

Quesnel Ongoing Projects

**Quesnel 2020 Project
June 2004**

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Alex Fraser Park

Alex Fraser Park is a jewel in the rough, currently contributing approximately 1.3 million dollars annually to the economy of Quesnel. We are currently overbooked, and have to turn away organisations and events that have no alternate venue in Quesnel.

The Alex Fraser Park Society is working to maximise the potential of this tremendous asset. Some of the advantages of this site include the central and accessible location across from the new College, ample parking, 15 acres of publicly owned and serviced land, and proximity to the recreation centre.

Phase 1 of the planned expansion includes washrooms, a concession and meeting room. We have drawings for this phase and will attend the joint planning committee meeting June 8th to seek approval in principle and request consideration in the 2005 budget. We are working with the QCEDC to identify sources of funding and plan to complete the building next year.

Phase 2 is in the concept stage and we welcome ideas and suggestions. We must include an indoor arena large enough to host dressage competition, spectator seating and event rooms. A theatre for the performing arts is long overdue for Quesnel, and could be part of the project. We are in the preliminary stages of discussion with the College, and are excited about the opportunity to help create a learning environment at the Park. We believe the Park is an ideal location for a multi use facility that will greatly increase its contribution to the local economy as well as serving the needs of many user groups.

Bowron Connector

This Project is now in the formative stage of working with government departments to enable the project to move ahead. Working on the project include local MLA's, the Mayor of Wells, CRD Area Director, representatives of the City of Quesnel and Prince George local government and individual representatives of the business communities.

In the latest study, Government Plan Barkerville's Future, they state "that if this route was completed it would provide the opportunity for circular tours of the area and make Barkerville more accessible".

We feel that this route would provide long-term economic benefits for surrounding communities, by putting into place road infrastructure that will promote tourism; Tourists coming in by Air (New International Airport. PG), Vehicle (Tourists coming from or going to Alberta,), Bus Tours, Casino Tours, New Train Tours, Local tours, cruise ship tour packages and local residents bringing visitors to the area along a *"new circle tour"*.

(Bowron Connector continued)

Highway 26 connecting onto Highway 16 is what the *Heartland Strategy* is all about. Putting into place road infrastructure that will promote tourism and long-term economic benefits and development within the Northern Heartland Region.

Widespread support for the Project is being sought as a means to develop this tour of interest to the tourist industry to include both local weekend travelers and visitors from around the world. By having this route would stimulate the Quesnel economy, it would be just another way to encourage visitors to the area.

Community Forest

The Quesnel Community and Economic Development Corporation (QCEDC) is exploring the feasibility of a community forest for Quesnel and area. QCEDC's mission is to facilitate the development of the local economy by working with existing businesses to grow, expand and develop, and by attracting new businesses, entrepreneurs and investment to the area. A community forest may provide benefits consistent with QCEDC's mission. Several other communities in B.C. have obtained community forest licences and are successfully operating them.

QCEDC is considering applying for a community forest licence in 2004/2005. We propose that an arms length municipal corporation would manage the forest. This corporation would consist of a board or team of community representatives that would make the major decisions after consulting with the public. Income from the community forest would go first toward basic community forest operations, and if an additional surplus were available, the funds would go towards community economic development, including additional community forest investment.

National Hiking Trail (BC)

The National Hiking Trail is a vision of a non-motorized hiking trail across the country. The goals of the NHT (from the NHT website <http://www.nationaltrail.ca/>):

For over thirty years, Hike Canada En Marche has been working on the vision of a footpath across Canada. But the trail is not an end in itself; it is a means of achieving these four goals:

1. To promote general fitness through healthy outdoor activities;
2. To help preserve places of natural, scenic, heritage, and historical values;
3. To promote non-motorized tourism and education; and
4. To promote bonding of unifying environmental interests across the nation.

The BC portion of the NHT is described on the BC NHT page. The trail begins/ends in Bella Coola and crosses the grease trail to the Blackwater and into Quesnel. From Quesnel the trail is proposed

(National Hiking Trail continued)

to follow the north side of the Quesnel River to Gravelle Ferry, and on to Likely. From Likely the route will cross the Gold Rush Trail to Barkerville/Wells, over the Goat River Trail to Crescent Spur and over mountain ridges to Alberta.

Quesnel will benefit from becoming the hub of the BC portion and from the establishment of a beautiful day-hike from Quesnel to Gravelle Ferry along the Quesnel River.

Some local people involved: Robin Grady, Paddy Doherty, Dwight Dodge, Judy Campbell

Nature Education and Resource Centre

Baker Creek Enhancement Society has been providing environmental restoration, nature education, and youth employment/training for 10 years. Baker Creek Enhancement Society opened the Nature Education and Resource Centre two years ago.

Advisory Committee composed of Continuing Education, C.N.C., U.N.B.C., Quesnel Naturalists, Quesnel Environmental Society, Parkland Community Association, and the Tourism Information Centre.

The Nature Education and Resource Centre currently employs 1.5 full time jobs as well as biological contract work. The centre provides school, youth and community nature education programs. The centre also provides trail development at West Fraser Timber Park, environmental input into community programs, projects, stormwater drain filter project with Save On Foods, creek and wetland restoration projects and various other community programs designed to raise awareness and protect our local environment.

An important part of the Baker Creek Enhancement Society is bringing environmental funding into Quesnel and providing employment and training for local youth. Over the last 10 years the Baker Creek Enhancement Society has brought in over \$800,000 dollars of government and foundation funding into Quesnel.

Performing Arts Theatre

At the present time the Quesnel and District Community Arts Council has formed a committee to look at building a Performing Arts Theatre.

In 1985 a Performing Arts Theatre was to have been part of the referendum when the Arts Centre, the second ice arena and Alex Fraser Park Complex was put to referendum. At the time the group believed that the public would not support such a large expenditure of money and the Performing Arts Theatre was dropped. (The taxpayers have now paid for the above-mentioned facilities.) The Performing Arts Theatre has been under discussion off and on for some time and a committee was formed two months ago. The committee has met and has looked at other options such as Maple Drive School and have been told that the school is not available. Discussions have also been

(Performing Arts Theatre continued)

held with other communities that have built Performing Arts Theatres or have renovated large buildings Ex. Vernon, Fort St. John, Prince Rupert, Naniamo). The committee is in the very early

stages of looking at the feasibility of building a five hundred seat Performing Arts Theatre that would be attached to the Arts and Recreational Centre. During the past few years there is an increasing number of performing artists in both music and theatre. The Performing Arts Centre would allow us to bring in larger name artisans. As theatre and music are increasing sources of revenue in our community we often miss out because the Correlieu Theatre is not available or it is too small. (The B.C. Festival of the Arts was awarded to Fort. St. John and the revenue for local businesses totalled one million dollars. In Vernon the theatre brought in over one million dollars in ticket sales in its first year of operation.)

The Performing Arts Theatre Committee will continue to meet over the summer and formulate plans. A community meeting is planned for October.

The building of the Performing Arts Theatre is a long-term project!

Quesnel Airshed Roundtable

The Quesnel Airshed Roundtable is composed of a cross section of the community. Representatives from local industry, local and provincial governments, community health, environmental groups and concerned citizens. We are involved in a process to develop an Airshed Plan. The goal is to tackle all sources of air pollution, from backyard burning to large industrial sources.

Activities include:

- Additional monitoring of pollution sources
- Identifying present air pollution problems
- Producing a plan for short and long term steps for improving air quality
- Implementing these solutions while maintaining jobs.

Intended Outcomes:	2004	2010
pm10	50	40
pm25	30	18

Quesnel Hockey Academy

In September of 2002, the Quesnel Hockey Academy (QHA) was formed from a three-way partnership between Quesnel Secondary School (QSS), Quesnel and District Minor Hockey Association, and the Quesnel School District and registered as a non-profit society. The QHA supports and delivers the instruction of the Hockey Canada Skills program at Quesnel Secondary

(Quesnel Hockey Academy continued)

School to grade 8, 9, and 10 students in the Physical Education program. It is also available to qualified grade 11 and 12 students in the Career Prep and Independent Directed Studies programs.

The vision of the QHA is to become the Regional Center for player skill development for local, provincial, and international student hockey players within five years. September 2004 will see the opening of the Skating Acceleration Training Center and the introduction of the international student program. There will be approximately 65-70 local students enrolled and talks are continuing to enroll a number of students from Korea and Japan. As of September 2004, the level of the QHA goals achieved will be 75%. Funding is always an issue and large corporate sponsors are now being pursued. The QHA is one of only three hockey skills training centres in western Canada and needs a multiplex centre in which to become the world class training centre of its vision.

Quesnel International Student Program

The Quesnel International Student Program allows international students from secondary schools to attend one of our two secondary schools. While attending either Correlieu Secondary School or Quesnel Secondary School, they will be living with a family in the community through a program called Home Stay. Home Stay will match up the student with the best family for them. The family will provide all the necessities for the student as well as welcome the student in to their family. While in Quesnel taking a one-year or multi-year program here the student will immerse themselves in our community and learn Canadian Cultures, as well as, experience the British Columbia curriculum. If, at the end of their stay, the student meets the graduation qualifications they will obtain a British Columbia diploma, the Dogwood. It is anticipated that between 30-40 students will come to Quesnel this fall.

Quesnel Youth Soccer Association ("QYSA") New Facility

Conceptually, for years - the present venue is not in the healthiest environment (proximity to the city garbage dump, United Concrete and the pulp mills), plus QYSA has been pushing maximum capacity for some time. The Business Plan to develop a financially self-sustaining facility was pulled together late 2001

QYSA (with support from BC Soccer in recognizing as the official "Northern Regional Training Facility") is presently the sole driver, however our Business Plan acknowledges and identifies the need to involve other sports and recreations - while soccer will be the backbone, we realize that the facility cannot be an exclusive-use facility for soccer.

We are approaching the conclusion of Phase One (Five mini-outdoor fields; three full-sized outdoor fields; parking lot, signage and landscaping; construction of clubhouse with washrooms and change

(Quesnel Youth Soccer Facility continued)

rooms). The fields are in (we may be playing there Fall-04, more likely Spring-05), we are now looking to construct the clubhouse, funds for which are just about in place.

Phase Two is where the facility becomes international class, and creates a serious economic draw to Quesnel, with the construction of an indoor complex (adding on to the clubhouse): capacity for two full-sized soccer fields, 40ft ceiling, walking track, spectator areas... This is when QYSA and Quesnel starts to bring in and anchor players from across the north to our facility: matches, tournaments, coaching sessions and clinics....year-round. As an add-on, the meeting room space within the facility could be used for conferencing purposes.

Community and political support appear to be in place - financial support is the issue, having been declined by SICEAI, and unsure of local support re 2010 Legacies, the project is in danger of stalling after Phase One and not realizing it's full potential - as a sports facility and as an economic boost for the city and region.

South Quesnel Business Association

The South Quesnel Business Association (SQBA) has determined a number of priorities for 2004-2005. These include:

- Develop and use a logo, jingle and mascot
- Develop a kiosk for Wal-Mart parking lot that will provide a map for tourists and information on all businesses in SQBA
- Investigate pull-out area for RVs on Hwy 97, between 7-11 and Tim Hortons. Pull-out area would provide washrooms, tourist information, business information, green space and ultimately, link to Quesnel Riverfront Trail
- Develop a year-long calendar of events for the South Quesnel area
- Publish a regular newsletter
- Investigate additional funding opportunities

West Quesnel Information Kiosks

The West Quesnel Business Association is in the process of installing an outdoor visitor's centre to include a stand-alone kiosk featuring a map of the 'west country' which will identify key tourist destinations along with historical heritage sites in West Quesnel. The Kiosk will be approx. 16' wide and will be designed to compliment existing City signage and our "Welcome West" sign. The

(West Quesnel Information Kiosks continued)

signage will include areas of opportunity for advertising as well. A portion of the site will be developed as a 'picnic' area and the entire area will be landscaped and will also include a parking area. The location for this kiosk is a piece of city property located between Spartan Printing and 7-11. The City has recently approved the project and the association is currently putting together a bid package for the project. We currently have a small group of approx. 5 people working (2 active) on this project and have a low budget. We are seeking funding opportunities on the federal and provincial level.

Multi-Purpose Facility

- Present Arena is 54 years old with very outdated accommodations
- Seating capacity is for 1000, most events need much more than this to make any profit
- Warmth in the winter cannot be maintained
- Coolness in the summer cannot be maintained
- Bench seat with no backs are very uncomfortable
- Netting to protect spectators makes visibility very poor
- Lobby is a congested bottle neck
- Ticket office is small and outdated
- Over wiring for what the present system can handle is a problem with breakers
- Meeting room very limited with space and good appearance

*Much discussion, survey, and investigations have been done in the past 10 years for the need of a multi purpose center

*Lack of public pressure to the elected officials has let city and sub regional rest on this project. City and Sub-Regional have not had a good working relation with any Recreation Projects, which in turn has put this in a Stall Mode because of its huge cost.

Citizens in Quesnel would profit from this project for years and years to come. Keeping us competitive with other communities, for our sport, art, culture, and social activities.