



*building communities together*

## **2019 Business Plan North Cariboo Recreation and Parks (1554)**

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***Working in partnership with communities, large and small, to make the Cariboo Chilcotin a socially, economically and environmentally desirable region to live, work and play.***

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### **Department/Function Services**

The Quesnel and District Leisure Services Department's mandate is to provide a variety of recreational services to the residents of the City of Quesnel (City) and Cariboo Regional District (CRD) Electoral Areas A, B, C and I within a defined recreation boundary for the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks (NCRP) function. These services are primarily offered through the Quesnel and District Arts & Recreation Centre, the West Fraser Centre and Arena 2. School and outdoor facilities are also utilized.

The Alex Fraser Park Society, Quesnel Youth Soccer Association, and the Quesnel River Archers provide services with funding support obtained through NCRP. Five-year contribution agreements provide stable operating and capital support to the Alex Fraser Park Society (2019-2023) to manage the Alex Fraser Park and to the Quesnel Youth Soccer Association (2016-2020) to manage the indoor and outdoor soccer complex. NCRP provides capital support to the Quesnel River Archers (2019-2023) to manage Pioneer Park on Dragon Lake. The Service also provides funding for community use of school facilities through a Joint Use Agreement with School District 28.

The governance and management of the North Cariboo rural recreation properties in Bouchie Lake, Barlow Creek, and Parkland areas have been under review with changes in the management of these properties occurring in 2017. The Leisure Services Department has assumed an increasingly larger role for these properties, in particular with regard to asset and capital project management. The expanding role of the Leisure Services Department with regard to these properties is reflected in the Recreation Services Management Agreement (2019-2023) between the City and CRD.

The Service includes the construction of the West Fraser Centre which opened in September 2017. A successful referendum was held in June 2014 to borrow \$7.5 million towards the \$20.6 million project cost.

NCRP is a function of the CRD that was originally established by supplementary letters patent in 1982 and most recently updated through Bylaw 3900 (2004) and subsequent amendments. The City of Quesnel manages the function on behalf of the CRD. The five-year management agreement between the City and CRD expired at the end of 2016 and was renewed in 2019 following several years of strategic planning on service level options.

The NCRP function is funded through taxation and user fees. The tax component of funding is allocated among the participating jurisdictions on the basis of hospital assessment. The taxation limitation is the greater of \$4.9 million or an amount of \$3.2095/\$1,000 of total assessed value of land and improvements.

Policy decisions related to existing NCRP services are made by the North Cariboo Joint Planning Committee (NCJPC). The NCJPC consists of the CRD Directors from Electoral Areas A, B, C and I and the Quesnel City Council. The NCJPC does not have delegated authority and all of its recommendations must be ratified by the CRD Board. The NCJPC is currently developing terms of reference for the Committee.

## **Business Plan Goals, Rationale and Strategies**

### **2019 Goals**

- 1. Goal:** Renovate the aquatic space in the Arts and Recreation Centre.  
**Rationale:** The aquatic centre is nearly 40 years old and, while well maintained and in mostly good condition, is overdue for some life-cycle updates to the mechanical and electrical systems, change rooms and tiling. The addition of a waterslide would also increase the current entertainment options in the pool, bringing it up to a modern standard.  
**Strategy:** Concept-level design plans for the proposed project are complete. This major capital project is not included in the NCRP function financial plan and will require substantial grant funding to proceed.
- 2. Goal:** Complete the event hosting precinct project at the West Fraser Centre.  
**Rationale:** The vision for the new West Fraser Centre always included it being more than just an ice arena. The development of an event hosting precinct surrounding the centre and including connections to the downtown area and LeBourdais Park will support utilization of the space for many new and larger events, such as the BC provincial curling playdowns and the Minerals North conference.  
**Strategy:** Major grant funding was obtained for the project and leveraged with several capital projects in the NCRP capital budget, such as the event announcement reader board and audio/visual equipment.
- 3. Goal:** Increase the amount, size and diversity of events hosted in North Cariboo recreation facilities.

**Rationale:** The opening of the new West Fraser Centre creates an excellent opportunity to host larger events such as the provincial curling playdowns, concerts, trade shows, tournaments and other activities that will draw visitors to the north Cariboo as well as provide entertainment for local residents. Providing additional resources for hosting events will also help maximize use of other recreation facilities such as the Arts and Rec Centre, soccer complex and Alex Fraser Park.

**Strategy:** Contract funding to coordinate events is included in the 2019 financial plan and may include partnerships with non-profit groups. New event hosting equipment such as a stage and audio visual systems were purchased to support this goal.

4. **Goal:** Support the establishment and improvement of trail systems in the sub-regional recreation area.

**Rationale:** Trails and walking paths consistently rank as one of the most used and desired public recreation assets. Well-known signature trails can be a tourism product marketed to draw visitors to the area. Design and authorizations were mostly complete in 2018 and 2019 will focus on trail construction and signage – with substantial grant funding from the Rural Dividend and Northern Development.

**Strategy:** Contract funding to focus on trails is included in the 2018 financial plan and will include contracted consulting support and partnerships with non-profit groups.

5. **Goal:** Increase the number of senior (55+) participants using the Arts and Recreation Centre facility and programs by 30%.

**Rationale:** Engaging the senior population (55+) in meaningful recreation & physical activity will improve their personal health, wellness and social interaction within the community.

**Strategy:** Increasing the number of fitness programs geared toward seniors from 2 to 4 classes per week and holding one monthly informational meeting for seniors. Staff training specific to the target market will be conducted and partnerships will be developed with outside organizations to provide additional support to assist seniors in meeting personal wellness goals.

6. **Goal:** Construct an Animal Hosting Facility at Alex Fraser Park.

**Rationale:** Current buildings at the park are not adequate to host large numbers of animals, either for events at the park or during evacuations of rural areas.

**Strategy:** Grant funding for the project has been obtained from the Rural Dividend program and Northern Development. Some additional capital funding is identified in the NCRP financial plan to complete the project. Project will be guided by Leisure Services staff with support from the Alex Fraser Park Society.

7. **Goal:** Repave the parking area at the Bouchie Lake hall and upgrade the fence and bleachers at the Barlow Creek ball fields.

**Rationale:** In 2016, an asset management assessment was completed for the Bouchie Lake and Barlow Creek recreation properties that staff have reviewed and incorporated high priority projects into the five-year financial plan.

**Strategy:** Funds have been allocated in 2019 to fund projects referenced in the report as being a high priority at both properties.

8. **Goal:** Undertake a facility condition assessment at the soccer complex.  
**Rationale:** Infrastructure and equipment assessments are important tools to help staff prioritize capital projects and ensure adequate funding is available in the financial plan.  
**Strategy:** Consulting services will be retained to undertake the assessment, equivalent to the previous process completed for other major NCRP facilities.
9. **Goal:** Install new chillers for the Arena 2 ice plant.  
**Rationale:** The new chillers will help the arena meet new regulatory requirements developed by Technical Safety BC following the incident in Fernie, BC. The new chillers will also result in a significant gain in energy efficiency.  
**Strategy:** Funding has been included in the financial plan to support this project with CRD Community Works Funds.

## 2020 Goals

1. **Goal:** Begin construction of a new gymnastics centre including renovation of portions of the soccer complex.  
**Rationale:** Gymnastics is a fast-growing sport in the north Cariboo and in need of a permanent facility. Expansion and upgrades to the soccer complex are consistent with the original design plans for the building allowing for more flexible use.  
**Strategy:** Detailed design plans for the proposed project are complete. This major capital project is not included in the NCRP function financial plan and will require substantial grant funding to proceed.
2. **Goal:** Install a playground at the Barlow Creek ball fields and develop designs for a covered riding arena at the Bouchie Lake hall equestrian grounds.  
**Rationale:** The playground would benefit both local residents in Barlow Creek as well as the ball leagues now using the fields throughout the summer. An active equestrian group in Bouchie Lake is looking for opportunities to increase use of the riding arena and extend the season by providing a covered facility.  
**Strategy:** The Barlow Creek project is included in the current capital plan; however the Bouchie Lake project requires confirmation of scope and cost; it is expected grant funding will be necessary to complete the covered riding arena due to the significant cost.

## **Overall Financial Impact**

The total tax requisition for the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks service in 2019 is \$3,889,424 which represents a 1% increase over 2018 amounting to \$38,509. This increase is required to enable business plan goals for event hosting coordination, working towards establishment of a trail network, and an increase in the operating costs for the new West Fraser Centre. A 1% increase each year is also included from 2020 – 2023.

The budget for the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks service includes the management of the West Fraser Centre, the Arts and Recreation Centre, Arena 2, Alex Fraser Park, indoor and outdoor facilities at Bouchie Lake, Barlow Creek, and Parkland, as well as incorporation of the soccer facility and costs associated with the school use agreement with School District 28.

The West Fraser Centre project was completed in 2017 and operating costs are higher than expected compared to the costs to operate Arena 1; however, now that all mechanical deficiencies are rectified, it will be another full year of operation to stabilize and confirm the actual costs.

The NCRP service had capital reserve funds of approximately \$910,472 projected as of the end of 2018 with a planned transfer to reserve at the annual policy amount of \$100,000. Borrowing for the new arena project commenced in 2017 with a debenture of \$7.5 million with annual payments on principal and interest of \$515,368 per year. Remaining debt as of the end of 2018 is projected at \$7,220,882.

## **Significant Issues and Trends**

1. **The Economy:** External economic forces will play a significant role in determining our future needs for recreation and our ability to pay for it. The pine beetle infestation and other factors may result in permanent mill closures and job losses in the future. This may reduce facility demand and decrease the tax base needed to maintain services.
2. **Aging Infrastructure:** Maintaining our aging infrastructure is a significant issue facing the Department. The cost to maintain our aging buildings is expected to increase annually. If we defer maintenance costs and fail to update or upgrade facilities, equipment and amenities, it will likely result in health and safety concerns, complaints from the community, and decreased use of facilities.
3. **Accessibility:** There has been an increased awareness regarding the needs of people with disabilities. While considerable improvements have been made in recent years, continued effort is required to ensure that our facilities are as accessible and inclusionary as possible.
4. **Sustainability Initiatives:** Increasing fuel costs, combined with initiatives and legislation to encourage environmental sustainability are expected to continue to

significantly influence local government decision-making, particularly related to the energy efficiency of our buildings. The Department will continue to find ways to improve energy efficiency in all of its buildings, wherever possible. The Cariboo Regional District is a signatory on the Province of BC/UBCM Climate Action Charter, and has committed to being carbon neutral in respect of operations. Initiatives will be developed to maintain or decrease the level of greenhouse gas emissions.

5. **Declining Volunteerism:** A number of our facilities and most of our community programs are established through partnerships with non-profit organizations. Nationally, volunteerism is on the decline. It is expected that the role of the Department in supporting these organizations is likely to expand and increase in the future and that additional financial resources may need to be allocated to support these organizations in order for services to continue.
6. **Aging Population:** The aging population is expected to result in an increased interest in low impact fitness programs such as walking, and in arts, heritage, and culture, as well as resulting in a decreased demand for youth activities.

### **Measuring Previous Years Performance**

**Goal:** Renovate the Arts and Recreation Centre on confirmation of grant funding.

- Not complete. A grant application to the UBCM Strategic Priorities Fund for \$6 million for the project was not successful.

**Goal:** Begin construction of a new gymnastics centre including renovation of portions of the soccer complex.

- Not complete. A grant application to the UBCM Strategic Priorities Fund for \$6 million for the project was not successful.

**Goal:** Increase the amount, size and diversity of events hosted in North Cariboo recreation facilities.

- Complete. An events coordinator was retained under contract to connect with numerous volunteer groups and explore potential hosting opportunities. The coordinator also organized several major events including the Wildfire Recovery Celebration and Canada Day and began preparation for the Minerals North conference.

**Goal:** Support the establishment and improvement of trail systems in the sub-regional recreation area.

- Complete. A trails coordinator was retained under contract to begin planning, formalizing and implementing trail improvements.

**Goal:** Implement a new software data management program for the Department.

- Complete. The switch to a new system was very time consuming for staff to input data but has been successful with online program registration being well received by the public.

**Goal:** Make facility improvements to Arena 2.

- Complete. Aspects of the capital improvements at the arena were combined with the event hosting precinct major project.

**Goal:** Replace the bleachers at the Bouchie Lake equestrian grounds and replace the roof at the Barlow Creek Hall.

- Complete. Both projects were delivered successfully as planned.

**Goal:** Upgrade electrical systems and undertake building repairs at the Alex Fraser Park grounds.

- The electrical system work is planned for completion prior to year end; however the building repairs were deferred in favour of a higher priority, which was to develop a site drainage plan.

**Goal:** Install energy saving heaters at the Arts and Recreation Centre.

- Partially complete. The new heat exchangers were installed; however the hot water tank replacement wasn't feasible at this time.