



December 17, 2015

Regional District seeks opportunity for electors to decide on Robson Valley Exploration and Learning Service

The Regional District of Fraser-Fort George is seeking approval by assent of the electors through an assent vote (formerly referred to as referendum) to establish a new service to fund the purchase of a building to be used for the McBride and District Public Library and the Valley Museum and Archives.

The Regional District Board received a feasibility study on the establishment of the service that identified a number of factors including limitations and challenges of current facilities; current and future needs; options considered to meet the needs of the library and museum; and a recommendation to purchase a building located at 521 Main Street in McBride. The feasibility study was developed by the Regional District, working with a committee comprised of representatives of the library, museum, Village of McBride and Regional District.

The McBride and District Public Library and the Valley Museum and Archives have advocated for bigger premises for several years. The feasibility study 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.

Three options were explored in the study – renovate the existing library and annex; build a new facility on vacant lots owned by the museum; and purchase the building at 521 Main Street. Based on the information provided in the study, the purchase of 521 Main Street has been identified as the best option. It is the most cost-effective and provides the necessary space for the library and museum to operate and provides improved storage space for museum artifacts. The location is highly visible and considered a major benefit to help attract visitors.

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 proposed service area includes all properties in Area H east of Small River and the Village of McBride. (see attached map) There are an estimated 988 dwellings in the area.

The Board will be forwarding service establishment bylaws to the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development. If the Ministry approves the bylaws, the assent vote will be held within 80 days of the Ministry's approval.

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Robson Valley Exploration and Learning Service Area

