



building communities together

2025 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 2024, setting new annual targets for taxation subsidy to support subregional recreation 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 (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 (2024-2028) 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 (2024-2028) 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

2025 Goals

- 1. Goal:** Increase tax requisition to build capital reserves.

Rationale: In recent years, capital reserves have been reduced in order to deliver projects in the five-year capital plan and for unplanned expenditures. The reserve balance at the end of 2024 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 carry on in 2025 and through the five-year plan. Significant contributions to reserves will be made each year subject to any other limiting factors in the financial plan.
- 2. Goal:** Host a West Fraser Centre concert event at the end of the ice season.

Rationale: The West Fraser Centre has hosted numerous events such as the provincial curling playdowns, the BC Winter Games, and the Minerals North conference, in addition to supporting a Sr. Hockey Team and a new Jr. Hockey Team. To date, only one concert has been held since the official opening of the Centre in 2017. Concerts have the potential to draw visitors to the north Cariboo as well as provide entertainment for local residents. The Reklaws concert held in 2023 was well received but did not break even financially. Hosting a second concert based on the lessons learned will enable the Department to determine if

hosting concerts at the venue are viable and if investments in concert infrastructure are sustainable.

Strategy: Contract funding to coordinate events is included in the 2025 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.

- 3. Goal:** Replace the exterior siding on the Arts and Recreation Centre.
Rationale: The exterior cedar siding on the Arts and Recreation Centre has deteriorated over the years and is in need of replacement.
Strategy: Funding is allocated in the 2025 capital plan to undertake this project.
- 4. 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 Arena 2, purchase of an electric ice-resurfacer, and upgrading the boilers at the Arts and Recreation Centre.
Strategy: Funding is identified in the NCRP capital plan for these projects through an allocation of Cariboo Regional District Community Works Funds.
- 5. Goal:** Install solar panels on the Bouchie Lake Hall.
Rationale: Solar panel technology continues to advance and can help rural community hall facilities reduce their carbon footprint as well as save on operating costs.
Strategy: Funding for the project is identified in the capital plan with an allocation of Cariboo Regional District Community Works Funding. Project timing will require that the 2025 capital goal to replace the roof on the hall be completed first.
- 6. Goal:** Replace the Barlow Creek Hall roof membrane and ceiling.
Rational: Condensation has been an issue at the Barlow Creek Hall resulting in damage to the building infrastructure, negatively impacting events and limiting rental opportunities at the hall. A building envelope consultant was hired in 2023 to recommend a course of action to resolve the issue.
Strategy: Funding has been allocated in the 2025 capital plan to replace the roof membrane and ceiling to resolve the condensation issue.
- 7. Goal:** Install tee boxes on the disc golf course at Kostas Cove.
Rational: Disc golf is a growing sport that provides a free family-friendly recreational activity for residents as well as attracting enthusiasts from outside the region who will travel to play the course. Working with a volunteer nonprofit organization, the Parkland Recreation Commission began construction on a disc golf course in 2024 installing disc golf baskets on the course. Construction of tee boxes will further enhance and improve the course.

Strategy: Funding has been allocated in the 2025 capital plan to install tee boxes on the course.

- 8. Goal:** Install a playground at Bouchie Lake Hall and prepare site for a future playground at Kostas Cove.

Rationale: A site for playground equipment at the Bouchie Lake Hall was prepared in 2024. 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 projects will be guided by the Bouchie Lake and Parkland Recreation commissions to confirm design priorities and advise on project implementation. Funding for both these projects is included in the function capital plan.
- 9. Goal:** Obtain a conceptual design and cost estimate for a future expansion of the agriplex facility in Alex Fraser Park.

Rationale: The current agriplex has some structural issues that need to be addressed and the facility lacks sufficient space for the programs and events offered within it, creating various safety issues.

Strategy: Funding has been allocated in the 2025 capital plan to complete a conceptual design to expand and upgrade the facility and to obtain an order of magnitude cost estimate to complete the work.
- 10. Goal:** Review the use and occupancy agreement with the Quesnel Youth Soccer Association for the turf facility and adjacent fields.

Rationale: The current five-year agreement expires at the end of the year 2025 and will need to be renewed to continue the arrangement that has the association manage the day-to-day operation of the indoor turf facility and outdoor soccer fields.

Strategy: Staff will engage with the soccer association and bring forward a proposed renewal agreement for consideration of the joint committee.
- 11. 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.

- 12. 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.

2026 Goals

- 1. 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.

2027 Goal

- 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.

Overall Financial Impact

The total tax requisition for the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks service in 2028 is \$5,288,500 which represents an 8% increase over 2024 amounting to \$391,741. This increase is required to account for operational cost increases and make significant future contributions to capital reserves, as well as achieve 2025 business plan goals and capital plan projects. An 8% increase each year is also included from 2026 – 2029.

The total tax requisition for the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks service in 2024 was \$4,896,759 which was an 8% increase over 2023.

The budget for the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks service includes the management and operating costs of the West Fraser Centre, the Arts and Recreation Centre, Arena 2, Alex Fraser Park, indoor and outdoor facilities at Bouchie Lake, Barlow Creek, Parkland,

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

The NCRP service will have capital reserve funds of approximately \$534,000 projected as of the end of the year; however, no transfer to reserves is planned in 2024 due to operational cost increases and several large projects that were added to the financial plan throughout the year. It is a goal of this business and financial plan to make major contributions to reserves and to this end, a total of \$3.2 million is added to reserves over the five-year plan bringing the total to \$4.1 million at the end 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 2024 is \$ 5,361,270.

Significant Issues and Trends

1. **Outdoor Recreation:** For many years there has been an increasing emphasis on outdoor recreation opportunities. 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, such as the widespread inflation for the cost of goods and services, which are in-turn reflected in collective agreement wage increases, will play a significant role in determining the balance between our future needs for recreation and the ability to pay for it. Although 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 and Inclusion:** 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: Host the 2024 BC Winter Games.

- Completed. The Quesnel Lhtako BC Winter Games were successfully held in February 2024.

Goal: Increase tax requisition to build capital reserves.

- Completed. An increase of 8% annually is included in the five-year financial plan with planned contributions to reserves of \$3.2 million.

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

- Not completed.

Goal: Remove and repair the exterior siding at the arts and recreation centre.

- Not completed. A change in scope required that the project be deferred until 2025.

Goal: LED lighting and energy efficient equipment upgrades.

- Completed.

Goal: Construct outdoor changerooms at the Kostas Cove trail network.

- Completed.

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

- Completed.

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

- Completed. Full construction of a new boat launch remains subject to acquiring external grant funding.

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

- Not completed.

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

- Not completed.