



Feb. 19, 2014

14-10 - For immediate release

North Cariboo recreation public meetings announced

Quesnel, B.C. -During the North Cariboo Joint Planning Committee (NCJPC) meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 11, Quesnel City Council members and CRD North Cariboo Directors approved a consultation process to seek input from the community and stakeholder groups about the proposed vision for the construction of a new arena. This vision is based on the following:

- a. Engineered steel construction with wood architectural elements;
- b. Appropriate multipurpose space to support arena events and programs;
- c. A regulation size ice surface;
- d. Seating capacity of 1200 – 1600; and
- e. Located adjacent to the Twin Arenas.

Two open public meetings have been confirmed for Wednesday, March 5 at the Bouchie Lake Elementary School and Tuesday, March 25, in Quesnel Council Chamber. Both meeting start at 7 p.m.

Five stakeholder meetings will also be scheduled with arena users, arts, business, industry, and seniors. A community feedback form will be available at each meeting, at the Twin Arenas and the Recreation Centre, City Hall and CRD facilities. The form will also be available online at cariboord.bc.ca and quesnel.ca.

The NCJPC has reviewed the information and discussed options regarding future recreation infrastructure planning since the referendum last fall. Based on the results from the telephone survey conducted in January 2014, replacing Arena 1 was the highest community priority for new or upgraded recreation infrastructure.

Professional estimates, prepared by MHPM Project Managers indicate the cost to construct an engineered steel, 1,200 - 1,600 seat arena is approximately \$14.3 - \$16.8 million. Project funding currently available is approximately \$9.9 million if all grants, donations and reserve funds are retained or re-committed.

Procurement options are currently being researched and will be presented to the NCJPC at their meeting on March 11, 2014.

“The recent survey gave us the information we needed, to ensure we are moving forward based on the wishes of our residents within the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks Service Boundary,” stated NCJPC Co-Chair and CRD Vice-Chair Ted Armstrong. “We strongly encourage residents to attend the public meetings to obtain accurate and current information about the proposed next steps, and to provide comments and suggestions to the NCJPC.”

“As this community project advances I encourage all residents and user groups to get involved and attend one of our public information meetings,” says City of Quesnel Mayor Mary Sjostrom. “New infrastructure for our community’s future is extremely important as we look to host tournaments and new events to enhance economic opportunities and growth.”

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Editors: This release is available online at quesnel.ca or cariboord.bc.ca