



2021 Business Plan South Cariboo Recreation and Culture (1546)

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.

Department/Function Services

The South Cariboo Recreation function was established through Bylaw No. 4617 in 2010 through the merger of three existing recreation services: Arena (Bylaw No. 3703 - 2001), Curling Rink (Bylaw No. 4616 - 2010, LP No. 29 - 1976) and Programming (Bylaw No. 3952 - 2004). The merger was undertaken to create a common taxation boundary and for administrative efficiency of the three existing services. The establishment bylaw was amended following a referendum in 2013 and adoption of Bylaw No. 4837, which broadened the description of services provided to include arts and culture and increased the maximum requisition by \$300,000.

The Stan Halcro Arena function was originally established in 1972 following a successful referendum of residents within the taxation area. The taxation boundary for the service was expanded in 2001, which also provided for an increased maximum requisition and the borrowing of \$3 million to construct a new 600-seat facility. The debt is scheduled to be fully repaid in 2023. The South Cariboo Recreation Centre (SCRC), which includes a geothermal ice plant and heating system for the arena, curling rink and meeting rooms, was completed in 2003. Major capital improvements to facilitate event hosting have been completed including installation of comfortable seats, projection screens, wireless connectivity, bleacher heating and a digital advertising sign as well as the purchase of tables and chairs and a dry floor to cover the arena ice. A modular stage and storage capacity was added in 2011-2012.

The arena and adjacent curling rink are operated by Canlan Ice Sports under a management contract with the Cariboo Regional District, which was renewed for a five-year term in July 2019 and will expire March 31, 2024.

The curling rink function was established following a successful referendum in 1976. The service was created to support the operation and maintenance of a curling rink for residents in 100 Mile House and surrounding areas.

The curling rink facility is currently managed by the 100 Mile and District Curling Club during the ice season and by Canlan Ice Sports during the off-season through agreements with the Cariboo Regional District.

Under these agreements, each party is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the facility during its respective term. The Curling Club operating agreement is for five years expiring in March 2024.

The programming function was originally established in 1973 to provide recreation and leisure activities for residents of the South Cariboo and to support the efforts of community groups in their related pursuits.

Also included in the recreation function is a maintenance agreement with the District of 100 Mile House for Lumberman's Park and Robinson Park, which are multi-use ball fields adjacent to the recreation centre. The agreement with the District includes maintenance of the fields, outdoor washrooms and wooded picnic area. Scheduling use of the ball fields is included in the Recreation Management Agreement with Canlan Ice Sports. The infields were completely rebuilt in 2016 and lights installed on one field to extend the playing time available.

A three-year use and occupancy agreement with the Wranglers junior hockey team was signed in 2018 to provide the club with ice allocations, advertising rights and a dressing room.

Funding contribution agreements are also in place with the District of 100 Mile House for operation of the 100 Mile Soccer Park (2020-22) and Martin Exeter Hall Theatre and Lodge Complex (2020-22).

The 108 Beach Program is also part of this function and is provided through an agreement (2019-2021) with the 108 Mile Ranch Community Association.

Portions of Electoral Areas G, H, and L and the District of 100 Mile House participate in this service, which is funded by means of a tax applied to the assessed value of land and improvements within the local service area utilizing hospital district assessment. The maximum requisition is the greater of \$900,000 or \$0.8721/\$1,000.

The Directors for Electoral Areas G, H and L and the District of 100 Mile House are responsible for the governance of this service. This group meets as the South Cariboo Joint Committee in open public meetings each month.

Business Plan Goals, Rationale & Strategies

2021 Goals

- 1. Goal:** Conduct public and stakeholder engagement for a recreation and culture service referendum that includes all areas of the South Cariboo.

Rationale: Following a review of existing boundaries and services, the preferred option is to develop a new taxation area that includes all of the South Cariboo including Electoral Areas G, H and L and the District of 100 Mile House. This new service establishment would require public assent through a referendum from all residents within these areas.

Strategy: Communications activities such as the distribution of information through social media and meeting with key stakeholder groups will take place as planned in 2021. A referendum will be scheduled for June 2022 with the boundary changes to be enabled for 2023 if successful.
- 2. Goal:** Develop and deliver more community programs that adhere to COVID-19 safety measures.

Rationale: Delivery of additional community events and programs was included in an expanded scope within the Recreation Management Agreement with Canlan, which was extended for an additional term in 2013.

Strategy: Canlan has retained a staff programs coordinator to focus on development and promotion of additional activities, particularly indoor soccer, dance and pickleball, to be offered in rural schools.
- 3. Goal:** Develop an event-hosting promotional package for the recreation centre.

Rationale: A well-designed promotional package will help attract special events, such as conferences and concerts, which provide direct revenue to the facility as well as indirect economic benefits to the community. Utilizing the recreation centre for more than on-ice activities is important to continue to demonstrate value to a broader range of residents.

Strategy: The facility operator will develop the promotional package and explore opportunities to distribute the information.
- 4. Goal:** Complete an audio-visual systems upgrade at the recreation centre.

Rationale: The existing equipment has exceeded its effective lifespan and new technologies will offer better results and potentially the ability for online viewing of arena activities, which would make compliance with COVID-19 safety measures much easier.

Strategy: Project will be sourced and supervised by the facility operator in consultation with Regional District staff. Funding is allocated in the function capital plan, but grants will also be pursued.

5. **Goal:** Review the agreements for 108 Lake beach maintenance and South Cariboo ball fields maintenance.
Rationale: These service agreements will expire at the end of 2021. The 108 Lake beach agreement is with the 108 Mile Ranch Community Association and the ball fields agreement is with the District of 100 Mile House.
Strategy: Agreements will be reviewed by staff and renewed if no material changes to terms of funding are required.
6. **Goal:** Replace the rubber flooring in the halls and change rooms.
Rationale: The current flooring is nearing the end of its effective life cycle and maintenance is becoming difficult.
Strategy: Project will be managed by the facility operator in consultation with Regional District staff.
7. **Goal:** Build a wheelchair accessible low mobility trail at the 108 Greenbelt.
Rationale: The Regional District has embraced the universal access outdoor recreation concept and has completed 25 wheelchair accessible wilderness trail projects across the region. This trail location is a larger project than most and will complete the full circuit around 108 Lake. Trail development under the same project scope are also planned for the Esler Sports Complex and Pioneer Park on Dragon Lake.
Strategy: The Region has applied for grants to support this project and identified matching funding as required in the sub-regional recreation financial plans. Project management consulting services will be retained for delivery of construction.

2022 Goals

1. **Goal:** Undertake a South Cariboo Recreation and Culture referendum for a new service that covers all areas of the South Cariboo.
Rationale: Following a review of existing boundaries and services, the preferred option is to develop a new taxation area that includes all of the South Cariboo including Electoral Areas G, H and L and the District of 100 Mile House. This new service establishment would require public assent through a referendum from all residents within these areas.
Strategy: A referendum will be scheduled for June 2022 with the new service established for 2023 if successful.
2. **Goal:** Host a major conference or event.
Rationale: An event-hosting promotional package was developed to attract special events to benefit the facility and the broader community.
Strategy: The facility operator will facilitate the event either through hosting directly or working with a host organization.

- 3. Goal:** Replace the score clock in the arena.
Rationale: The existing equipment will reach the end of its functional life span and can be upgraded with new designs and technology.
Strategy: Project is included in the function capital plan and will be managed by the facility operator in consultation with Regional District staff. There may be the opportunity for corporate sponsorship or other external funding to support this project.
- 4. Goal:** Review and update the recreation centre fees and charges bylaw.
Rationale: The current three-year fees and charges bylaw expires at the end of March 2022 and will need to be replaced. The bylaw sets the rates for all public, user-group and commercial use of the recreation centre properties.
Strategy: A proposed new bylaw will be developed and brought forward by the facility operator in June 2022.

2023 Goal

Goal: Repave the parking lot and relocate the light standards.
Rationale: The parking lot asphalt has reached its effective lifespan and is becoming more of a maintenance liability each year. The parking lot lights were not located efficiently to maximize parking spaces and traffic flow when the arena was constructed.
Strategy: Project is included in the function capital plan and will require a transfer from capital reserves. The work will be managed by the facility operator in consultation with Regional District staff. It is expected that the paving work will be coordinated with the annual paving tenders released for the District of 100 Mile House to ensure cost effectiveness.

Overall Financial Impact

The 2021 tax requisition is increased by 1% from the 2020 requisition amounting to \$7,466 for a total requisition of \$754,172. The requisition is also increased by 1% annually from 2022-2025 to account for operating cost increases and to maintain appropriate capital reserves.

The 2020 requisition was increased by 1% from the 2019 requisition.

Deficit targets for the operational costs for the recreation centre, including activity program delivery, are set within the five-year contract with Canlan Ice Sports and equate to \$232,370 in 2019 increasing to \$254,130 in 2024. Through the current contract, Canlan receives a management fee of \$60,500 in 2019 increasing to \$68,903 in 2024 with a bonus payment based on meeting operational cost targets. Canlan also retains the revenues

from use of the facility based on fees and charges reviewed and set annually by the Regional District.

The Regional District renewed five-year Operation and Occupancy agreements (2019-2023) with the 100 Mile and District Curling Club. As part of these agreements, the Regional District will cover the building's utility costs for the ice season and allow the club time to rebuild its membership and stabilize its revenues. The previous debt, amounting at one point to about \$21,000, owed by the club was paid in full in 2014.

Other annual agreements within the service include \$7,000 for the 108 Ranch Community Association (2019-2021) to maintain the beaches on 108 and Sepa Lakes and \$15,000 for maintenance of the Lumberman's and Robinson Ball Parks (2019-2021) with the District of 100 Mile House.

Annual funding contribution agreements are also in place with the District of 100 Mile House for operation of the 100 Mile Soccer Park at \$61,000 (2020-22) and Martin Exeter Hall Theatre and Lodge Complex at \$60,000 (2020-22).

The five-year capital plan for the service maintains a consistent annual expenditure, between \$50,000 and \$150,000, depending on necessary purchases. Large purchases are planned, several years in advance, by making contributions to capital reserves.

The service had an outstanding debt of \$516,927 as of December 31, 2020, from borrowing on the arena reconstruction. The debt will be repaid by 2023.

The service has projected capital reserve funds of \$699,000 at the end of 2020 taking into account a transfer into reserves of \$100,000 in 2020. The contributions thereafter to capital reserves, amounting to \$600,000 over the five-year plan, are to facilitate major capital projects at the Martin Exeter Hall complex and the South Cariboo Recreation Centre.

Significant Issues & Trends

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in significant challenges for operation of the recreation centre and resulted in higher operational costs, event cancellations and lower rental revenue, which in turn had to be balanced with appropriately reducing expenses. It is unknown at this time if this will continue and to what extent into 2021. For example, the Wranglers Junior B hockey team has announced that they will not be playing in the 2020-21 season and their use agreement for the facility has been put on hold.

The South Cariboo Recreation Establishment Bylaw was amended in 2013 to include additional recreation and arts and culture facilities, which was accomplished through the adoption of Bylaw 4837. The motivation behind this change is that residents throughout

the sub-regional recreation area benefit from a wide variety of services and facilities and as such should contribute towards them. This trend of broad-scope, sub-regional recreation and arts and culture allows elected officials to react to changing requests for service from the public. Creating an equitable and flexible service delivery framework through the South Cariboo Recreation bylaw was an important step to achieving this objective.

There is an interest in the development of additional recreation facilities in the South Cariboo as a means to improve the quality of life for current residents and help attract new ones, including skilled professionals that seek out communities with these assets. A key business plan goal in 2018 was to conduct public consultation on a proposed expansion of the South Cariboo Recreation Centre to include a turf field, hardcourt gymnasium and walking track. A concept design for the expansion was completed in 2017 that would complement the existing recreation centre and offer a wide variety of activities. A referendum was held in June 2018 to borrow up to \$10 million to complete the recreation centre expansion, which had an estimated cost of \$14.6 million. The referendum failed with 73.5% of voters against the project.

The South Cariboo Swimming Pool study, completed in January 2009, recommended the recreation centre property as the preferred location for an aquatic facility. In order for pool construction and operation to be achieved it would be necessary to hold a referendum to obtain public assent to borrow the funding necessary for the approximately \$18 million (2018 cost estimate) project. In order to gauge public support for the proposal, a statistically valid telephone survey took place in September 2014 with the results demonstrating that residents were divided in their opinions: 46% supported the project, 40% did not and 14% were unsure.

Regular contract ice rentals, such as minor hockey, figure skating and adult hockey are starting later in the season due to lack of interest during the late summer, which may affect facility revenues if the schedule cannot be filled with opportunity rentals.

At the South Cariboo Recreation Centre, significant capital investments were completed over the past several years and continue to improve public use and satisfaction with the facility. Now that the building is well equipped, it is expected that more effort and emphasis will be placed on activity programming and community events to encourage use. This was a key piece of the Recreation Services Management Agreement renewal with Canlan Ice Sports in 2019.

The Cariboo Regional District is a signatory on the Province of BC/UBCM Climate Action Charter and has committed to continuing work towards carbon neutrality in respect of corporate operations.

Measuring Previous Years Performance

Goal: Conduct public and stakeholder engagement for a South Cariboo Recreation boundary referendum to expand the taxation area.

- Partially completed. This initiative was delayed due to the COVID-19 situation and will be included as a goal in 2021.

Goal: Continue to expand opportunities for community programs, including offering activities in rural schools as possible.

- Completed. Popular programs included dance and pickleball with various activities also offered in rural locations such as 108 Mile Ranch and Buffalo Creek.

Goal: Develop an event-hosting promotional package for the recreation centre.

- Not completed. A package is underway but delayed due to the COVID-19 situation. The goal will be completed in 2021.

Goal: Support the Cyclone Taylor Cup Junior B hockey tournament.

- Not completed. The tournament was canceled due to the COVID-19 situation.

Goal: Install kiosk signs at the recreation centre to identify all the facilities on site.

- Complete.

Goal: Relocate parking lot lights and pave gravel areas.

- Not complete. Coordination with paving tenders from the District of 100 Mile House did not occur. Goal is brought forward in 2023 to align with the capital plan for a major pavement rehabilitation project.

Goal: Install water treatment system to flood ice with cold water.

- Completed. A Real Ice system was installed and has resulted in better ice quality at higher temperatures, which saves ice plant energy.

Other Accomplishments

Despite the unprecedented challenges resulting from the COVID-19 situation, the South Cariboo Recreation and Culture service managed to continue with many activities and programs by developing extensive safety plans and protocols. Working closely with user-groups and other stakeholders, the facility operator was able to make the recreation centre available to support the community and individual efforts to maintain some level of healthy normal activity.

The recreation centre completed a changeover to an updated customer service and financial system called Dash, which was a major corporate initiative for Canlan Ice Sports. The new system is much more efficient and performing well.