

THRIVING RESILIENT SUSTAINABLE

SEPT 16, 2025

PRESENTED TO

SLI ADVISORY BOARD

PRESENTED BY

JENNIFER WILSON
AND KELLY LAU



ALL OUR RELATIONS

Surrey Libraries recognizes that our work takes place on the ancestral, traditional, and unceded territories of the SEMYOME (Semiahmoḡ), ḡícáy (Katzie), k^wik^wə́łəm (Kwikwetlem), ḡ^wα:ήλəή (Kwantlen), qiqéyt (Qayqayt), x^wməθk^wə́yəm (Musqueam) and s̄cəwaθən məsteyəx^w (Tsawwassen) First Nations.

The City of Surrey and Surrey Libraries are committed to reconciliation, engagement, and collaboration with local First Nations and Métis governments, and the Urban Indigenous communities in Surrey.

Working with and learning from Indigenous communities to develop actions, policies and programs are an important part of our sustainability journey that includes engagement and partnership with those who are most impacted by climate change.



BACKGROUND

2022

Established **Climate Crisis Working Group**

2023

Enrolled in **Sustainable Libraries Certification Program**

2024

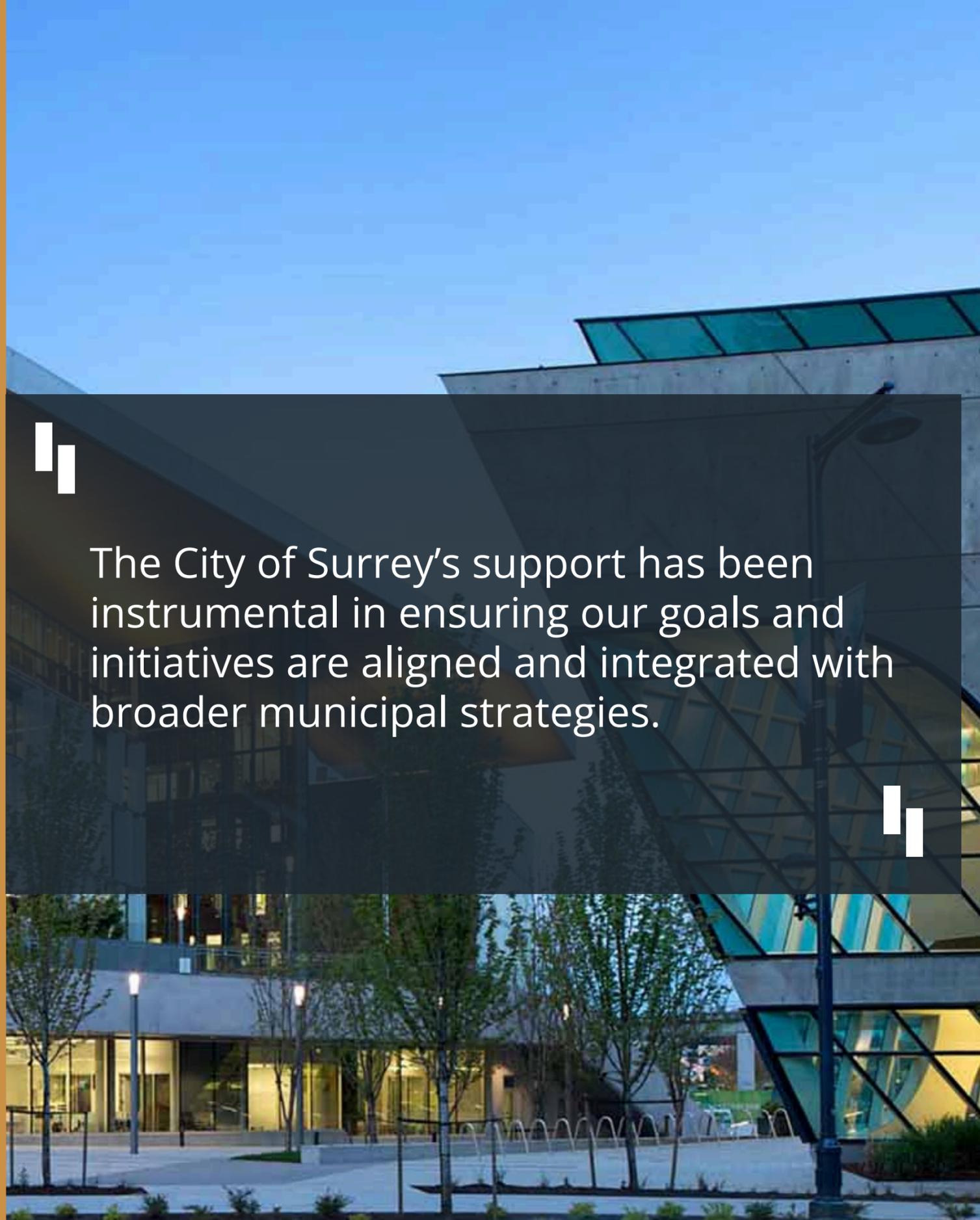
Hired **Sustainability Coordinator**

2025

Certified Sustainable



STRONG CITY PARTNERSHIP



The City of Surrey's support has been instrumental in ensuring our goals and initiatives are aligned and integrated with broader municipal strategies.



GETTING STARTED

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Making our message consistent and positive

TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE TRAINING

Empowering our staff to lead with knowledge and confidence

PRESENTATIONS TO LEADERSHIP & LIBRARY BOARD

Inspiring leadership to champion sustainability

WASTE AUDIT

Identifying opportunities for improvement

SUSTAINABILITY IS A SHARED VALUE

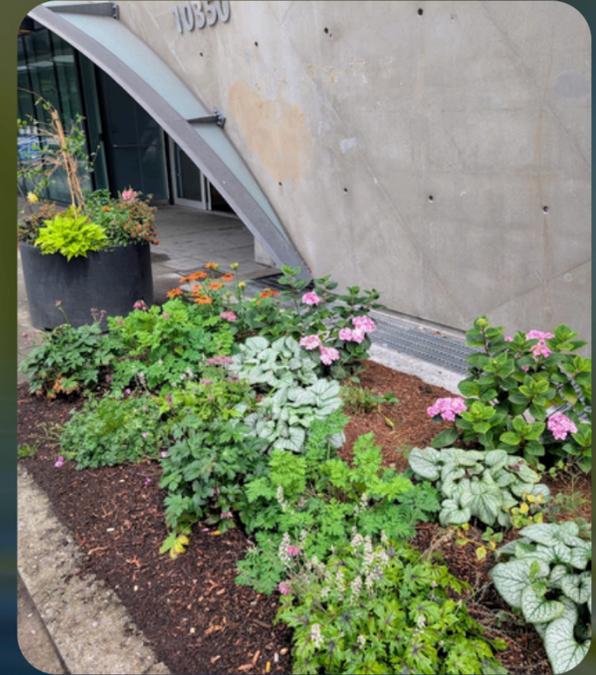
Cultivating collective purpose



OUTDOOR SPACES

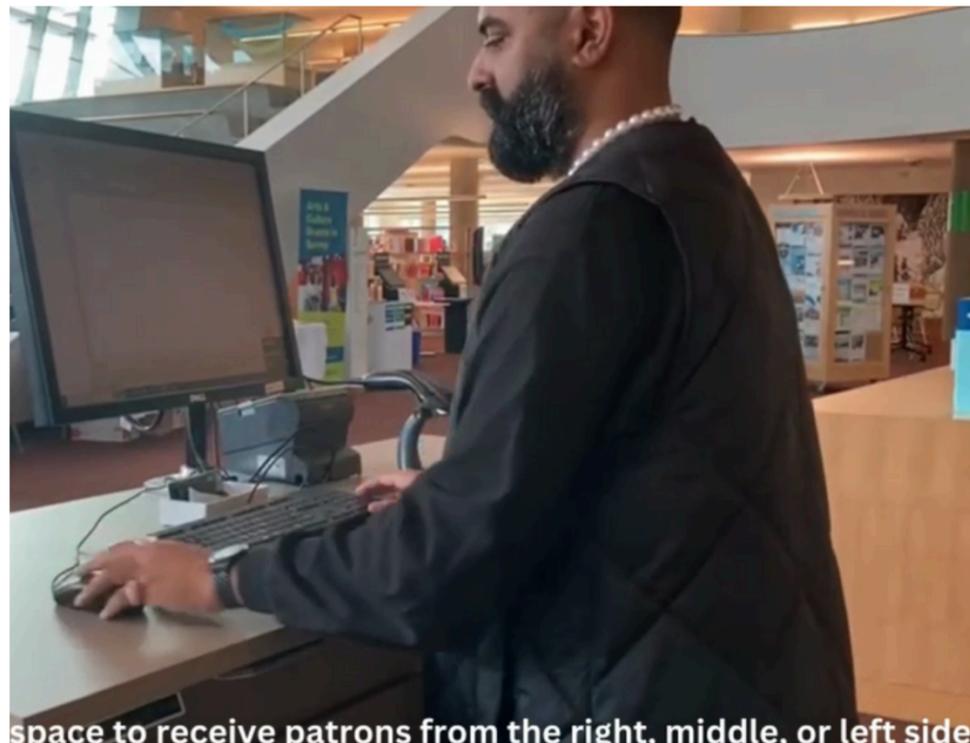
“ The best libraries don't stop at the front door.

– *Great Outdoor Spaces*
Library Journal



*Clockwise from top left:
Semiahmoo Library living wall, City Centre Library green roof, City Centre Library pollinator bed,
Ocean Park newly planted trees, Newton Library flower beds, Clayton Library and Community Centre community garden*

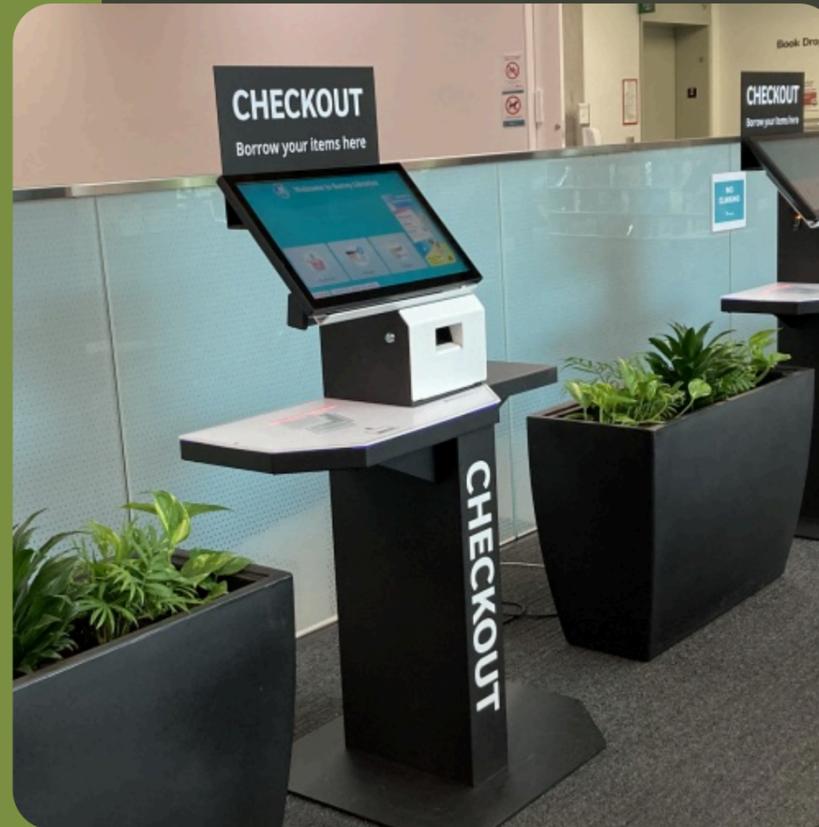
INDOOR SPACES



space to receive patrons from the right, middle, or left side

FLEXIBLE WORKSTATIONS

Support diverse work styles and enhance comfort and productivity



INDOOR PLANTS

Low maintenance, improve air quality, reduce stress and beautify spaces



GREEN BUILDING CERTIFICATIONS

City Centre Library
LEED Gold

Semiahmoo Library
LEED Silver

Clayton Library
Passive House



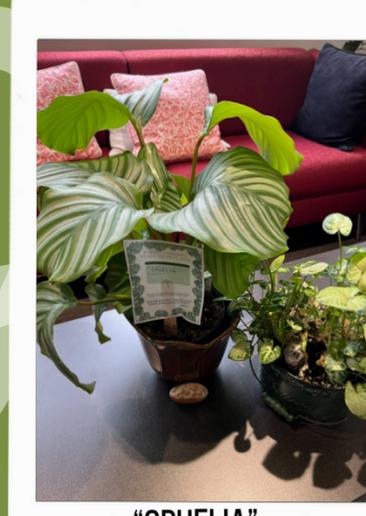
"STANLEY"
CS



"PLUTO"
FL



"EDNA"
SH



"OPHELIA"
NE



"PENELOPE"
PK

MEET OUR

BRANCH PLANTS!



"KEANU LEAVES"
ADMIN



"KEANU LEAVES"
SE



"KEANU LEAVES"
CT



"ESMERELDA"
OP



"SALVATORE"
GL



"TILLY TILLANDSIA" ML



"ROBERT PLANT" CV



"KAA" CC



"STELLA" ACS



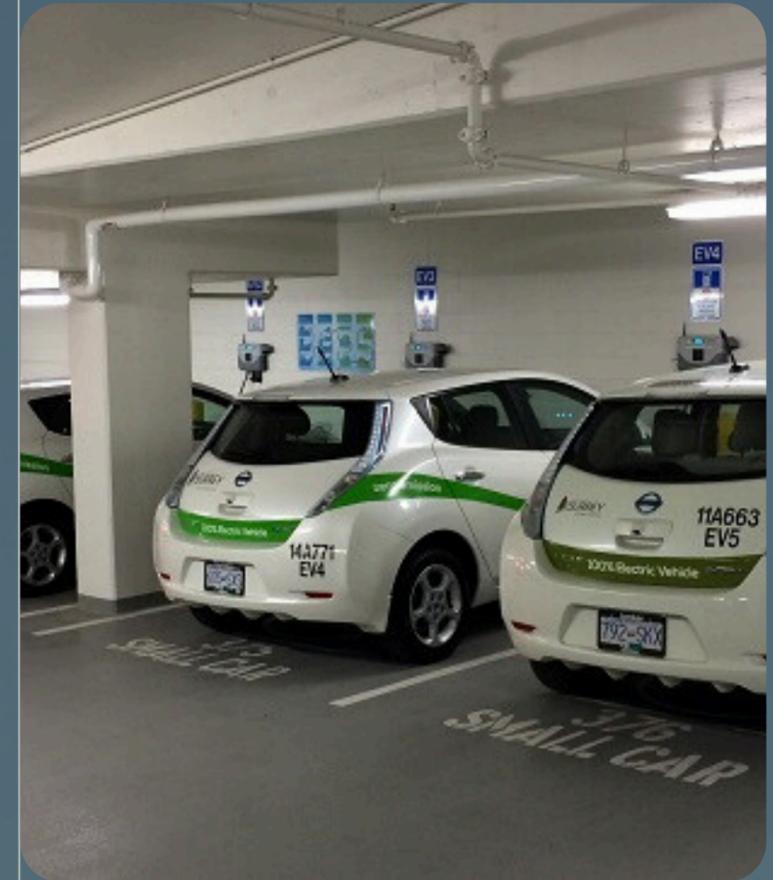
BIKE REPAIR STATIONS

Funding was awarded to install bike repair stations at library branches over the next 3 years.



TRANSIT REBATE INCENTIVE PROGRAM

30% of the cost of a monthly transit pass is reimbursed to employees who work at least 40 hours per month.



EV CAR SHARES

A partnership with a local carshare cooperative provides 13 vehicles, including 5 electric vehicles.

TRANSPORTATION





PROCEDURES

Build energy-saving actions into procedures



APPLIANCES

Replace old appliances at the end of their life with energy-efficient models

MAKE IT MEANINGFUL

Our libraries consumed 7,774 GJ of energy in 2024.

This is equivalent to



164 passenger vehicles



7 tanker trucks of gasoline



1,250 barrels of oil

ENERGY

WATER



BIOSWALES

Designed with native plants and porous substrate to capture, treat, and discharge stormwater. Provide biodiversity benefits by creating a variety of micro-habitats for plants, insects, and wildlife.



RAINGARDENS

Designed with native, water tolerant plants to increase groundwater infiltration.



CONSTRUCTED WETLANDS

Designed to improve water quality using plant, soil, and microbial communities. Can support diversity of plants and wildlife (many of which are Species of Conservation Concern).



WATER AUDITS

Assess current performance of water-using equipment and recommend water conserving measures to enable greater water efficiency.

MATERIALS



Recyclable receipts
BPA&BPS free



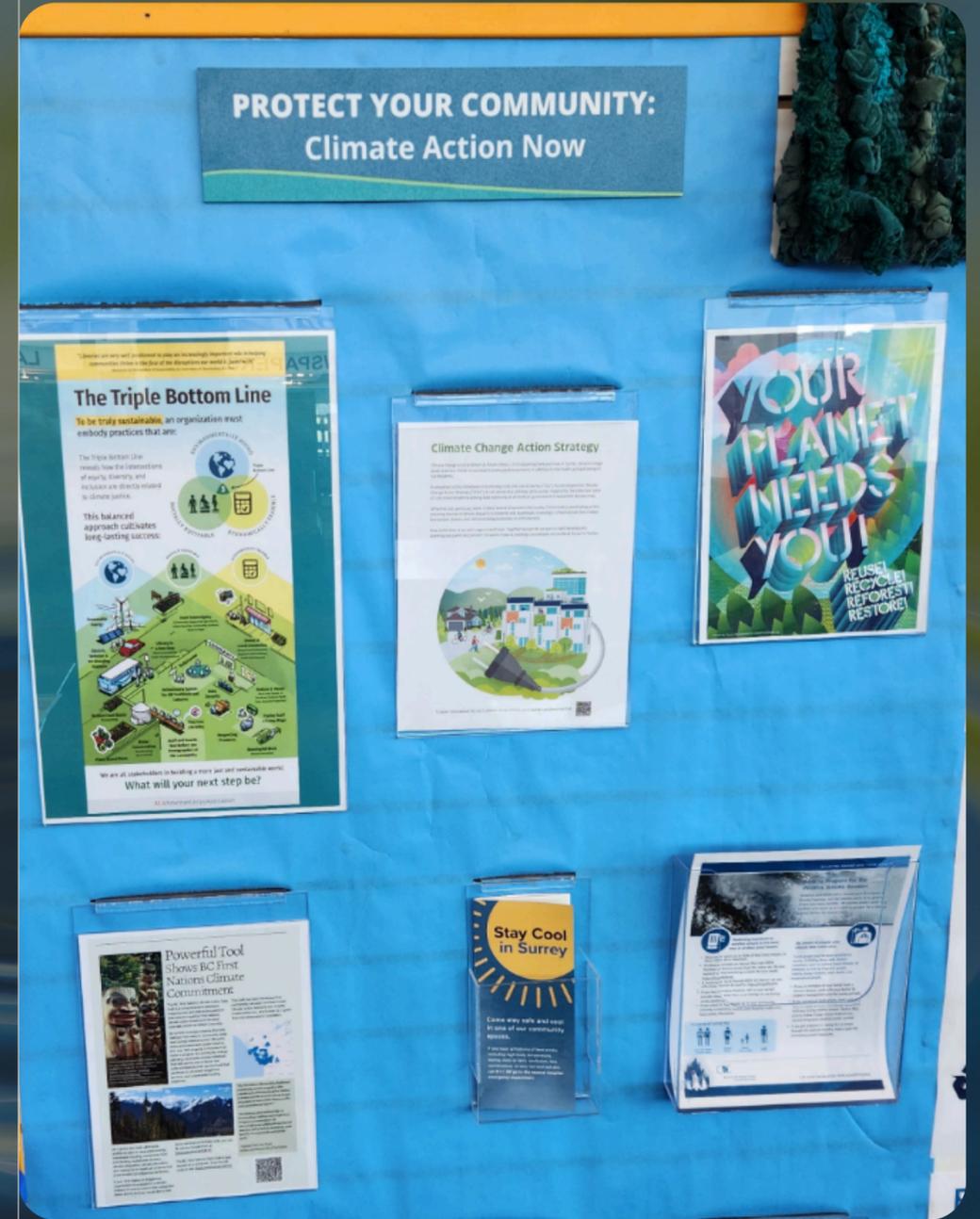
Bottle filling stations
Available at most
branches, in addition to
water fountains



Bin signs in the top spoken languages in Surrey
Available at all branches



Triple Bottom Line Training
Provides context and rationale for reducing
consumption at work.



RESILIENCE



Clockwise from top left: Guildford Library repair cafe, Emergency Kit supplies*, Workplace safety manual*, Semiahmoo Library climate information display, Cooling Centre sign*, Emergency Plan*

*stock photos

SOCIAL COHESION

“ An inclusive library is a resilient library. ”



Clockwise from top left:
Les George - Indigenous Knowledge Keeper, Cantonese Opera demonstration,
Punjabi Storytime, Newcomer Resources display, Environmental Extravaganza owl program,
English Conversation circle

COLLECTIVE IMPACT

CLOVERDALE COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS



Join us for a conversation with other community members to share ideas and aspirations for the Cloverdale area.

Light refreshments provided.



Arts & Culture
WED, MAY 21
2-3:30pm

Business & Economy
MON, MAY 26
6-7:30pm

Children & Families
SAT, MAY 31
10-11:30am

Newcomers
MON, JUN 2
6-7:30pm

Health & Wellness
WED, JUN 4
2-3:30pm

Registration required.

Register in person,
call 604-598-7327, or email
surreylibrariescloverdale@surrey.ca



[The] Community-Connected Library is not a novel concept. Surrey Libraries has a strong foundation and rich history of working with our community. We want to continue to and expand on actively engage with our citizens and patrons to better understand their needs and aspirations. ... By listening to our community, we can help realise their dreams and advance our vision of a literate, inclusive, and thriving city.

– Surrey Libraries Community-Connected Libraries Framework



CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNED

01 **CLEAR COMMUNICATION**

Be clear about your goals. Transparency builds trust.

02 **BUILD RELATIONSHIPS, NOT AGREEMENTS**

More people care than you think. Use common goals to your advantage.

03 **STAY FLEXIBLE**

Prioritize “quick wins.” Be adaptable to evolving priorities.

04 **CELEBRATE YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

Share the wins. Positivity fuels progress!

05 **EMPOWER STAFF**

Support staff-led climate initiatives.

06 **KEEP IT ON THE TABLE**

Make it part of every decision. The future depends on it.



LOOKING FORWARD

01 CONTINUE THE WORK

Expand actions to other branches and work on any unsubmitted actions.

02 REVISIT THE ACTIONS

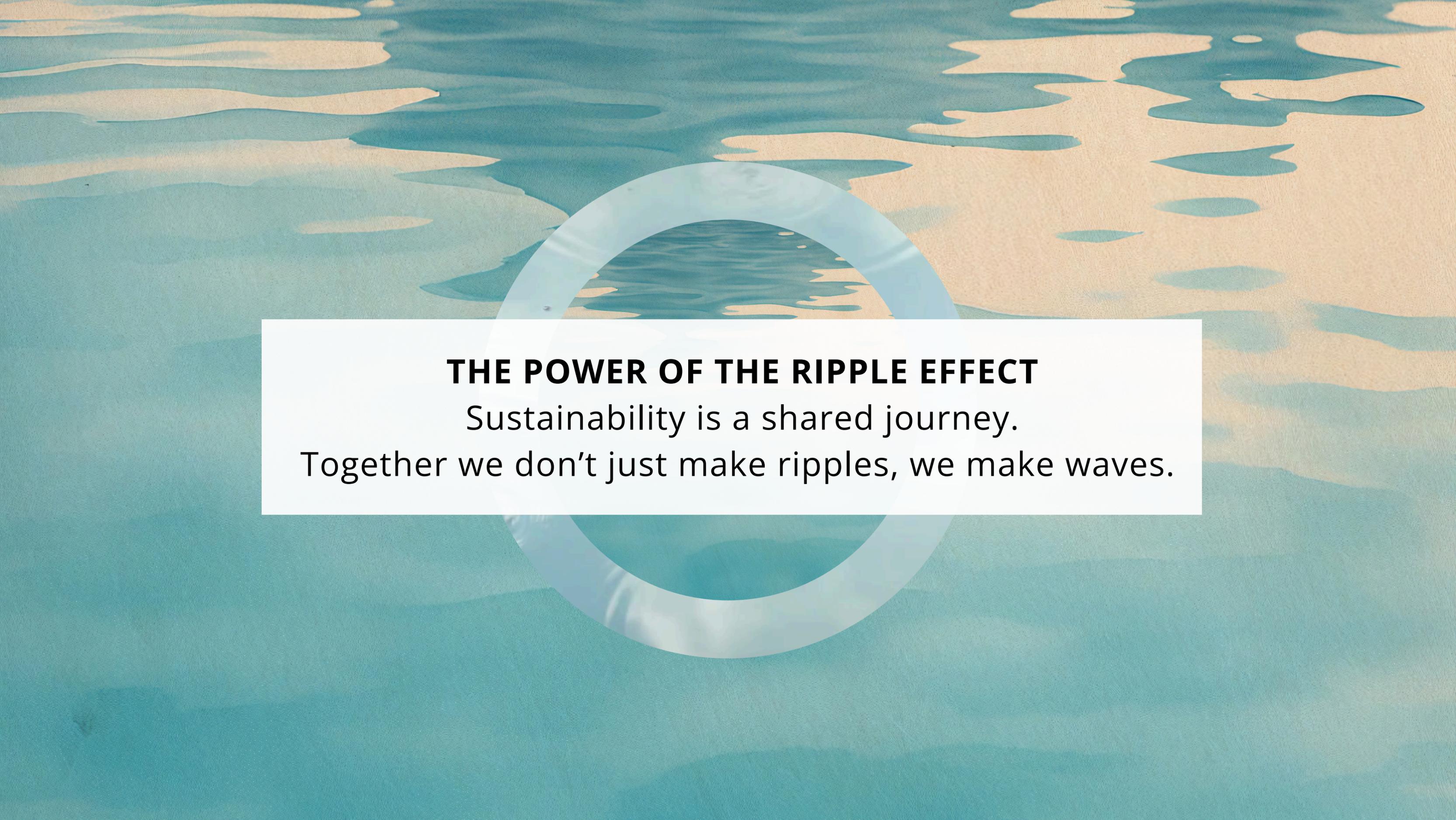
Consider better or newer ways to achieve sustainability goals.

03 BECOME A MENTOR

Share our experience and help other libraries on their sustainability journey.

04 SUSTAINABILITY TOOLKIT & ROADMAP

Documentation to guide our work going forward.



THE POWER OF THE RIPPLE EFFECT

Sustainability is a shared journey.
Together we don't just make ripples, we make waves.

THANK YOU
SUSTAINABLE LIBRARIES INITIATIVE

SLI ADVISORY BOARD

ROGER REYES

REBEKKAH SMITH-ALDRICH

ALEX BLEND

SOPHIA LOCASCIO

SURREY LIBRARIES

LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

SURINDER BHOGAL

KRISTEN ANDREWS

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

CLIMATE ACTION WORKING GROUP

LIBRARY STAFF

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

OUR PATRONS





CITY OF SURREY

MAYOR BRENDA LOCKE AND COUNCILLORS

SUSTAINABILITY TEAM

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURE

FACILITIES

ENGINEERING

FINANCE

CORPORATE SERVICES

SURREY FIRE SERVICES

SPECIAL THANKS

PRATIBHA RIALCH

CRAIG BUSCH

BC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE





I STILL HOPE FOR A BETTER, MORE SUSTAINABLE AND EQUITABLE FUTURE. BUT DON'T CONFUSE HOPE WITH BLIND OPTIMISM. HOPE IS A VERB. IT'S AN ACTIVE FRAME OF MIND, AN ACTIVE FRAME OF HEART.

IT ASKS US TO ACT, NOT JUST RECEIVE.

— DR. JONATHAN FOLEY, PROJECT DRAWDOWN