



building communities together

2026 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 project support to the Quesnel River Archers (2025-2030) 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 updated and approved in 2020.

Business Plan Goals, Rationale and Strategies

2026 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 2025 is 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 2027 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:** Install North Cariboo Recreation and Parks signs at key facilities.
Rationale: Uniform, consistently-branded signs will be installed in an effort to better inform the public and user groups about assets that are funded through the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks service and governed by the City and Quesnel and the Cariboo Regional District.
Strategy: Funding is allocated in the function capital plan for four signs to be installed in 2026 with prime locations identified as Alex Fraser Park, the indoor turf building and soccer fields, Bouchie Lake Hall and Barlow Creek Hall.

- 3. Goal:** Work with the pickleball and soccer associations to determine options and feasibility of expanding the turf building to include courts.
Rationale: Pickleball is a popular fast-growing sport for persons of all ages and a local association has formed to advocate for indoor court space to enable play in the winter and shoulder seasons.
Strategy: Recreation services staff will continue to meet with the user groups and help guide the development of concept options including consideration of capital and operating costs.
- 4. Goal:** Upgrade the sound system at the West Fraser Centre.
Rationale: The existing sound system at the arena has had challenges performing to expectations for high profile user groups with large crowds such as the Kangaroos and River Rush hockey teams. Upgrading the system while maintaining value from various components will improve the patron experience at the facility.
Strategy: Funding for the project is allocated in the function capital plan.
- 5. Goal:** Purchase a stage lift for the West Fraser Centre.
Rationale: The current stage set-up for events such as grad ceremonies at the West Fraser Centre do not easily allow persons with mobility challenges to access the stage area.
Strategy: Matching funding for the project is identified in the function capital plan and grant support will also be required.
- 6. Goal:** Complete energy efficiency upgrades at the Arts and Recreation Centre.
Rationale: Capital investments to improve energy efficiency can help reduce long-term operating and maintenance costs. These projects include replacing two furnaces as well as the front entrance doors at the Rec Centre.
Strategy: Funding is identified in the function capital plan for these projects through an allocation of Cariboo Regional District Community Works Funds.
- 7. Goal:** Undertake kitchen improvements at the Bouchie Lake Hall.
Rational: Use of the hall continues to increase and the large kitchen is important to its success for hosting events. Specific components of this project include replacing appliances and installing a kitchen exhaust fan.
Strategy: Funding has been allocated in the function capital plan for these projects.
- 8. Goal:** Undertake kitchen and concession improvements at the Barlow Creek Hall.
Rationale: Use of the Ranger Park ball fields and the hall remain steady and the hall kitchen and outdoor concession are important to its success for hosting events. Specific components of this project include replacing appliances in the hall and installing a gas stove in the outdoor concession.
Strategy: Funding has been allocated in the function capital plan for these projects.

- 9. Goal:** Install a bird-viewing platform at Kostas Cove.
Rationale: The wetland area off Ten Mile Lake is excellent habitat for numerous bird species and the proposed trail and platform are a natural extension of the trail system created in past years at the property.
Strategy: Funding is allocated in the function capital plan for this project and the trails coordinator will work with the Parkland Recreation Commission to guide consulting and construction services.
- 10. Goal:** Support development of the Pilot's Grove disc golf course.
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. Initial layout for the course has been undertaken by the Quesnel Disc Golf Club, which has an occupancy agreement from the City for shared use of space at the Fuel Management Trails near the airport.
Strategy: The North Cariboo Recreation trails coordinator and staff will work with the disc golf club to explore development options including ongoing management, maintenance and cost.
- 11. Goal:** Retain spring ice to encourage sports camps and extend the season.
Rationale: Several groups have expressed interest in hosting hockey camps and other activities into May and these bookings offer an opportunity for additional revenue as well as community value.
Strategy: Ice at the West Fraser Centre will not be taken out in March as usual, subject to annual play-off games for various teams, but will be maintained though to mid-May to allow for additional use. Keeping the ice through the warm shoulder season will increase operating cost for the facility; however, it is expected to be offset by the revenue generated through the camp bookings.

2027 Goal

Goal: Replace the lobby and change area roof at the Arts and Recreation Centre.
Rationale: The roof in this section of the building is due for replacement and ongoing investments of this nature are critical to maintain the long-term viability and value of the recreation asset.
Strategy: Funding is allocated in the capital plan and financial plan to undertake this project.

2028 Goal

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 2026 is \$5,711,579 which represents an 8% increase over 2025 amounting to \$423,080. This increase is required to account for operational cost increases and make significant future contributions to capital reserves, as well as achieve 2026 business plan goals and capital plan projects. An 8% increase each year is also included from 2027 – 2030.

The total tax requisition for the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks service in 2025 was an 8% increase over 2024.

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 \$651,000 projected as of the end of the year with a transfer of \$105,000 planned for 2025. It is a goal of this business and financial plan to make major contributions to reserves and to this end, a total of \$3.5 million is added to reserves over the five-year plan bringing the total to \$4.15 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 2025 is approximately \$5.02 million.

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 global trade tariffs and 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: 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.

- Completed. The Snotty Nose Rez Kids played the WFC in spring 2025.

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

- Completed. New siding was installed on the most damaged sections of the building.
- Goal:** LED lighting and energy efficient equipment upgrades.
- Completed. Projects included 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.
- Goal:** Install solar panels on the Bouchie Lake Hall.
- Completed. The new panels came online in August 2025.
- Goal:** Replace the Barlow Creek Hall roof membrane and ceiling.
- Completed. The roof membrane was completed in October and the ceiling finishing is expected to be complete by year end.
- Goal:** Install tee boxes on the disc golf course at Kostas Cove.
- Completed. Project was finished by volunteers from the Quesnel Disc Golf Club with support from contract services.
- Goal:** Install a playground at Bouchie Lake Hall and prepare site for a future playground at Kostas Cove.
- Partially completed. The playground at the Bouchie Lake Hall was completed. At Kostas Cove, the project location and design were reconsidered in the context of the Crown land lease development map and determined to be inconsistent with the approved plan.
- Goal:** Obtain a conceptual design and cost estimate for a future expansion of the agriplex facility in Alex Fraser Park.
- In progress and planned for completion in December.
- Goal:** Review the use and occupancy agreement with the Quesnel Youth Soccer Association for the turf facility and adjacent fields.
- In progress and planned for renewal in January 2026.
- Goal:** Pursue funding for construction of a gymnastics facility addition at the arts and recreation centre.
- Not completed. Goal was removed from the business plan by the North Cariboo Joint Advisory Committee following a strategic planning session.
- Goal:** Pursue funding for an indoor court addition to the arts and recreation centre.
- Not completed. Goal was removed from the business plan by the North Cariboo Joint Advisory Committee following a strategic planning session.