



building communities together

2021 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.

Department/Function Services

North Cariboo Recreation and Parks (NCRP) is a function of the Regional District 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's Leisure Services Department manages the function on behalf of the CRD. The five-year management agreement between the City and CRD was renewed in 2019 following several years of strategic planning.

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 (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.

Recreation properties in the Parkland, Bouchie Lake, and Barlow Creek areas are governed and managed by the rural Recreation Commissions and the Leisure Services Department with the Commissions being responsible for governance, administration, and maintenance of the properties in accordance with the Parkland (Bylaw #4271), Bouchie Lake (Bylaw #4272), and Barlow Creek (Bylaw #4273) Commission Bylaws. The Leisure Services Department is responsible for asset and capital project management for these properties in accordance with the Recreation Services Management Agreement (2019-2023) between the City and CRD.

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 Advisory Committee (NCJAC). The NCJAC consists of the CRD Directors from Electoral Areas A, B, C and I and the Quesnel City Council. The NCJAC does not have delegated authority and all of its recommendations must be ratified by the CRD Board. Terms of reference for the Committee were approved in 2020.

Business Plan Goals, Rationale and Strategies

2021 Goals

- 1. Goal:** Secure an estimated \$18.5 - \$21.3 million to renovate the swimming pool at the Arts and Recreation Centre.

Rationale: The aquatic centre is 40 years old and 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 health and wellness benefits such as aquatic physiotherapy.

Strategy: The CRD will hold a referendum in 2021 to obtain approval from the electorate to borrow the funds needed to renovate the facility in 2022.
- 2. Goal:** Increase capital reserves.

Rationale: Capital reserves for the NCRP service have been reduced by major projects in the past five years and is currently below the historical amount. Increasing reserves will also provide opportunities to leverage grant funding for major infrastructure projects.

Strategy: The five-year financial plan includes an increased annual allocation to capital reserves which will add \$1.55 million to reserves over the term of the financial plan.

- 3. Goal:** Develop a strategic partnership with the curling centre to help them address the capital deficiencies in their building.

Rationale: The curling centre is owned and operated by a non profit organization and is a critical asset to the community when it comes to event hosting and community wellness however the building is aging and there is a risk that a catastrophic failure of the buildings structural components or its equipment could result in the loss of this asset to the community without government assistance.

Strategy: Staff will work with the curling centre staff and volunteers to identify risks and potential funding sources in an effort to pre-emptively address a potential failure before it occurs.
- 4. Goal:** Construct new low mobility trails in Pioneer Park on Dragon Lake.

Rationale: Trails and walking paths consistently rank as one of the most used and desired public recreation assets. Pioneer Park has the potential to be a destination for low mobility trails that provide views and access to Dragon Lake.

Strategy: The CRD has applied for grant funding for a project to upgrade existing trails, construct new low mobility trails, and supporting infrastructure including a kiosk, benches, outhouses, lookouts, gates, signage, garbage cans and improvements to the parking lot and gazebo.
- 5. Goal:** Undertake trail upgrades and establish new trails at the Claymine property in Bouchie Lake.

Rationale: Trails and walking paths consistently rank as one of the most used and desired public recreation assets. The Claymine property has some existing trails that are in need of investment and improvement.

Strategy: The NCRP recreation trails coordinator will work with the Bouchie Lake recreation commission to confirm design priorities and manage project implementation. Funding for this project is included in the function capital plan.
- 6. 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.
- 7. Goal:** Purchase a new Compressor for Arena 2 and replace the existing header.

Rationale: The three compressors and the headers for Arena 2 are beyond their recommended lifespan. With the installation of a separate ice plant for the West Fraser Centre, only two compressors are required. There is an opportunity to replace the compressors with more energy efficient units. Upgrades in recent years to the Arena 2 ice plant have included a new chiller and new condenser/cooling tower. Once the compressors and headers are replaced, all

the major component of the Arena 2 ice plant will have been replaced with new modern, energy efficient equipment.

Strategy: Funding has been included in the financial and capital plan to fund this energy saving project with CRD gas tax funds.

8. **Goal:** Secure funding for a new gymnastics facility.

Rationale: Gymnastics is a fast-growing sport in the north Cariboo and in need of a permanent facility. A \$3.4 million plan to add a gymnastics facility to the Arts and Recreation Centre has been advanced to the Design Development stage. The project will require significant grant funding to proceed.

Strategy: The financial plan for NCRP incorporates a plan to increase capital reserves which will enable the service to better position itself to make a financial contribution to supplement grant funding and/or to provide 'backstop funding' for grant applications while other sources of funding are secured. Once capital reserves have been sufficiently replenished, staff will seek opportunities for grant funding by the CRD or the City to support this major capital project.

9. **Goal:** Confirm a utilization plan for a dry floor at the West Fraser Centre and pursue grant funding if purchase is feasible.

Rationale: The facility was designed to be more than an ice sheet and offer a variety of events that are of interest and benefit to a broader audience in the community. Having the ice in from August to April can be very limiting for other events like concerts, conventions or trade shows and having access to a dry floor may make other activities more feasible.

Strategy: Staff analysis will be conducted to determine purchase and storage costs and also include consultation with other regional recreation facilities for potential shared use.

2022 Goals

1. **Goal:** Create designs for a renovation of the entrance and lobby space at 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. Completing the design in 2022 will help determine costs for the renovation which can be considered in the 2023 capital plan.

2. **Goal:** Install branded location signs at select NCRP properties.

Rationale: The location signage for North Cariboo Recreation and Parks facilities is inconsistent, is not branded as being part of North Cariboo Recreation and Parks, and in some cases is old and poorly maintained.

Strategy: Funding has been included in the financial and capital plan in 2022 and 2023 to install signage at North Cariboo Recreation and Parks facilities.

Overall Financial Impact

The total tax requisition for the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks service in 2021 is \$4,146,125 which represents a 4% increase over 2020 amounting to \$159,466. This increase is required to achieve business plan goals and capital projects. A 4% increase each year is also included from 2022 – 2025.

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, soccer facility and costs associated with the school use agreement with School District 28.

The NCRP service will have capital reserve funds of approximately \$692,000 projected as of the end of 2020 with a planned transfer to reserves at the annual policy amount of \$100,000 included. The 2021 financial plan includes an increase from the policy amount for annual contributions to reserves and \$1.55 million is added to reserves over the five-year plan.

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 2020 is projected at \$6,637,274.77.

Significant Issues and Trends

1. **COVID-19:** The global pandemic had a significant impact on the delivery of recreation services in 2020 resulting in facility closures. Facilities have reopened with enhanced cleaning protocols and reduced services, and with the cancellation of many programs, events and tournaments. The pandemic is expected to continue well into 2021 and where it will impact the budget going forward with increased operating costs for additional cleaning, and significantly reduced revenues.
2. **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, 2017 and 2018 forest fires, 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.
3. **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.

4. **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.
5. **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.
6. **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.
7. **Aging Population:** The aging population is expected to result in an increased interest in arts, heritage, and culture and in low impact fitness programs such as walking. The youth population, which had been decreasing for a number of years, resulting in decreased demand for youth programs, is leveling off and while it is expected to increase modestly in the near future, demand for youth programs is not expected to increase to previous levels.

Measuring Previous Years Performance

Goal: Renovate the aquatic space in the Arts and Recreation Centre.

Action: Not completed. The CRD was not successful in obtaining a significant grant for this project through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.

Goal: Host a West Fraser Centre concert event at the end of the ice season.

Action: Not completed. There were some challenges securing an economically viable and suitable performer based on the venue size prior to pandemic. Once COVID-19 became a health concern in BC and Canada all attempts to schedule a concert were cancelled.

Goal: Review and renew the North Cariboo Recreation Fees and Charges bylaw.

Action: Completed.

Goal: Review the turf facility management agreement with QYSA.

Action: In progress. New agreement to be brought to the November NCJAC meeting for approval.

Goal: Redesign of the bike skills park at the Arts and Recreation Centre.

Action: In progress. Will be completed in 2020.

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.

Action: Kosta's Cove work completed. Claymine Property work deferred to 2021 to allow interface fire work to be completed prior to undertaking trail work.

Goal: Replace concourse railing at the West Fraser Centre with glass panels.

Action: Completed.

Goal: Upgrade the cooling tower and DDC control system at Arena 2.

Action: Completed.

Goal: Install a playground at the Barlow Creek ball fields and air conditioning at the Bouchie Lake hall.

Action: Completed.

Goal: Review the performing arts centre feasibility report and determine next steps for the proposed project.

Action: The Joint Planning Committee reviewed the issue at its September strategic planning meeting and determined that it was not a priority project at this time. No further action to be taken.

Goal: Develop a signage plan for all sub-regional recreation facilities.

Action: In progress. To be completed in 2021.