



*building communities together*

## **2024 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**

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**

### **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. The required local funding contribution is included in the financial plan.

**2. Goal:** Increase tax requisition to build capital reserves.

**Rationale:** In recent years, capital reserves have been reduced in order deliver projects in the five-year capital plan. The reserve balance at the end of 2023 was well below an appropriate amount for a service with numerous major capital assets. Increasing reserves will allow funding to be available for future projects and to take advantage of grant leveraging opportunities.

**Strategy:** The proposed requisition increase will begin in 2024 and carry on through the five-year plan. Significant contributions to reserves will be made each year subject to any other limiting factors in the financial plan.

- 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 including the Reklaws in August 2023, 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. As a first attempt, the Reklaws concert was well received but did not break even financially. However; lessons were learned by local coordinators to improve the potential for generating positive revenue through future concerts.

**Strategy:** Contract funding to coordinate events is included in the 2024 financial plan and delivery 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:** Remove and repair the exterior siding at the arts and recreation centre.

**Rationale:** The existing cedar plank siding has deteriorated and is becoming an ongoing maintenance concern. This project is a scaled-back version of the scope that was to be included in the pool upgrade referendum that did not pass in June 2023. No additional insulation will be added to the building and the result will be considered a temporary improvement until a long-term solution is implemented.

**Strategy:** Funding is allocated in the capital plan and financial plan to undertake this project.
- 5. Goal:** LED lighting and energy efficient equipment upgrades.

**Rationale:** Capital investments to improve energy efficiency can help reduce long-term operating and maintenance costs. These projects include completing the LED lighting conversion at the arts and recreation centre and soccer complex as well as upgrading hot water tanks at Arena 2 and digital HVAC controls at the Bouchie Lake Hall.

**Strategy:** Funding is identified in the NCRP capital plan for these projects through an allocation of Cariboo Regional District Community Works Funds.
- 6. Goal:** Construct outdoor changerooms 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 project will be guided by the Parkland Recreation Commission to confirm design priorities and advise on project implementation. Funding for this project is included in the function capital plan.
- 7. 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.

8. **Goal:** Support maintenance of the Dragon Lake boat launch and fishing dock on Hydraulic road.

**Rationale:** The City acquired a land tenure for the boat launch in 2023 and is in the development process for major improvements to the area. Freshwater Fish BC plans to install a fishing dock which will become part of the tenure area. The launch is well-used by residents and tourists from across the north Cariboo.

**Strategy:** It is expected construction funding will be primarily achieved through external grant programs. Operational and maintenance funding is allocated in the NCRP financial plan.

9. **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. An application to the UBCM Strategic Priorities Fund program has been submitted and a decision is pending.

10. **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.

## 2025 Goals

1. **Goal:** Repave the Arts and Recreation Centre parking lot

**Rationale:** The existing pavement has deteriorated and is becoming an ongoing maintenance concern.

**Strategy:** Funding is allocated in the capital plan and financial plan to undertake this project.

2. **Goal:** Install a playground at Kostas Cove on Ten Mile Lake

**Rationale:** The beach area of Kostas Cove is well used by Ten Mile Lake residents and visitors from across the greater Quesnel area. A modest playground will complement other recent investments at the site, such as change rooms and trail upgrades.

**Strategy:** The project will be guided by the Parkland Recreation Commission to confirm design priorities and advise on project implementation. Funding for this project is included in the function capital plan.

### **Overall Financial Impact**

The total tax requisition for the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks service in 2024 is \$4,896,759 which represents an 8% increase over 2023 amounting to \$362,723. This increase is required to account for operational cost increases and make significant contributions to capital reserves, as well as achieve 2024 business plan goals and capital plan projects. An 8% increase each year is also included from 2025 – 2028.

The total tax requisition for the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks service in 2023 was \$4,534,036 which was a 5.1% increase over 2022.

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 \$520,000 projected as of the end of 2023 with a transfer out of reserves of \$350,000. It is a goal of this business and financial plan to make major contributions to reserves and to this end, a total of \$2.8 million is added to reserves over the five-year plan bringing the total to \$3.3 million.

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 2023 is \$5,694,551.

### **Significant Issues and Trends**

1. **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.

2. **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.
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 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:** Hold a referendum to authorize borrowing for the Pool Upgrade Project.

- Completed. A referendum in June 2023 to borrow up to \$35 million was not supported by a majority of voters.

**Goal:** Renovate the entrance and lobby space at Arena 2 for the Winter Games.

- Completed.

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

- Completed. The Reklaws performed August long weekend.

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

- Partially completed. The trail portion of the project was completed and the remaining ancillary items will be carried forward to 2024.

**Goal:** Develop a design and cost for an extension to the low mobility trail at the Claymine property in Bouchie Lake.

- Completed. Preliminary concepts explored for potential construction in 2024.

**Goal:** Develop a concept design and cost estimate for a covered arena at the Bouchie Lake Hall grounds.

- Planned for completion in December. Sahuri Architects were retained to complete the design and cost estimate.

**Goal:** Perform lighting and mechanical equipment energy efficiency upgrades.

- Completed.

**Goal:** Pursue funding for construction of a gymnastics facility addition at the arts and recreation centre.

- Not completed. An application to the UBCM Strategic Priorities Fund program has been submitted and a decision is pending.

**Goal:** Pursue funding for an indoor court addition to the arts and recreation centre.

- Not completed.

**Goal:** Review the Recreation Management Agreement between the City of Quesnel and the Cariboo Regional District.

- Expected completion in December following financial plan discussion at the joint committee.

**Goal:** Review the occupancy agreements with the Alex Fraser Park Society and the Quesnel River Archers.

- Expected completion in December.