



building communities together

2023 Business Plan North Cariboo Recreation and Parks (1554)

Darron Campbell, Manager of Community Services

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 (2021-2025) 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 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

2023 Goals

- 1. Goal:** *Direction required for aquatic centre renovation plan.*
Rationale:
Strategy:
- 2. Goal:** Renovate the entrance and lobby space at Arena 2 for the Winter Games.
Rationale: The entrance lobby at Arena 2 is dated and requires revitalization to present a welcoming atmosphere for visitors to the facility. The facility will be a figure skating venue when Quesnel is host for the 2024 BC Winter Games.
Strategy: Funding has been included in the capital plan to support this project. Completing the design in 2022 determined costs for the renovation.
- 3. 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 2023 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:** 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 been approved for grant funding to upgrade existing trails, construct new low mobility trails, and install supporting infrastructure, including a kiosk, benches, outhouses, lookouts, gates, signage, garbage cans and parking lot and gazebo improvements.
5. **Goal:** Develop a design and cost for an extension to the low mobility trail 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 a popular, existing low mobility, wheelchair accessible trail and has land available for an extension.
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:** Develop a concept design and cost estimate for a covered arena at the Bouchie Lake Hall grounds.
Rationale: Both the riding arena and outdoor skating rink are popular amenities in Bouchie Lake and providing a roof cover over one or both would improve the assets and encourage additional use.
Strategy: Funding is allocated in the NCRP capital plan for consulting services to assist with development of the design and cost estimate.
7. **Goal:** Perform lighting and mechanical equipment energy efficiency upgrades.
Rationale: Capital investments to improve energy efficiency can help reduce long-term operating and maintenance costs. These projects include converting to LED lighting and modernizing HVAC equipment at the arts and recreation centre and the arena.
Strategy: Funding is identified in the NCRP capital plan for these projects through an allocation of Cariboo Regional District Community Works Funds.
8. **Goal:** Pursue funding for construction of a gymnastics facility addition at the arts and recreation centre.
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:** A preferred location, design and cost report for the project was completed in 2020. Appropriate grant funding opportunities will be explored as they become available.
9. **Goal:** Pursue funding for an indoor court addition to the arts and recreation centre.
Rational: There is growing demand in the community for indoor activities, either in winter or during heat or smoke events in the summer. Sports such as pickleball, basketball, volleyball, or floor hockey would benefit from access to a year-round indoor facility.
Strategy: A preferred location, design and cost report for the project was completed in 2022. Appropriate grant funding opportunities will be explored as they become available.
10. **Goal:** Review the Recreation Management Agreement between the City of Quesnel and the Cariboo Regional District.
Rationale: The current five-year agreement, which establishes taxation subsidy targets and general operating requirements for the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks function will expire at the end of 2023.
Strategy: Staff will review the details of the agreement and bring forward a proposed renewal agreement to the joint committee for consideration.
11. **Goal:** Review the occupancy agreements with the Alex Fraser Park Society and the Quesnel River Archers.
Rationale: The current five-year use and occupancy agreements for the Alex Fraser Park equestrian grounds and the archers use of Pioneer Park on Dragon Lake will expire at the end of 2023.
Strategy: Staff will review details of the arrangements and bring forward proposed renewal agreements to the joint committee for consideration.

2024 Goals

1. **Goal:** Host the 2024 BC Winter Games.
Rationale: The City of Quesnel was awarded the opportunity to host the games in 2021 and preparations have been ongoing. The games provide an excellent opportunity to showcase the city and surrounding area to visiting athletes and spectators.
Strategy: Game host coordination is undertaken by an appointed committee with vast support provided by volunteers of numerous local sporting organizations.
2. **Goal:** Construct outdoor washrooms at the Kostas Cove trail network.
Rationale: The lakeside trail and beach on Ten Mile Lake are well used during the summer season and additional facilities will accommodate the increasing number of visitors.

Strategy: The NCRP recreation trails coordinator will work with the Parkland Recreation Commission to confirm design priorities and manage project implementation. Funding for this project is included in the function capital plan.

3. **Goal:** Undertake construction of an extension to the low mobility wilderness trail at the Claymine property in Bouchie Lake.

Rationale: An existing wheelchair accessible trail through the forested property was completed in 2014 and there is potential to add additional length. The trail is very well used and extending it will improve user satisfaction.

Strategy: The NCRP trails coordinator will work with the Bouchie Lake Recreation Commission to confirm the design of the project. It is expected external grant funding will be utilized to leverage funds included in the NCRP function capital plan.

4. **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 2024 and 2026 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 2023 is \$4,484,449 which represents a 4% increase over 2022 amounting to \$172,479. This increase is required to achieve business plan goals and capital projects. A 4% increase each year is also included from 2024 – 2027.

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 \$850,000 projected as of the end of 2022 with no planned transfer to reserves. Transfers from reserves for a total of \$600,000 are planned for 2023 and 2024 to accommodate major capital projects, including improvements for hosting the winter games. Following completion of these projects, the financial plan includes annual contributions to reserves and \$600,000 is added through years four and five of the 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 2022 is \$6,018,175.

Significant Issues and Trends

1. **COVID-19:** The global pandemic continued to have a significant impact on the delivery of recreation services at the end of the 2021/2022 season. Facilities have fully reopened following extensive restrictions and closures; however, participation rates and user fee revenues continue to fall below historic levels.
2. **Outdoor Recreation:** For many years there has been an increasing emphasis on outdoor recreation opportunities and this trend was accelerated further by the COVID-19 situation and requirements for socially distanced fitness and activity. Development of outdoor recreation, such as trails, is expected to continue as a high priority and be well-supported by the public.
3. **The Economy:** External economic forces will play a significant role in determining our future needs for recreation and the ability to pay for it. Following the pine beetle infestation, 2017 and 2018 forest fires, as well as recent challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the local economy has generally stabilized. This factor will be considered when determining current and future facility demand and the tax base needed to maintain services.
4. **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.
5. **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.
6. **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 its buildings, wherever possible.
7. **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.

8. **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: Conduct assessments of sub-regional recreation facilities in anticipation of hosting the 2024 BC Winter Games.

- Completed. Several capital projects to improve facilities are included in the financial plan.

Goal: Create designs for a renovation of the entrance and lobby space at Arena 2.

- Completed. Project will be included in the 2023 capital plan.

Goal: Improve the energy efficiency of the soccer complex by installing a heat recovery ventilation system and LED lighting

- Completed.

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

- Completed. The curling club received a bridge loan for replacing the roof at the curling centre.

Goal: Construct new low mobility trails in Pioneer Park on Dragon Lake.

- Not completed. Grant funding support for the project has been approved and construction is planned for 2023.

Goal: Undertake trail upgrades and establish new trails at the Claymine property in Bouchie Lake.

- Partially completed. Trail upgrades were completed and potential new trails will be explored in 2023.

Goal: Secure funding for a new gymnastics facility.

- Not completed.

Goal: Develop concept plans for construction of an indoor hardcourt facility.

- Completed. The preferred location was identified adjacent to the Quesnel and District Arts and Recreation Centre.