

Nanaimo CITY UPDATES

What's inside

01

Events centre update

03

Open house schedule

02

Referendum information

04

What's next

Proposed events centre moves to next planning stage

Nanaimo residents will get a chance to learn more about a proposed events centre for the Harbour City in early 2017. Assessing the cost, financing options, design and public support for a new events centre in Nanaimo are key steps in the next phases of a six-phase planning process.

The proposed Nanaimo events centre offers significant economic opportunities for the City—such as providing a tourism anchor, boosting downtown revitalization efforts, anchoring the waterfront and creating a new cultural space as per the City's Cultural Plan. It will also create jobs and help draw visitors to the area, offering significant ripple effects to benefit the City.

The opportunities it offers also reflect Council's strategic priorities including improvement of the South Downtown Waterfront, seeking and developing opportunities for recreation, culture, sports and tourism and promoting community wellness.

The proposed events centre will cost up to \$80M and will be paid for through current revenue streams, causing no property tax increase for residents or property owners.

Numerous studies (including financial analysis, transportation, sewer service, road design and geotechnical and environmental assessments) have been completed and City Council has agreed to move forward with a non-election assent vote (referendum) on a loan authorization bylaw seeking public support to borrow the required \$80M for the project.



The proposed events centre would anchor the South Downtown Waterfront walkway area and draw visitors to the city.

WELCOME!

Welcome to the City of Nanaimo's newsletter. This newsletter has been created to help keep the community informed of new projects, ongoing initiatives and upcoming events.

It will be mailed out to homes in the community twice a year and will also be posted online via the City's website and social media accounts.

Questions/comments about content? Please email newsletter@nanaimo.ca.

Referendum date proposed for March 11

In early 2016, City Council approved a three-year strategic plan that included the construction of an events centre to complement existing facilities, boost tourism and enhance cultural and recreational opportunities in Nanaimo.

Residents and property owners in Nanaimo will be asked whether they support borrowing funds to build an events centre in a non-election assent vote (referendum) proposed for Saturday, March 11.

The question will be:

Are you in favour of the City of Nanaimo Council adopting Loan Authorization Bylaw 2017 No. 7237 which will authorize Council to borrow a sum not exceeding \$80,000,000, repayable over a period of no more than 20 years, for the development and construction of an event centre that will include an ice arena and other related entertainment, cultural and recreation facilities?

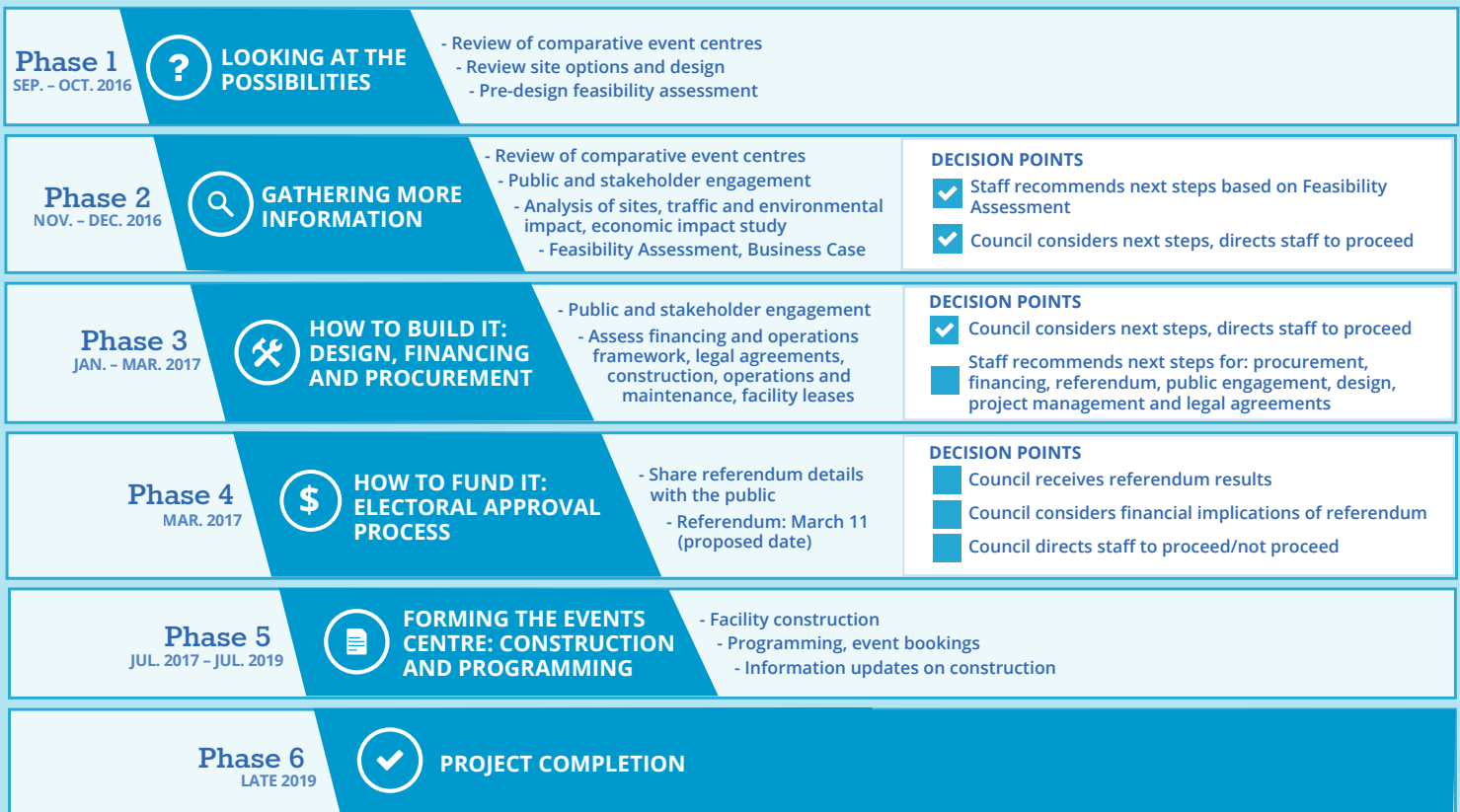
Watch for a separate mail-out closer to voting day with more details about the referendum, including details on times/ locations, ID requirements and more. Learn more about the project and the referendum at www.nanaimo.ca/eventscentre.

FOUR KEY PRINCIPLES: NANAIMO EVENTS CENTRE

In December, City council highlighted four key principles to guide the design, financing, construction and operations of a proposed events centre:

1. Ensure the interests of the citizens of Nanaimo are protected;
2. The events centre is a community meeting place catering to all and promoting community wellness;
3. Funding for development and operations of the events centre come from a mix of public, private and other sources; and
4. The events centre is complementary to existing facilities and is a catalyst for downtown revitalization.

Proposed Events Centre Timeline



Preferred location selected

On January 23, Council selected the preferred location for the proposed events centre: 1 Port Drive.

After assessing two sites—1 Port Drive and the Howard Johnson site—it was determined 1 Port Drive located on Nanaimo's waterfront was better suited.

Because the City already owns the 1 Port Drive site, this location offers reduced costs related to construction, site remediation and access. It also scored better in assessment of geotechnical issues and transportation requirements. The City has engaged with the Snuneymuxw First Nation and key stakeholders on this project and will continue to do so.

To learn more and read the site assessments, visit www.nanaimo.ca/eventscentre.



Council has identified 1 Port Drive on the waterfront in downtown Nanaimo as the preferred site for a proposed events centre.

Comments highlight key topics of interest

During November and December, the City asked the community for their initial thoughts/feedback on a proposed events centre.

Using a range of tools including social media, open houses and online, telephone and mail surveys, residents were asked about their level of support and what their main questions were about the proposed events centre.

Some of the top questions were:

- **How much would it cost?** \$80M.
- **How will the City pay for it?** Borrowing would be required, and repaid via existing revenue streams.
- **How will it affect my property taxes?** It won't. Existing funds will cover the borrowed costs, creating no tax increase.
- **Where will it go?** Council has identified 1 Port Drive as the preferred site.
- **How can it be feasible?** Financial analysis and review by Ernst & Young has indicated a sound business case, with the securing of an anchor tenant, such as a Western Hockey League team.
- **Why build this?** An events centre offers significant economic development, job creation and tourism prospects while also adding new recreation opportunities for City residents and anchoring the development of the South Downtown Waterfront.

PROPOSED EVENTS CENTRE OPEN HOUSE SCHEDULE

A series of six public open houses are scheduled to share information with residents and property owners so that they can make an informed decision in a referendum proposed for March 11. Hope to see you there!

1. **Thursday, February 9, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm**
Dodd Narrows Room, Vancouver Island Conference Centre (101 Gordon St.)
2. **Wednesday, February 15, 11:30 am to 1:30 pm**
Upper Cafeteria, Vancouver Island University (900 Fifth St.)
3. **Thursday, February 16, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm**
Oliver Woods Community Centre (6000 Oliver Rd.)
4. **Tuesday, February 21, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm**
Loyal Order of Moose Hall (1356 Cranberry Ave.)
5. **Thursday, February 23, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm**
Harewood Activity Centre (195 Fourth St.)
6. **Wednesday, March 1, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm**
Beban Park Social Centre Lounge (2300 Bowen Rd.)

What's Next

25 / January

COUNCIL MOVES FORWARD

City Council completed all three readings to move forward with non-election assent voting (referendum) that would ask residents about their support for a loan authorization bylaw required to borrow funds for the proposed events centre.

9 / February

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES BEGIN

A series of six open houses to be held over four weeks will provide additional information so that the community can make an informed decision in the proposed referendum. Dates, times and locations for these events are listed on page 3.

11 / March

PROPOSED REFERENDUM VOTING DAY

Residents and property owners cast their vote in a referendum about borrowing required for the development and construction of an events centre.

Watch your mailboxes for additional information about voting times and locations including advanced voting days.

For more info about the referendum, visit www.nanaimo.ca/eventscentre.



Residents attended open houses in November and December 2016 to learn more about the proposed events centre.

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

The proposed Nanaimo Events Centre is a significant project that requires a lot of planning and assessment before proceeding. To help keep the community in the loop on the latest news and info, a project webpage has been created.

Watch www.nanaimo.ca/eventscentre for project updates, upcoming events and current information.

In addition, residents are encouraged to stay informed on all City news by following us on Twitter, Facebook, and watching for ads in local media including newspapers and radio.

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is created and distributed by the City of Nanaimo to share news and information about ongoing initiatives, new projects and upcoming events. Watch for these updates to be mailed and posted online seasonally or as needed. Questions, comments?

(250) 754-4251

newsletter@nanaimo.ca

[@cityofnanaimo](https://www.facebook.com/cityofnanaimo)

