



DATE: May 26, 2022

Mayor Jonathan Cote
City of New Westminister

Dear Mayor Cote and New Westminister City Council:

The Library Board is writing to you with a request to appear before Council on June 13th, 2022 and request that Council send a motion to this September's UBCM convention.

Provincial funding to public libraries has been frozen at \$14 million since 2009. Over the past several years, the Library Partners (Association of BC Public Library Directors, BC Libraries Association, BC Library Trustees Association and the BC Libraries Cooperative) have made concerted efforts to appeal to the provincial government for increased funding. Since 2016, the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services has every year made specific recommendations for public libraries. While these recommendations have increased understanding of the need for adequate and reliable provincial funding for public libraries – and yielded one-time funding for specific initiatives – they did not result in increased ongoing funding.

Ongoing inflationary increases to operating costs, and the need to increase the range of services to meet a rapidly changing community including technological advancements and infrastructure requirements all have significant impact on library budgets.

Therefore, the Library Board passed the following motion at its May 17, 2022 meeting. The Library Board would like in its delegation to provide City Council with the context of the request.

WHEREAS public libraries are central to communities, providing equitable access to vital resources, including internet, computers, digital library tools, and in-person services from expert staff; and

WHEREAS public libraries provide British Columbians with low-barrier services, that support job seekers and small businesses, that increase literacy in communities, that advance reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and that promote equity and inclusion; and

WHEREAS libraries in British Columbia are largely financed by levies paid by local governments, and where provincial library funding has remained stagnant for the past 10 years

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED



THAT The City of New Westminster write to the MLA for New Westminster, MLA for Richmond-Queensborough, and the BC Minister for Education; and

THAT The City of New Westminster submit the following motion to UBCM:

Whereas libraries in British Columbia are largely financed by levies paid by local governments, and where provincial library funding has remained stagnant for the past 10 years:

And whereas public libraries are central to communities, providing equitable access to vital resources, including internet, computers, digital library tools, and in-person services from expert staff;

And whereas public libraries provide British Columbians with low-barrier services, that support job seekers and small businesses, that increase literacy in communities, that advance reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and that promote equity and inclusion;

Therefore be it resolved that the City of New Westminster urge the Government of British Columbia to provide long-term sustainable funding for public libraries in BC;

And be it further resolved that the Province ensure that BC Libraries will henceforth receive regular increases to Provincial Government funding in subsequent years.

AND THAT The City of New Westminster share the above motion with BC municipalities.

Sincerely,



Norah Andrew
Library Board Chair

Cc: Jorge Cardenas, Chief Librarian
Cc: New Westminster Library Board
Cc: Jacqueline Killawee, City Clerk
Cc: New Westminster City Council