



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL KOOTENAY

MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

Castlegar & District Recreation Commission recommends reducing borrowing for Complex enhancements

Castlegar, BC: At its meeting on March 5, the Castlegar & District Recreation Commission passed a resolution to reduce the amount of borrowing on enhancements to the Castlegar & District Community Complex to \$22 million. The project is currently estimated to cost \$32,370,000. The Commission would pursue grants and other sources of funding for the remaining cost of the project.

“It has always been our intent to pursue any grants or other potential sources of funding that are available to support the cost of this project, so taxpayers don’t carry all the burden,” said Lawrence Chernoff, Chair of the Recreation Commission. “With this resolution, we are putting our money where our mouth is. If we don’t achieve the additional funding, then the project will not move forward.”

The Commission considered dividing the project into two independent phases, to ensure that a phase of the project would proceed even if not all the funding was secured. The Commission felt that prioritizing some enhancements over others was not a true reflection of the public’s wishes. The additional time and investment to define the two phases might also affect the timing of the referendum. Ultimately, the Commission committed to securing the full amount of funding needed before the project can proceed. Voter approval for this borrowing will be sought through a referendum planned to be held before summer 2018.

If the Board approves moving forward with borrowing \$22 million over a 25-year term, and if approved through the referendum, the impact is estimated to be \$51.04 annually for a \$100,000 home, or \$153.12 annually for a \$300,000 home. The impact of borrowing the full cost of the project (\$32,370,000) was estimated to be \$75.10 annually for a \$100,000 home, or \$225.30 annually for a \$300,000 home. Some residents in Area I would see a higher impact, since they would start paying for aquatic and fitness services.

“The public’s views on what kinds of enhancements they want to see at the Complex have guided our work from the outset of this project,” said Director Chernoff. “Over the past few weeks, we have continued to listen as residents and users of the facility have shared their feedback—both for and against. We know the community as a whole will benefit from an enhanced facility, and that the majority supports the project. The challenge now is for us to share this vision with potential funders, and for supporters to add their voices to our efforts.”

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At its meeting on February 16, 2018, the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) Board of Directors considered two bylaws pertaining to enhancements to the Complex. The bylaws were prepared to establish a new recreation service to replace the two existing services and encompass the proposed facility enhancements, and to start the process to authorize the borrowing of \$32,370,000 in building costs. Both bylaws passed third reading, which means they can proceed to provincial approval prior to a public process to seek voter approval by means of assent voting, or referendum, on an area-by-area basis within the proposed service area. In order to move forward with reduced borrowing, the Board must rescind the third reading of the relevant bylaws, amend the taxation amounts, and begin the process to secure funding.

The referendum is a key milestone in a lengthy public consultation process, which began with the 2015 Castlegar & District Recreation Master Plan. Since then, the Recreation Commission has returned to the community on several occasions using a variety of methods to obtain feedback and validate decisions.

For more information about the project and the proposed enhancements (also known as “Option B”), please visit the Build Your Own Activity Hub website at <http://myactivityhub.ca>.

The Build Your Own Activity Hub is an initiative of the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK), in partnership with RC Strategies+PERC and HCMA Architecture + Design.

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