

NEWS RELEASE

Distributed November 15, 2016

Council receives results from first phase of Event Centre study

Phase II set to kick off with public engagement as priority

Summary

Nanaimo City Council has received the phase one results of an events centre study completed by Toronto architecture firm Brisbin Brook Beynon (BBB) which considered the initial criteria needed to make an informed decision on whether or not Council should direct staff to undertake planning that would lead to the construction of an events centre on one of two possible sites.

Conducted over a four-week period from September through October of this year, the study provided Council with an initial overview of a proposed Nanaimo-based event centre's financial, physical and planning realities along with information concerning its benefits. Key among the report's findings was the conclusion that Nanaimo's current market characteristics present a favourable opportunity to capitalize on audiences and users wanting access to a multi-purpose event facility along with event operators looking to bring their festivals, concerts and other occasions to a community like Nanaimo and its surrounding region.

Phase two of the study is now set to start with a second report scheduled to return to Council on December 19. The report will focus on in-depth market research, economic impacts, concept design, capital costs, further site studies, operating proforma, project funding and a formalized meeting with the Western Hockey League. In addition, the City will begin a public engagement campaign to get input on the findings of the first report, overall support for an event centre and any additional information that may help form future decisions.

Strategic Link: The establishment of an events centre (sport and entertainment centre) is listed as one of Council's five key capital projects.

Key Points

- Nanaimo City Council is encouraging the residents of Nanaimo to participate in a variety of public engagement opportunities set to start the week of November 14 and continue through December 18. Opportunities will include public information meetings, surveys and online feedback.
- The first public information meeting will be held Thursday, November 24 from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm in the Beban Park Social Centre. Subsequent meetings are planned for December 1 and December 8.
- To learn more about the proposed events centre or to review/watch the available presentation materials, please visit the City's website - a link has been provided in the online version of this new release.

Quotes

"The presentation from the consultant was a great start in peeling back the layers of the onion and learning more. This is a great lead into a conversation with the community and I look forward to drilling down further. This is a big decision for Nanaimo. We need to get this right and ensure we are listening and in fact hearing our citizens on this potentially, very large investment."

Bill McKay
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

Quick Facts

- The phase one study proposed two possible sites for an event centre located in Nanaimo - the Howard Johnson site located at Comox Road and Terminal Avenue and the 1 Port Drive site located on the south downtown waterfront. At this time, no decision on either site has been made. See presentation for details - a link has been provided in the online version of this news release.

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