



REGIONAL DISTRICT
of Fraser-Fort George

**Community
Services**

February 22, 2016



ROBSON VALLEY EXPLORATION AND LEARNING SERVICE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

On April 30, the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George will seek the approval of electors (formerly referred to as referendum) to establish the Robson Valley Exploration and Learning Service. This service would provide the funding through taxation to purchase the building located at 521 Main Street in McBride as the new location of the McBride & District Public Library and the Valley Museum and Archives.

Why do we need a new building for the Library and Museum?

The Library and Museum Boards have advocated for bigger premises for several years. A feasibility study conducted by the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George assessed that for reasons of limited space and deteriorating building conditions, the library and museum need a different space if they are expected to continue to serve McBride and area.

How much will this cost?

The projected cost for the purchase of the building and related expenses (renovations and repairs, engineering report and contingencies) is \$668,230. The Library and Museum have fundraised and received grants totaling \$47,700 which brings the total to be borrowed down to \$620,530. With an annual operating budget of \$74,550, the taxation impact on residents within the service area would be \$27.47 per \$100,000 of assessed property value. For business properties, the impact per year would be \$67.30 per \$100,000 of assessed property value. The McBride and District Public Library and the Valley Museum and Archives are committed to continue their fundraising activities to reduce the cost to the taxpayers.

Are there any grants available to pay for this?

Initially the Library and Museum hoped to cover the entire purchase of the building through grant funding and fundraising. However, most grants cover work for improvements to buildings already owned by the applicant versus grants to purchase a building. The Library and Museum have fundraised and received small grants totaling \$47,700, which will be applied against the purchase costs.

Could they just renovate the building(s) they're in?

As part of the Feasibility Study, many options were explored, including renovations to the current space. In order to acquire the space needed for the Library and Museum, it would be necessary to build a second floor onto the library building or bring a modular trailer on-site for additional space. The cost of this option is estimated at \$1,052,100.

Regional District of Fraser-Fort George Main Office:

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Robson Valley Exploration and Learning Service Frequently Asked Questions cntd.

What other locations and options have been considered?

The feasibility study looked at building a new facility on lots owned by the Museum. The cost of new construction was estimated at over \$1.6 million. In recent years, the Library and Museum worked with a consultant and assessed a number of vacant properties deemed to be acceptable for a new facility based on cost, space and accessibility. In the end, it was determined that the purchase of 521 Main Street is the most cost-effective and provides the necessary space for the Library and Museum to operate and have improved space for storing of the Museum artifacts.

We already pay taxes for libraries in the Regional District. Can't we just use that?

The Robson Valley Library Service was established in 1983 to provide funding through taxation for the operation and maintenance costs of libraries in Valemount, McBride and Dome Creek. Funding capital purchases for a library is not permitted under this service which is why the Robson Valley Exploration and Learning Service is being proposed.

Who will own the building?

The building will be owned by the Regional District who will enter into a long-term lease with the McBride and District Library Association. The Library will enter into a lease agreement with the Museum.

Will property taxes be collected on the new building?

The Regional District will own the building and will be required to pay property taxes. In order for it to be exempt, the Regional District would need to operate out of the facility as opposed to leasing out the space for another organization to provide the service. The annual cost for property taxes is included in the operating budget for the Robson Valley Exploration and Learning Service.

Am I in the Robson Valley Exploration and Learning Service area?

If you live within the boundary (shown in purple) on the attached map, you are within the service area.

Am I eligible to vote?

Information on voter eligibility (resident and non-resident) will be available at the community information meetings and through notices published in local newspapers over a 3-week period in the month leading up to the April 30 vote. Inquiries about voting can be directed to Karla Jensen, Chief Election Officer for the Regional District at 250-950-4400 or 1-800-667-1959.

Where can I get more information?

Information about the proposed new service is available on the Regional District website at www.rdffg.bc.ca. There you will find the feasibility study approved by the Regional District, information about the service area and any community updates about the project that have been published, as well as voting information as it becomes available. There will also be a series of community meetings March 30-31.

Community Information Meetings

Dunster Community Hall

7085 Read Rd.

Time: 4:30 pm

Date: March 30, 2016

McBride Elks Hall

172 Holdway St.

Time: 7:30 pm

March 30, 2016

Dome Creek Community Facility

13741 Dome Creek Rd.

Time: 7:00 pm

March 31, 2016

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