this work is sustainable.

2A. Revise the Code of Conduct to include a statement that harassment, verbal abuse or racism will not be tolerated.

The revised Code of Conduct was implemented in July 2023. The new Code includes a statement that racism, transphobia, homophobia, and any other form of discrimination, harassment and verbal abuse will not be tolerated.

2B. Create ways to support staff who are Indigenous, Black or people of colour following incidents of racial harm.

The staff team working on this project shared recommendations in early 2024. Implementation of these recommendations is in progress.

2C. Deliver disruptive behaviours training and revise procedures with an anti-oppression and trauma-informed lens.

The staff team working on this project shared recommendations in mid-2024. Incident response training was delivered in March 2025, and ongoing additional training has been incorporated into onboarding and regular training.

2D. Deliver respectful workplace training with an anti-oppression lens.

Work began in Q1 2025.

2E. Offer bystander intervention training.

In Q2 2023, 172 staff participated in Anti-Racism Response Training sessions. The training gave staff practical tools that they could use when encountering racism at work and in life. This training will be offered again at regular intervals, and is being scheduled twice in 2025.

3A. Train supervisors on managing conflict and facilitating difficult conversations.

Three training sessions have been delivered: a conflict resolution workshop with Kwela Leadership in November 2021, Deep Democracy workshops with small groups of senior staff in spring 2022, and Facilitation Training in September 2024. This last training is being reinforced by optional 1-on-1 coaching and by a series of six facilitated communities of practice sessions.

3B. Provide time, structure and support for staff leading anti-racism work, including the Anti-Oppression working groups.

Since early 2022, members of the Transgender Inclusion, Anti-Racism, and Indigenous Initiatives working groups have been allocated four hours per week. This action is complete in terms of defining terms of reference, setting the number of hours and clarifying expectations with supervisors. There is ongoing work to do in prioritizing this

work, in particular for supervisors to make space time for staff to attend and for members to prioritize their working group hours. There is also a need to find stable ongoing funding for this work. In 2026, there is an Operating Plan project to evaluate the working group structure.

3C. Build time for anti-racism work into staff schedules.

In 2022, supervisors were directed to allocate one hour week for anti-racism training work. This has been communicated, however more follow up is needed on whether this time is being scheduled and taken.

3D. Deliver anti-racism training for all staff to build shared understanding of racism and anti-racism concepts such as microaggressions, privilege and institutional racism.

Four in-person training sessions, consisting of an anti-oppression introduction and inclusive communication, were delivered to 170 staff in summer 2022. Staff responses to the training were mixed. A different consultant will be engaged in 2025 to provide anti-racism training to staff.

3E. Develop a framework to help staff do their work through an anti-racism lens.

Work began in Q3 2024.

Other Updates

Board Diversity

The Board and Chief Librarian worked with MOSAIC's SCOPE program, which provides racialized newcomers with training and information on becoming board members. More than 10 SCOPE members observed a board meeting, and the Chief Librarian and BPL trustees also attended a MOSAIC Board Diversity Forum.

Library Board appointments are made by Mayor & Council. When vacancies arise, the Chief Librarian, on behalf of the Board, can communicate any skills, characteristics or demographics that the Board is looking for. For the trustee vacancy that arose in February 2025, the Chief Librarian has communicated to Mayor & Council the Board's desire to find a trustee from underrepresented groups, including Black and Latinx residents, under-30s, 2SLGBTQS+ residents, and residents with disabilities.

Multilingual Services

In September 2024, BPL began a project to develop a multilingual services strategy, in line with the strategic plan goal to provide services to residents in their preferred language. Recommendations from this project will be presented to the Board at the April 2025 Board meeting.

Cultural Celebrations

The 2025 operating plan includes a project to bring cultural celebrations to library spaces. This project begins in Q2 2025.

Library Programs

This year, BPL's public service librarians have begun work on designing programs and services that engage library users in equity issues, including understanding the impacts of settler colonialism and advancing Truth and Reconciliation. The project to create an anti-racism framework from which to do our work will support librarians in further developing these services and programs.



Next Steps

Much of our anti-racism and anti-oppression work is ongoing and changing. Although some projects are considered complete, and others have become operational, we recognize that our anti-racism work is never truly finished.

Anti-racism commitments project are scheduled to complete by the end of 2025. In 2026, BPL plans to conduct an anti-racism climate audit in 2026 to measure any movement that we've made through intentional action on racism and oppression.

Beth Davies
CHIEF LIBRARIAN
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY



TO: CHAIR AND TRUSTEES
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

FROM: CHIEF LIBRARIAN
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY

DATE: APRIL 17, 2025

SUBJECT: STRATEGIC PLAN REPORT Q1 2025

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Library Board receive this report for information.

REPORT

Connect the Community

- Develop library services that serve the diversity of people living in Burnaby.
- Lower and minimize barriers to library services.
- Provide library services to communities in their preferred language.
- Connect people to the services and resources they need.
- Create opportunities so that library users learn from and feel more connected to each other.

<i>NEW MEMBERS</i>	Q1 2025	Q1 2024	Increase/Decrease	
			Number	%
	7,460	7,812	-352	-4.5%

<i>HLAS – PATRONS SERVED</i>	Q1 2025	Q1 2024	Increase/Decrease	
			Number	%
	775	747	28	3.7%

COMMUNITY WORK – VISITS	Q1 2025	Q1 2024	Increase/Decrease	
			Number	%
	167	99	68	68.7%

Dudes Club

Community Librarian Logan visits the Burnaby Dudes Club monthly to share a meal and connect with other self-identifying men. The Dudes Club is a weekly, community-led program where men can feel comfortable to discuss the successes and challenges they are experiencing, and to build relationships with other men. During visits, Logan has shared, listened, and learned alongside the other men in the group. He has built relationships and worked to demystify traditional stereotypes of the library. Logan has also connected many in the group with library resources such as the Peer Navigator program, facilitated a visit from Service Canada to discuss and enroll members in the Canadian Dental Care Plan and shared information about the ever-popular \$5 printing credit at BPL. A long-time member of the Dudes Club recently thanked Logan for visiting and expressed his desire to have Logan visit the club more frequently. "It's great that you're here. It's important for guys to see you and know someone from the library wants to join us. You share and you learn alongside us, and that's really important."

Neighbourhood House Food Hub

This quarter, Community Librarian Sue has been visiting the Burnaby Neighbourhood House South Food Hub, a weekly food pick-up for those experiencing food insecurity. Sue noticed the diverse backgrounds of the clientele speaking different languages and she has strategized ways to differentiate herself from the Food Hub staff in order to invite patrons to have conversations with her. With her consistent and continued presence, offering translated information and materials in different languages, Sue has been able to build connections and is helping individuals with their information needs.

Diversity Dance

Teen Librarians Victoria and Sarah attended the annual Diversity Dance, Burnaby School District's dance for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth. It was a joyous event to celebrate and show support for the youth, many of whom Victoria and Sarah work with in their regular community work. The library booth provided buttons with various pronouns and scenes from popular 2SLGBTQIA+ comics and graphic novels. Victoria was also able to chat with some d/Deaf youth in ASL.

BC Youth Custody Centre Spring Break

This year, Teen Librarian Victoria began monthly visits to the BC Youth Custody Centre (Fraser Park). These monthly visits provide seasonal discussions and activities to engage youth on different topics and learn about library services. During Spring Break, the popular Virtual Reality program returned by request. Youth got to experience thrilling games, as well as new meditative and educational experiences such as underwater coral reef exploration, and a journey to the centre of the brain.

Indigenous Youth Council

As part of the Indigenous placemaking project, Teen Librarian Sarah and Community Development Manager Noreen met with the Indigenous Youth Council, a group that

includes Indigenous teens from across the Burnaby School District. At the meeting, Sarah and Noreen introduced the placemaking project to the youth and engaged them in a short discussion about what would make them feel safe, welcome and uplifted at the public library. In order to be reciprocal, feedback was gathered and shared back with the teens to ensure that we captured their ideas correctly.

Providing space at Tommy Douglas

Tommy Douglas continues to provide much-needed community space: the Deaf Children’s Society of BC and the Provincial Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service from the Ministry of Children and Family Development hosted workshops for families on a new, free e-literacy streaming service; local resident (and new Library Board member) Shiraz Ramji hosted a series of Grandparents and Elderly Movie (GEM) days to promote inter-generational storytelling; and MOSAIC continued their regular programming at the branch while the nearby MOSAIC Family Centre on Kingsway underwent building work.

Spanish Discussion Series

Community Librarian Maité has been working with Spanish-speaking settlement workers at the Burnaby Neighbourhood House to provide *Conversatorio in Spanish*, a monthly Spanish discussion series that welcomes Spanish speakers to join regardless of immigration status; a settlement topic, e.g. taxes and tax credits, is presented and then there is time for more casual discussion and questions. This group was originally meeting at the Burnaby Neighbourhood House, but when space became a challenge, the group started to meet at the Metrotown library, also seen as a safer space by community.

Operating Plan Project Updates	
Project	Update
Multilingual Services	The final Multilingual Services Strategy report has been shared with senior staff, and will be shared in April with staff and community members who contributed to the report. The report will be shared with the Board at the April meeting.
Harm Reduction	Metrotown launched the service to provide harm reduction supplies (snacks, juice, water, bus tickets) in early March. Tommy Douglas is continuing to offer this popular service to patrons. In addition, work to implement this service at Temporary Cameron is underway.
Courtesy Phones	Work is underway to expand the project to Metrotown, McGill and Tommy Douglas branches.
Accessible Services	BPL continues to work with SPARC BC through a contract with InterLINK on accessibility audits of facilities, programs, and human resources. Audits have been completed for Metrotown, Cameron and Tommy Douglas branches. A draft city accessibility plan was presented to the City of Burnaby’s Access Advisory Committee (AAC) in February for feedback. Staff are working to finalize the plan to present to the AAC and Council in Q2 2025.

Create Welcoming & Innovative Spaces

Provide additional BPL facilities and services to people across Burnaby.

Indigenize the design and naming of library spaces in relation with Host Nations.

Celebrate Burnaby's diverse communities in BPL spaces.

Provide a refuge for people in response to affordability and the climate crisis.

Create accessible, flexible spaces that respond to evolving community needs.

Create physical and digital spaces that inspire play and imagination.

VISITS TO BRANCHES	Q1 2025	Q1 2024	Increase/Decrease	
			Number	%
Metrotown	131,416	123,272	8,144	6.6%
McGill	93,984	107,654	-13,670	-12.7%
Tommy Douglas	86,755	81,139	5,616	6.9%
Cameron	63,990	46,392	17,598	37.9%
TOTAL	376,144	358,457	17,687	4.9%

ONLINE VISITS	Q1 2025	Q1 2024	Increase/Decrease	
			Number	%
Website	201,805	206,336	-4,531	-2.2%
Catalogue	587,973	879,035	-291,062	-33.1%

ROOM USE BY COMMUNITY GROUPS	Q4 2023	Q4 2024	Increase/Decrease	
			Number	%
Metrotown	867	806	61	7.6%
McGill*	13	45	-32	-71.1%
Tommy Douglas	180	161	19	11.8%
TOTAL	1,060	1,012	48	4.7%

*Room unavailable due to renovations during part of this time period

Muslim Celebrations Displays

At Cameron, Librarian Yasmin created displays in March to spark curiosity about Muslim celebrations like Ramadan, Eid-ul-Fitr, and Nowruz. She featured materials from the library's collection, including works by Muslim authors and highlights from the Persian collection. Patrons & staff appreciated the displays, with one saying, "I learned so much about Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr," and another noting, "The Nowruz display was beautiful and informative." Persian and Muslim patrons were especially delighted to see their cultural celebrations represented in the library, expressing joy and pride in seeing their heritage showcased.

McGill Renovations

In February, McGill Library officially finished renovations. The new Automated Materials Handling machine is up and running, and both patrons and staff are big fans. The lobby is now fully open to the public. It has extra seating, tables to work at, and display space that have all been very popular with patrons. Community members shared how happy they are to have the renovations done, and how the new lobby is very exciting and welcoming.



Digital Studio Kudos

A regular Digital Studio user has extensively used the Recording Studios to create his own songs and albums since discovering the studios in mid-2024. He described his regular recording sessions as “therapeutic” and a “nice, sane part of [his] life” that he always looks forward to. The patron shared his appreciation of staff’s patience and support, and his belief that all libraries should have a similar space.

Metrotown Branch Kids Fun Zone

During Spring Break, the children's librarians at the Metrotown branch transformed the program room into a Kids Fun Zone. The space welcomed many families and spring campers for two weeks with board games, colouring sheets, and a wall for creative writing and drawing. Families left positive comments on the variety of games and activities that fostered the creativity of their children, and said they would like to see more of these spaces for their children in the future.

On the other side of the room, a vote was held for which character they would like to hang out with during the day. Surprisingly, Garfield and Dogman received the most votes. Grown-ups who visited the space were amazed that Garfield is still popular 46 years after its debut!



Cameron Teen Space Creativity

The Cameron Teen Space continues to feature informal drop-in creative activities for teens. Over spring break teens using this space could create drawings that were showcased on our art wall. Below are some examples of their work.



New Shelving in Metrotown Children's Area

This quarter, new colourful shelving was installed in the Metrotown children's area. This shelving was funded by the insurance settlement following the 2022 fire. Thanks and kudos to staff who designed the space, coordinated the renovation, and to everyone who helped move the collections during and after the installation. The new shelving brightens up the space, and the renovations create a central, more visible hang out zone, which some of our patrons find particularly relaxing!



Operating Plan Project Updates	
Project	Update
Strategic Facilities Plan	Consultant Annerieke van Hoek of studioHuB architects is working on finalizing the plan. The consultant brought a presentation and questions to the February Board meeting, and also presented to the City of Burnaby's City Leadership Team in March and to all BPL staff in early April. The project is scheduled to complete in May 2025 and the final report will be shared then.
McGill Renovation	The new automated materials handling system is fully operational and final work will be completed in Q2.
Indigenous Placemaking	There has been continued work on connecting with Indigenous groups in Burnaby. Planning and preparation for the in-library consultation has ramped up with the intention of welcoming Indigenous folks into our space in a good way. The in-library consultation is planned for Q2 2025.
New Cameron	Fencing and hoarding around the perimeter of the site has been completed. As excavation progresses from west to east, formwork and concrete pouring have commenced at the westernmost side of the site. The first of three tower cranes have been erected on-site. (see photo below)
Cultural Celebrations	The project to create a plan to bring cultural and other celebrations to library spaces will begin in Q2.



New Cameron construction site

Encourage Curiosity & Learning

Provide library services and collections that feed people’s curiosity, learning and imagination.

Engage library users in advancing equity issues.

Engage library users in understanding the impacts of settler colonialism, and ways in which we can advance Truth and Reconciliation.

Increase information literacy and civic engagement among library users.

Facilitate community participation in brave dialogues on big issues.

CIRCULATION – PHYSICAL ITEMS	Q1 2025	Q1 2024	Increase/Decrease	
			Number	%
	670,982	664,531	6,451	1%

CIRCULATION – DIGITAL	Q1 2025	Q1 2024	Increase/Decrease	
			Number	%
	125,314	114,696	10,618	9.2%

TECHNOLOGY USE	Q1 2025	Q1 2024	Increase/Decrease	
			Number	%
Computer Sessions	48,188	42,736	5,452	12.8%
Digital Studio Sessions	763	744	19	2.5%
TOTAL	48,951	43,480	5,471	12.5%

PROGRAMS	Q1 2025	Q1 2024	Increase/Decrease	
			Number	%
	230	212	18	8.5%

DIGITAL RESOURCES	Q1 2025	Q1 2024	Increase/Decrease	
			Number	%
	31,542	17,527	14,015	79.9%

Metrotown Baby Social

Metrotown Library offered Baby Social programs starting in January this year and it has brought lots of new families with babies into the library. Baby Social is a drop-in program for caregivers and their babies to come together to connect and socialize. Many families have shared positive comments about programs for babies during this wintertime. Many caregivers shared their experiences that they had made their first parent friends through the library program, and it had been a really great opportunity to meet others whose children were around the same age as their children. With an increase in young families

with babies in the neighbourhood, Babytime and Baby Social have created a meaningful space where babies can play with other babies and caregivers can chat with other caregivers.

Songs and Rhymes for StrongStart Staff

Children's Librarians Ashley and Alex attended the annual training day for Burnaby's StrongStart Early Learning Centres to lead a session on songs and rhymes. Because of changing age demographics, StrongStart staff particularly wanted to tap into the librarians' experience working with babies and toddlers. Through performance and discussion, the librarians and StrongStart facilitators exchanged many tips and songs.

Spring Break Top Secret Super Search

The Top Secret Super Search is an annual series of activities in the form of a scavenger hunt that happens at all four BPL branches during Spring Break. The activities in the search are specifically designed to be fun but also to help children develop new skills and support emotional development. Through activities like asking staff questions, testing their memories, answering riddles, and more, kids are encouraged to explore the library, practice social skills, use their imagination and think creatively. Overall, we received 1,044 completed scavenger hunt booklets and had very positive feedback from families across the system.

English Language Learning Class Visits

Teen Librarian Rhiannon made her first visits to a local secondary school's English Language Learning classes. Through discussion with the ELL teachers, she learned that they were interested in using BPL's digital resources in their courses. Some teachers had known about Libby's online resources, but didn't know about Teen Book Cloud, which allows multiple students to access one book at the same time and includes excellent features such as read-along book formats. Teachers were pleased to learn more about the BPL resources available to them.

Hora do Conto (Portuguese Storytime)

Hora do Conto (Portuguese Storytime) is a program that provides storytime and social space for families who speak Portuguese. It has been very successful with the Brazilian and Portuguese communities and has been attended even by families that do not speak the language. Some families who did not know the storytime was happening were happily surprised to arrive at the library and find storytime happening in their language! Children's Librarian Ana has received positive feedback on the program when out in the community and has also been able to share information about the new Portuguese collection to the families who attended the programs.

Hora de Diversion (Spanish Family Fun Time)

The Hora de Diversion (Spanish Family Fun Time) is a program that provides a social space and storytime for families who speak Spanish. The program recently ran at the Cameron branch where there was great attendance with participants coming from many areas of the Lower Mainland. Families who travelled from other cities expressed their delight with Cameron's proximity to the Skytrain for ease of access without a car. Children's librarian Ashley did a storytime, which was so appreciated the attendees asked if it could go for an hour next time, and community librarian Maité spoke with families to

hear their feedback and connect them with resources. Ashley checked out a dozen or so Spanish books to give families some options for books to check out, as Cameron doesn't carry a Spanish collection. Many attendees expressed a wish for Cameron to add a kids' Spanish collection, which would be easier for them to browse and choose the books they want. Participants enjoyed the time to chat with each other after the event and many spent time in the space for a while after the program.

Art at Progressive Housing Residence

At a supportive housing residence operated by Progressive Housing Society, Community Librarian Logan had been noticing an emergent theme to his visits -- a connection to art. Recently, multiple residents had been sharing their artwork with Logan and discussing how and why they create art, as well as using the opportunity to showcase their art to other residents. While some residents are expressing interest in showing their art outside of the residence, others are thankful to the library for bringing materials on visits, especially graphic novels and comic books, which have proven to be a source of inspiration for creating art and connection to their past. Individuals have shared that returning to art and showing art to their neighbours has given them purpose and inspiration as they take on many of life's difficulties, including mental health challenges, substance use, employment searches and housing precarity.

Digital Literacy Programs

Digital Literacy Portfolio Librarians hosted programs and tours for several community partners including the African-Canadian Single Parents and Seniors Association (a Burnaby non-profit community group), Burnaby Neighbourhood House (librarians delivered a Job Search Tour for their Employment Group), and ECHO Clubhouse (which is Edmonds based and sponsored by the Canadian Mental Health Association). For ECHO Clubhouse, staff offered a "Using Microsoft Word" session and participants were taught intermediate formatting skills, focusing on the use of templates to create resumes and posters. Time was made for participants to work on specific projects and skills with assistance from a librarian. Further technology sessions are planned for with participants being polled on what skills they would most like to develop.

A regular Computer Basics series attendee credited the courses with helping them get a job with one of BC's biggest employers in the health field. Librarians Nik and Eleanor take a flexible and customizable approach to their courses, adjusting topics to the needs of the patrons in the room, so that the classes are relevant and engaging to the participants. In this case they used email, cloud storage, and Microsoft Word examples in the series, since they are related to employment.

Community Connections Programs

The Community Connections Portfolio team had several reoccurring partner programs, including a Renter's Information Session with the Tenant Resource and Advisory Centre (TRAC) in January and the ongoing Peer Navigator program with the Canadian Mental Health Association, both at Tommy Douglas.

We also continued our popular English Language Learning programs online and at all four branches. Librarian Lucia, who facilitated the online English Conversation Circles, noted that there is a new trend where participants who live part-time in Burnaby (where they first learn about the program) and the rest of the year in another country, continued to attend the program virtually from other places including Thailand, China, and Iran. Librarian Lorraine notes that participants from her Games for English Learners program at McGill have started to meet up outside the library to practice their language skills and go for walks together. Participants also have the opportunity to learn more about current events at our English Reading Circles and Conversation Circles, which Librarian Yasmin noted covered topics like environmentalism, Black History Month, and winter cultural celebrations including Nowruz, Lunar New Year, and Ramadan. Librarian Lucia notes that “it’s amazing how much personal growth happens through these types of interactions, not only in terms of language but also in building empathy and understanding between people from different cultures.”



In Winter 2025, the Community Connections Portfolio began a new partner series with BC Seniors First called “Wellbeing for Older Adults,” which included three topics that reflected community needs and concerns librarians had been hearing at the Information Desks from older adults, their families, and caregivers. The series began with two sessions at Cameron on fraud prevention and social isolation, co-presented with the Community Centre and Cameron Seniors Society. At Tommy Douglas, we were joined by legal advocates from BC Seniors First for the presentation “Government Benefits for Older Adults.” Librarian Rebecca noted that participants learned about eligibility requirements, how to apply, and what to expect when applying for a number of essential benefits that can help support their financial and physical wellbeing. Participants expressed their gratitude for having the often-confusing application processes explained in clear detail and appreciated the ability to ask questions of an experienced legal advocate.

Lifelong Learning Programs

In March, more than 20 people attended a very interactive workshop called the “ABCs of Bicycle Maintenance” where they got to learn from, discuss, ask questions, and practice with volunteers from local non-profit Advancing Cycling for Everyone (ACE). There were three different stations for folks to practice their skills: Air (inflating/patching tires), Brakes, and Chains. Attendees were from a diverse range of ages and cultural backgrounds, including children and newcomers. Coordinated by Librarian Ryan, the Lifelong Learning

Portfolio aimed to increase environmental and sustainable awareness through this program in a fun and beginner-friendly manner.

At Bob Prittie Metrotown, we hosted the premiere of *The 24 Hours Edmonds Film* with Burnaby StrideFest, the Long Table Society, and Alegria Soy, which had more than 50 attendees. The *24 Hours Edmonds Film* was a community driven collaborative project created by residents of all ages and backgrounds in the Edmonds neighbourhood. This film serves as a visual document, capturing the unique perspectives of residents and the aspects of their community they cherish most. Guided by filmmaker and project facilitator Yunuen Perez Vertti, participants worked together to produce a 24-minute film, with each minute representing

an hour in Edmonds over a 24-hour span. Yunuen joined Adult Public Services Coordinator Jamie for a discussion with the film makers afterwards, which included questions about what the Edmonds neighbourhood meant to them and revealed their filmmaking tips and techniques.



The Lifelong Learning Team also collaborated with Shadbolt Centre for the Arts and the City of Burnaby for our first Artist in Residence workshop of the year. Writer and poet Veronica Gaylie hosted an all-ages birdwatching and creative writing workshop called “Bird to Word: Spring Break.” Participants learned about bird writing, how to take inspiration from nature, and the importance of preserving wild bird habitat. They also went on a birdwatching walk in Confederation Park to look, listen and take notes to weave into a story. Librarian Rebecca noted that the library’s Birding Backpacks were a big hit at the program, especially the binoculars, and that one person commented that “the presentation was fun and meaningful”.

StrideFest

Spring Break this year coincided with Burnaby StrideFest, a local arts and culture festival in Burnaby hosted by The Long Table Society and our city’s creative community. The Lifelong Learning Portfolio collaborated with Burnaby StrideFest on two programs: a writer’s workshop and a film premiere. At the McGill branch, we hosted a Sensory Poetry Workshop in collaboration with Burnaby StrideFest and the Burnaby Writer’s Society, where poets Lara Varesi and Cynthia Sharp led participants through poetry-writing exercises focused on the five senses. One participant commented, “Great workshop. I enjoyed connecting with other writers (some I had met before) and felt inspired by hearing

their work. I also enjoyed the exercises and was surprised by what I was able to produce. I would love more writing workshops.”

McGill also hosted an interactive poetry board: community members were encouraged to write their own poem to contribute to the project, and many folks left their poems behind. Patrons asked a lot of questions about the art and shared how nice it was to have in the library.

Trans Day of Visibility Displays

McGill had displays in honor of Trans Day of Visibility on March 31 in the Children’s, Teen’s, and Adult sections. A patron shared with Children’s Librarian Vicki that their family had just moved to BC, and they felt very welcome when they saw the display up in the Children’s area.

Operating Plan Project Updates	
Project	Update
Mobile Self-Checkout	Testing and set up for the self-checkout feature via BPL’s mobile app is complete. It is set to launch to the public at the start of April, followed by an evaluation at the end of May.
Readers’ Advisory Strategy	Staff are working on the research and understanding/assessment phase. Next steps are to develop a set of guiding principles and criteria for developing and evaluating readers’ advisory activities.
Self-serve Checkout Replacement	Project begins Q3 2025.
Curiosity Collection	Project begins Q2 2025.

Strengthen Organizational Culture

- Encourage connection, creativity and fun.
- Weave equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility into BPL’s culture and governance.
- Strengthen staff and trustee commitment to the principles of Truth and Reconciliation.
- Support staff mental health and wellness.
- Balance the goals of the organization with the capacity and resources needed.
- Support a learning culture for staff and trustees.
- Create a supportive environment where members of equity deserving groups can lead and shape the organization.

STAFF TRAINING	Q1 2025	Q1 2024	Increase/Decrease	
			Number	%
Training Sessions/ Conferences Attended	59	104	-45	-43.2%
Staff Attending Training/Conferences	221	164	57	34.7%

Connecting with Library Worker Networks

Teen Librarian Victoria has connected with two new library worker networks – Latinx workers in GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums), and library staff serving justice-impacted patrons. The goal is that these networks will lead to supporting other Latinx workers in libraries and strengthened relationships with library workers doing similar work with patrons who have experienced incarceration or other justice systems.

Eid Festivities

Librarian Yasmin extended the Eid festivities to include Cameron staff by sharing the significance of this celebration along with samosas, jalebi, and different flavors of Indian tea with all the staff present. Staff were encouraged to drape brightly colored shawls around their shoulders if they wished. One staff member remarked, "I am feeling so good today! It was wonderful to experience a bit of Eid culture and share in the festivities. Thank you for doing this for us!"



Assisting English Language Learners

In response to IRCC funding cuts, Community Librarian Andrea updated her presentation to staff on how to best assist English language learners. As someone who has worked

with newcomers and English language learners for many years, Andrea provided context about the changing landscape of Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) and how class offerings are being impacted at various settlement agencies throughout Burnaby. Based on the needs and feedback that she has heard in community, Andrea has also compiled tools and strategies to equip BPL frontline staff to better assist patrons with their English learning needs.

Getting Feedback on the McGill Renovations

After moving into the new workroom, the McGill staff used a whiteboard and notecards to share feedback about how the space was working. They collectively identified areas that need to be improved, and suggested ideas for solutions. They also shared questions that they still have about the new space, and about what has been working well.



Accessible CDs

The Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA) recently announced that they would stop sending out CDs to CELA users and libraries at the beginning of August. CELA is one of the major agencies that Home Library & Accessible Service (HLAS) rely on to supply listening material to patrons with print disabilities: a disability that prevents or inhibits a person from reading a literary, musical, dramatic or artistic work in its original format. While this change has been in the works, it is coming sooner than expected. HLAS staff

are working hard to adjust their work processes and help prepare patrons for the upcoming shift in service. Patrons will still have access to MP3s through our own collection and through InterLINK, and HLAS staff have been investigating different technologies that could support patrons in this transition. Staff are also reaching out to Burnaby residents who have only been CELA users and not connected with HLAS to support them in alternative ways to meet their needs.

Library Technician Students Metrotown Tour

Branch Manager Des led a tour of Metrotown for Library Technician Program students from Langara College. During the question and answer period, the topic of local public library systems came up and Des was told by one of the students that “a lot of people say BPL is the best library system to work for.”

Operating Plan Project Updates	
Project	Update
Incident Response	Implementation is underway, in tandem with recommendations from the Violence Risk Assessment Report.
Staff Communication	This project aims to create more opportunities for staff input and communication. In Q1, the staff team developed recommendations from the more than 170 pages of input from in-person sessions and anonymous surveys. In March and April, the team shared eleven recommendations with staff and polled staff to identify their top three recommendations. Next steps are to prioritize implementation of recommendations based on the results of this poll.
Indigenous Learning	The Indigenous Initiatives Working Group is in the process of developing training with the consultant.
Implement anti-racism commitments	Anti-bias hiring training was scheduled for January 2025, but has been rescheduled to April due to consultant commitments. Senior staff continue to meet in a community of practice monthly to develop their facilitation skills.
Circulation Tasks	The project team has compiled a list of tasks to include in scope, and has begun to streamline them across branches.
Customer Service Training	Project is in the research phase and next step is to develop content.
Page Role Review	Begin Q2 2025.
Implement Scheduling Software	Begin Q2 2025.

Comments and suggestions from patrons

I thoroughly enjoyed my visit.

Metrotown patron

I feel so bless to come to the Burnaby public library at Station Square. All the staffs are so helpful and friendly. By the way I have been coming to this branch for more than 20 yrs, maybe close to 30 yrs now. Not a day that I feel not welcome.

Metrotown patron

You guys made me a reader again!

Home Library & Accessible Services patron

This has quickly become my favourite library. The librarians are always friendly and quick to help. Books I've been eager to read are easy to find. The layout is easy to navigate. I've also fallen in love with several of the trees and when I'm especially lucky I get a table near one of them.

McGill patron

The new return system at McGill is so nice! It was so fast and it says the item on the screen so I know it was seen by the machine! I'm so looking forward to using the new system now!!

McGill patron

The staff is always most polite, knowledgeable and helpful at Cameron Branch. I am a long time patron and their work is appreciated.

Cameron patron

Today I attended the English conversation class. Not only did I meet different people from various nationalities, I learned from their culture. I also had an opportunity to enjoy myself. My mind diverted from feeling lonely & homesick.

Cameron patron

I love this library! There are so many Korean books! When I visited here, they are very kind. Thank you so much!

Cameron patron

Big props on the courtesy phone.

Cameron patron

Beth Davies
CHIEF LIBRARIAN
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY