



*building communities together*

## **2020 Business Plan North Cariboo Recreation and Parks (1554)**

*Darron Campbell, Manager of Community Services*

***Working in partnership with communities large and small to offer local, sub-regional, and regional services to ensure that the Cariboo Chilcotin is a socially, economically, and environmentally desirable region.***

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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**

### **2020 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 larger, modern leisure pool will provide more options for family fun as well as medical benefits such as aquatic physiotherapy.  
**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:** Host a West Fraser Centre concert event at the end of the ice season.  
**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 such as Minerals North, tournaments and other activities that will draw visitors to the North Cariboo as well as provide entertainment for local residents. To demonstrate the community interest and confirm the financial viability of hosting a concert, a major event will be planned to follow soon after the ice is out of the West Fraser Centre.  
**Strategy:** Contract funding to coordinate events is included in the 2020 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.

- 3. Goal:** Review and renew the North Cariboo Recreation Fees and Charges bylaw.  
**Rationale:** The current three-year fees and charges bylaw expires in summer of 2020 and requires renewal prior to the 2020/2021 ice season. Several items in the bylaw will require detailed review and comparison with similar facilities, such as ice time rental at the arenas, which is notably lower than equivalent facilities. Additional revenue from ice rentals may also help off set some of the increased operating costs of the new arena.  
**Strategy:** A proposed fees and charges schedule will be developed by Leisure Services staff and brought forward to the joint committee for consideration.
- 4. Goal:** Review the turf facility management agreement with the Quesnel Youth Soccer Association.  
**Rationale:** The current agreement with the soccer association will expire at the end of 2020. The association has operated the indoor turf facility since it was constructed in 2005. The association coordinates scheduling the facility for soccer as well as other activities, such as walking and drop-in field play.  
**Strategy:** Leisure Services staff will engage with the soccer association and determine if any amendments to the agreement are necessary.
- 5. Goal:** Redesign of the bike skills park at the Arts and Recreation Centre.  
**Rationale:** The bike park has only received basic maintenance since it was constructed and is due for revitalization.  
**Strategy:** Contract funding to focus on trails is included in the 2020 financial plan and will include contracted consulting support and partnerships with non-profit groups. Grant funding will be pursued to support the design work and implementation of the revitalization activities.
- 6. Goal:** Undertake trail upgrades and establish new trails at the Claymine property in Bouchie Lake and the Kosta's Cove property on Ten Mile Lake.  
**Rationale:** Trails and walking paths consistently rank as one of the most used and desired public recreation assets. The two properties have some existing trails that are well-used, but in need of investment and improvement.  
**Strategy:** The sub-regional recreation trails coordinator will work with the Bouchie Lake and Parkland recreation commissions to confirm design priorities and manage project implementation. Funding for these projects is included in the function capital plan.
- 7. Goal:** Replace concourse railing at the West Fraser Centre with glass panels.  
**Rationale:** The existing railings can limit sightlines and hamper spectator satisfaction.  
**Strategy:** Funding has been included in the financial plan to support this project along with a substantial donation from West Fraser.
- 8. Goal:** Upgrade the cooling tower and DDC control system at Arena 2.  
**Rationale:** The new cooling tower and DDC control system will reduce electricity consumption and the amount of wear on mechanical equipment.

**Strategy:** Funding has been included in the financial plan to support this project with CRD Community Works Funds.

9. **Goal:** Install a playground at the Barlow Creek ball fields and air conditioning at the Bouchie Lake hall.  
**Rationale:** The playground would benefit both local residents in Barlow Creek as well as the ball leagues and tournaments using the fields throughout the summer. Adding air conditioning at the Bouchie Lake hall will improve community use and rental opportunities in the summer months.  
**Strategy:** The projects are included in the current capital plan, to be delivered through Leisure Services facility management staff.
10. **Goal:** Review the performing arts centre feasibility report and determine next steps for the proposed project.  
**Rationale:** The theatre feasibility study from Schick Shiner and Associates was completed in July 2018. Several major capital projects are envisioned for the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks function and confirming the viability and priority for a focus on a performing arts theatre is required.  
**Strategy:** A staff report of the feasibility study and potential next steps will be brought forward for consideration and subsequently reflected in the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks Business Plan.
11. **Goal:** Develop a signage plan for all sub-regional recreation facilities.  
**Rationale:** It is appropriate that recreation facilities such as the arenas, arts and recreation centre, Alex Fraser Park, soccer complex, and the rural recreation properties include signs recognizing the taxation support received through the Cariboo Regional District and City of Quesnel.  
**Strategy:** Staff will develop designs and standards and cost estimates for consideration of the joint committee and plan for implementation in 2021.

## 2021 Goals

1. **Goal:** Create designs for a renovation of the entrance and lobby space Arena 2.  
**Rationale:** The entrance lobby at Arena 2 is dated and requires revitalization to present a welcoming atmosphere for visitors to the facility.  
**Strategy:** Funding has been included in the financial and capital plan to support this project. The design will help determine costs for the renovation which can be considered in the 2022 capital plan.
2. **Goal:** Undertake a facility condition assessment at the Arena 2 and QDARC.  
**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:** Funding has been included in the financial and capital plan to support this project. The assessment will help determine costs and priorities to be considered in the five-year capital plan.

## **2022 Goal**

**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.

## **Overall Financial Impact**

The total tax requisition for the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks service in 2020 is \$3,986,660 which represents a 2.5% increase over 2019 amounting to \$99,666. This increase is required to achieve business plan goals for capital projects, event hosting coordination, ongoing establishment of local trail networks, and an increase in the operating costs for the new West Fraser Centre. A 2.5% increase each year is also included from 2021 – 2024.

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; however, now that all mechanical deficiencies are rectified, it will be several years of full operation to stabilize and confirm the actual costs. The higher utility and maintenance costs continue to put pressure on the NCRP operating budget. Additional revenues from the new facility have not been realized to date to off set the higher costs.

The NCRP service had capital reserve funds of approximately \$768,498 projected as of the end of 2019 with a planned transfer to reserve at the annual policy amount of \$100,000 and transfer from reserves for the Alex Fraser Park agricultural building at \$244,310. 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 2019 is projected at \$6,933,391.

## 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 aquatic space in the Arts and Recreation Centre.

- Not complete. A major infrastructure grant application has been submitted and it is expected notification will be received in 2020. The goal will be carried forward.

**Goal:** Complete the event hosting precinct project at the West Fraser Centre.

- Complete. The project was completed by leveraging approved capital funding with grant programs.

**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.

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

- Complete. A trails coordinator was retained under contract to coordinate improvements at the Wonderland and Dragon Mountain trail networks.

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

- Complete.

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

- Partially complete. It is expected the building envelope will be complete in 2019 with internal finishing to be completed in 2020.

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

- Complete. Both projects were delivered successfully as planned.

**Goal:** Undertake a facility condition assessment at the soccer complex.

- Complete.

**Goal:** Install new chillers for the Arena 2 ice plant.

- Complete. The ice plant has been brought into compliance with Worksafe BC and Technical Safety BC regulations following an audit, that took place province-wide after the incident in Fernie.