

Memorandum

To: Council for October 7, 2025 Special Business Meeting

Submitted by: Hilary Bloom, Director of Library Services

Subject: Squamish Public Library 2026-2035 Financial Plan

2025 Highlights

The District of Squamish's support made several initiatives possible this year. The continuation of our public technology upgrade project of 2024 has allowed us to successfully replace our public computers, expand our public Wi-Fi coverage and launch our lendable laptop service. The 2025 expansion of our public programming and outreach staffing has resulted in wonderful new opportunities for many age groups. These include after-school programming for school-aged children such as a new book club beginning this fall, a teen advisory committee, numerous all-ages events such as movie screenings and a monthly writing group, and tech help sessions at Westwinds Seniors Living. A new Zine collection was launched through a very successful Zinefest in the spring, and a collaboration with Create Makerspace to build a beautiful new display unit.

Thanks to provincial enhancement grant funding, several other projects are underway, including an exciting overhaul of our website and a service delivery plan project commencing this fall. The service delivery work, funding in part by the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, will help inform the library's long-term planning for the next 20-25 years.

2026 Initiatives

1. Our community is lacking in free, public spaces, so we have mapped out a scenario that would expand our open hours. With this change, the library would be open four days a week until 8 PM (Monday to Thursday), and until 5 PM on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, for a total of 59 open hours per week. This increase would expand access to our library collection, services and spaces by 14%, including access to our study pods, meeting room, public computer access and printing, all supported by our skilled staff. It would mean our meeting room could be made available for library events and third-party rentals later into the evening. It would enable the community to make use of the library to a fuller extent, with an estimated 7,000-10,000 more visits annually, and an additional 1,300 pod booking timeslots per year. This staffing increase would also enable us to service our proposed Brennan Park Holds Locker project with more frequent visits each week (further details below).

The annual cost of this request is \$55,740.00.

2. A second request for 2026 is for the annual operating cost the Foyer Gallery, a well-loved public art space located within the library, which is not currently funded by the municipality. A recent public survey indicated that the top two reasons people like the gallery are for access to public art and the opportunity to discover new artists. Unsurprisingly, the most common way that respondents find out about the gallery is by walking through it to access the library. The gallery program is made possible by a contract curator who juries, schedules and installs the multiple rotating exhibits each year, along with the help of a team of volunteers. Historically, the curator and other gallery costs were partially offset by an annual fundraiser, but the returns on this initiative have decreased over time, as has the capacity of library staff to support the endeavour. As a result, core library funding from non-District grants and other revenue is used to fund the operations of the gallery. While it is a valuable community amenity, the use of library funds for these purposes take away from supporting other essential library services. Municipal support of gallery operations aligns with the District of Squamish's Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy. The annual cost is \$15,000.

3. As a first step in expanding our service delivery capacity, we plan to start in 2026 with the purchase installation of a holds pick up locker and return bin at Brennan Park Recreation Centre. This capital cost of \$60,000 will be funded by the library's provincial enhancement grant funding, and we can operate the service at a base level within current staffing capacity.

Work is beginning this month on a long-term service delivery plan that will serve as a roadmap to guide our expansion over the next 20-25 years. This study will wrap up in Spring 2026 and will factor in the pace and location of anticipated population growth and development within our library service area (the District of Squamish and Area D of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District). This information will assist in the identification and assessment of opportunities to expand library services, including both traditional and alternative service delivery options, dovetailing with the District of Squamish's master plans to support our growing community. The findings will help inform our funding requests for 2027 and beyond. We anticipate returning to Council next year with a funding request to support an expanded mobile library service.

For further information on recent activities, please see the [Squamish Public Library's 2024 Annual report](#)