




---

 Original signed by: City Manager McKay

# City Staff Report

Report Date: May 14, 2025  
 Meeting Date: May 20, 2025 (NCJAC)

To: City Manager  
 From: Director of Community Services  
 Subject: Recreational Priorities Survey Results and NCRP Business Plan  
 Strategic Pillar: N/A

---

## Recommendation:

***THAT THE NORTH CARIBOO JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMEND to the Cariboo Regional District Board of Directors that the 2025 - 2029 North Cariboo Recreation and Parks business plan be amended to remove 2025 goals #11. to pursue funding for construction of a gymnastics facility addition at the arts and recreation centre and #12 to pursue funding for an indoor court addition to the arts and recreation centre.***

---

Is this a current strategic objective?

☐ Yes

☒ No

If not a current strategic objective, is it part of the normal course of business for the local government?

☐ Yes

☒ No

---

## Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC or the Committee) with an overview of the results for the survey they completed following the strategic planning session on March 31, 2025 and to seek direction from the Committee regarding any potential changes they would like to make to the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks (NCRP) Business Plan as a result.

## Summary

- One of the action items coming out of the strategic planning session March 31, 2025, was for a survey to be conducted of the Committee members regarding recreation priorities.
- A summary of those survey results is attached to this report for the Committee's review and discussion.
- In general, an overriding theme of the comments appears to be that the priority in the near future is to maintain existing recreation infrastructure and to provide core services as cost effectively as possible until such time that the tax base has grown to financially support the operations of any new facilities.



- The Committee may wish to review the current Business Plan and determine whether or not they would like to change or remove any of the goals in the plan in light of the survey results.
- Over the past decade, the Committee has had a number of feasibility studies, concept plans, and detailed designs completed for various large recreation infrastructure projects, including a renovation of the pool, construction of a new gymnastics facility, construction of a new indoor court facility, construction of a new performing arts centre, construction of a roof structure over the Bouchie Lake outdoor arena, and expansion of the Agriplex in Alex Fraser Park.
- Staff recommend the survey be broadened to include recreational priorities from user groups and the public in and around the North Cariboo to inform future business plan priorities.

### **Financial Implications**

NA

### **Statutory Requirements**

NA

### **Timing**

NA

### **Relevant Council or CRD Policy**

NCRP 2025-2029 Business Plan

### **Additional Background**

NA

### **Concurrence**

NA

### **Attachments:**

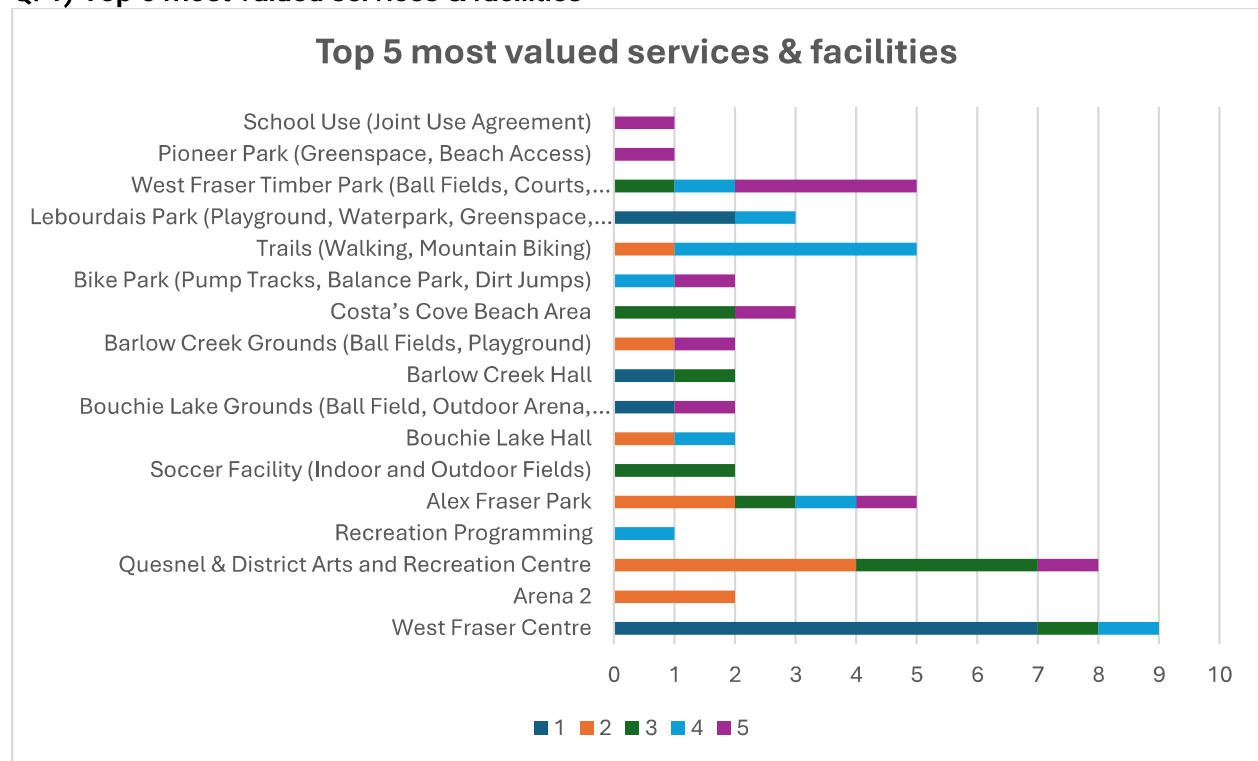
- Recreation Priorities Survey Results
- 2025 NCRP Business Plan

## North Cariboo Joint Advisory Committee

### Recreational priorities survey

Survey Duration: May 5 to May 12, 2025

#### Q. 1) Top 5 most valued services & facilities



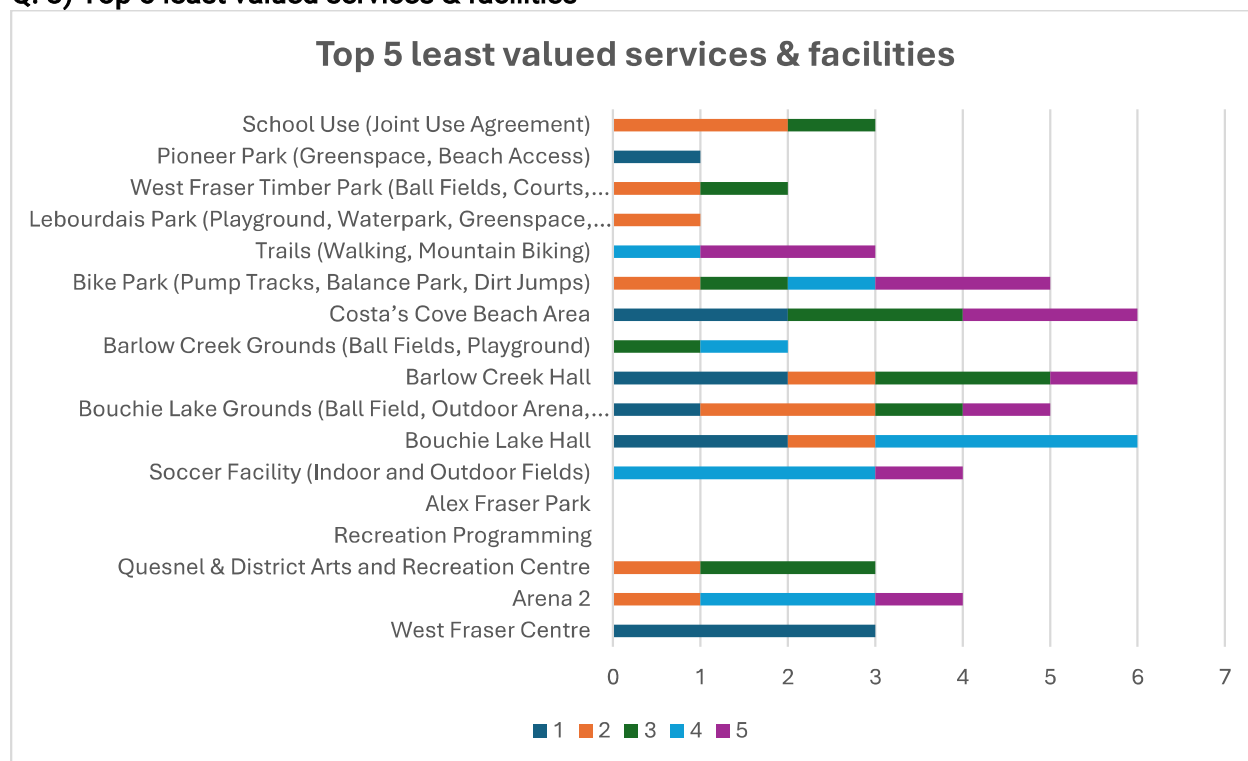
#### Q. 2) What kind of future investment, if any, would you like to pursue based on the top five services and facilities that you see the most value in?

Future investment can include, but is not limited to: Maintain existing operating costs and maintenance, conduct or explore renovation options, additional services or support, and other.

- Maintain what we have. Nothing new until economy settles down.
- Maintain existing operating costs and maintenance
- "Bouchie Lake Hall and grounds are well used all year for various community indoor and outdoor activities. Kosta's Cove is also well used for outdoor activities. Claymine Trails are used year-round for walking and to look at the Blue Herons nesting. All of these can be slowly upgraded for the Community's benefit. We have seen more and more use since Covid restrictions were lifted and these outdoor spaces were good for people throughout Covid.

- The outdoor spaces are worth the effort for all 5 I have identified.
- Additional services and support - maintain and enhanced facilities where it makes sense
- Maintain and upgrade current infrastructure. No new additions.

### Q. 3) Top 5 least valued services & facilities



### Q. 4) What are your concerns about the five services and facilities that you see the least value in?

Concerns can include, but are not limited to: Overall costs, existing debt or increasing debt service, the need to increase taxes, operating costs, repair costs, overall upkeep, not enough population base to utilize the facility or service area, share costs, and other

- We need to boldly prioritize based on per capita cost and need and overall community usage.
- Ongoing maintenance and operating costs as compared to overall use by the community. In the case of Arena 2, although widely used, it is still a duplicate facility.
- "For the Rec Centre - repair costs which are necessary to be done. Barlow Creek Hall - needs major upgrades, question is - is it worth it or would it be better to build a new Hall. School use - subsidizing SD#28 when we have facilities that can be used instead Arena 2

- what is the life expectation, will it have to be replaced in the near future, and what about the equipment failing and causing toxic cases The soccer indoor and outdoor fields - how much use is it getting? As for the other facilities - it seems to me they have a lot less maintenance costs and therefore are reasonable expenditures."

- Overall costs & upkeep
- Overall costs to Sub Regional recreation. keeps increasing Need to increase taxes but not building up a surplus or reserve.

**Q. 5) Currently, the Arts and Recreation Centre and Arenas recover approximately 38% of expenses through user fees. How satisfied are you with this balance between user fees and tax subsidies for the delivery of recreation services?**

- User fees should at least equal taxation costs, especially given the fact that some commercial businesses subsidize their own competition thru taxation.
- I am not satisfied. We should be aiming for 50%.
- I think that if we could recover a bit more through user fees that would be ideal. However, if doing so reduces the usage then that would not be very effective. People living outside of the Sub-Regional Recreation Boundary should not be subsidized to use the facilities. We should consider re-examining the Boundary soon.
- Fine balance between user pay and no one accessing programs because fees are too high
- Satisfied - Can't justify raising user fees
- Would like to see it closer to 50 %with user fees.
- Should aim a bit higher (50%)

**Q. 6) Please let us know your thoughts on the current facility service levels.**

- Current service levels are as good as can be expected in current economic climate.
- Anecdotally, while visiting the facility it would seem that the staffing levels seem appropriate, but 62% of expenses are still covered by rate payers. There may be room for efficiencies. I would need to see a breakdown of staffing hours per day for each function within the facility. Then I would need to see this number represented as a % of overall staffing facility hours. For example: Front desk staff utilize 24 man hours per average day at the facility. These hours represent 10% of tot hrs.
- I do not use much of the larger facilities therefore I do not feel it is fair to comment on them. However, I do use the smaller facilities and many of the rural trails and parks
- Like to see more flexibility with service levels when needed

- Facility ought to be open for use on stats
- I would like to see us communicate with the users of facilities to ask them what we can do better and best to meet the needs staying within budget allocation...
- Good

**Q. 7) Would you like to consider alternative service delivery options at existing facilities? If so, what options would you like to consider or investigate?**

- Good question... shrinkage or expansion of all recreational service levels should be relative to taxation and user fee capacity, with our eye on how we are competing against commercial, private and nonprofit enterprises.
- I would need an example, but if such options exist to offset some costs, I would be all ears.
- I do not understand the question. I like how Sub-Regional Recreation is delivered through CRD Bylaws like at Bouchie Lake Recreation and Parkland Recreation since they are lead by people in the community who know the Community's wants and needs and can facilitate improvements over time.
- Na
- An overall review would be useful of all existing facilities. Where can we find cost savings or improve service to increase income
- No

**Q. 8) Do you feel like there are adequate recreation options to support the community? If not, what would you like to see?**

- Yes, we have an abundance of publicly funded recreational options.
- I feel the answer is yes, but there is notable feedback which says otherwise. For example: gymnastics, pickle ball
- There can always be improvements to any recreational options. They need to be carefully considered and be sustainable.
- Always open to new ideas if funding is available
- Extremely adequate
- Yes because the cost of Recreation is very high currently in the North Cariboo. We can not afford more facilities
- Yes

**Q. 9) Please let us know if you have any additional feedback or comments about investment in joint services and facilities.**

- Nothing additional. I think ratepayers are maxed out on all fronts, particularly in view of tariffs and inflation in general.
- thank you
- "Working together is the best option and sharing expenses is mutually beneficial. We need to start considering what is best for our younger population and not just focus on the older generation. Using up the facilities without considering the next generations in my mind is a ZERO-SUM GAME. We need to cover the costs of Recreation and the facilities so that we can attract younger people to our communities both urban and rural so that we attract professionals to look after us in our OLD AGE!"
- Na
- The elected officials need to have a good understanding of costs and learn to stick to goals outlined and objectives to supply the best service possible with in the service. Regardless of who resides and pays for Sub regional recreation it is about the collective. Overall City taxes have risen considerably in the past 10 years and residents especially Seniors and Small business are feeling a lot of pressure to stay ahead. Provincial downloading is affecting all levels of government. Folks often want more services but do not want to pay. Sub Regional Rec has become a catch-all and needs to get back to the basics.
- It's all about a balance of urban and rural opportunities for recreation.



*building communities together*

## **2025 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 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 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.

**Rational:** 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.