The City of Prince George will be holding a referendum on October 28, 2017, concerning the re-building of the Four Seasons Leisure Pool and Fire Hall #1.
WHAT’S THE ISSUE?

Re-investing in aging infrastructure is a priority for municipalities everywhere and Prince George City Council has identified “prioritizing infrastructure needs and investment” as one of its focus areas. Fire Hall #1 and the Four Seasons Leisure Pool are old, and re-building them was part of the 2017-2021 Financial Plan that Council approved earlier this year. They require approval of the electors, however, because the loans that would enable construction would be paid back over a period of more than five years. The “assent voting process” (also known as a referendum) for these projects will be on October 28, 2017.

Fire Hall #1 does not accommodate modern firefighting equipment such as the City's largest ladder truck, which is stationed at a hall further away from the City's tallest buildings.

FIRE HALL #1

Located next to City Hall at 7th and Dominion, the City's main fire hall is more than 60 years old. Council has received a Fire Underwriters Survey, a Standards of Cover Review, and a Condition and Functionality Assessment – all of which indicate that Fire Hall #1 is no longer suitable to meet current standards as an emergency response (fire and rescue) facility, emergency operations centre (EOC), and Fire Operations Communications Centre.

A new fire hall, in a new location, would house modern firefighting equipment and improve response times to more of the City. It would also ensure that Prince George is better positioned to respond to emergencies and provide enhanced fire dispatch services. A new Fire Hall #1 is expected to cost about $15 million.
The Four Seasons was built in 1970 and is nearly 50 years old.

FOUR SEASONS LEISURE POOL

Located downtown, the Four Seasons Leisure Pool is one of two civic pools. The other is the Aquatic Centre located in Exhibition Park. The Four Seasons received more than 120,000 visits in 2016 and provides nearly 80% of the swimming lessons delivered in Prince George.

An Aquatic Needs Assessment was completed in 2016 and identified the need for a pool replacement. The report found that the Four Seasons is highly valued for its location and the programs it offers, but that it is nearing the end of its service life. Accessibility, especially for people with mobility challenges, is inadequate, and parts of the facility do not meet modern safety standards. In addition, the building’s structural and operating systems require significant investment beyond routine maintenance. In fact, the Aquatic Needs Assessment identified retrofits totaling nearly $10.3 million. The replacement cost is estimated to be $35 million.

Watch videos that depict the current state of Fire Hall #1 and the Four Seasons Leisure Pool

www.princegeorge.ca/referendum
WHAT IS BEING PROPOSED?

**FIRE HALL #1**

The replacement for Fire Hall #1 is proposed to be built on the south side of Massey, near the intersection with Carney Street. This location would enhance service to more of Prince George. In fact, the proposed location would increase by 50% the area firefighters could reach within eight minutes, compared to the current location of Fire Hall #1. Research shows that an eight-minute response time is critical for keeping fires contained to one room. After eight minutes, fires can spread into the rest of a structure, greatly increasing the risk of fatalities.

The proposed location of the new Fire Hall #1 increases the 8-minute response area by 50% over the present location of Fire Hall #1. The proposed site is owned by the City of Prince George. No land purchase is necessary.
FOUR SEASONS LEISURE POOL

The City is proposing to re-build the pool beside its present location so that the Four Seasons could remain open during construction. The site currently has a Days Inn hotel, which the City will purchase subject to approval in the referendum.

Residents who participated in the Aquatic Needs Assessment last year indicated a preference for keeping the pool downtown. The City also sees a new pool as critical to ongoing efforts to advance the downtown and attract people into the core with improved amenities and services.

The Four Seasons is highly valued for its downtown location, as well as the programs it offers.

Proposed Pool Features

- Improved design such that everyone who wishes to access and use the facility can do so, regardless of their age, ability, or needs
- Diverse pools:
  - A shallow and warm pool for toddlers, swimming lessons, and therapy (25 metres long and 4 lanes wide)
  - a leisure pool with beach entry and various water features, such as a slide
  - a main pool 25 metres in length and 6 lanes wide
- Spacious change rooms, including universal/family change rooms
- A hot tub, sauna, and steam room
- Space for public gatherings and instruction
REFERENDUM INFORMATION

The City’s referendum web page is regularly updated with information about the referendum, voting days and locations, the current state of the Four Seasons Pool and Fire Hall #1, and plans for what new facilities would contain.

www.princegeorge.ca/referendum

This web page includes a number of questions and answers related to the voting process, the facilities, and next steps. Some examples:

HOW MUCH WOULD THESE BUILDINGS COST ME?

A: Taxes are based on the assessed value of each individual property so the answer is different for everybody. Nevertheless, the City has estimated what the cost will be per $100,000 of assessed value. For a new Fire Hall, this amount is $8.45 per year. A new Four Seasons Pool would cost $19.71 per $100,000 of assessed value per year.

If a property is assessed at $300,000, for example, the annual cost of a new Fire Hall would be $25.35. A new pool would be $59.13. For both, the total annual increase on the property taxes would be $84.48.

These figures are based on a 20-year loan and an interest rate of 3%.

WHAT IS THE PLAN FOR PARKING AT A NEW POOL LOCATION DOWNTOWN?

A: The proposal for a new pool on the current Days Inn site includes parking on the 6th Avenue side of the property. In addition, the City is investigating angled parking along 7th Avenue to increase on-street parking beside a new pool. When angled parking was introduced earlier this year on 5th Avenue, it increased parking spots by about 35%.

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO THE EXISTING POOL AND FIRE HALL IF THEY’RE RE-BUILT ELSEWHERE?

A: Council would determine what would happen to each building. It’s possible that they would be demolished, but only after their replacements are built. Like other City-owned lands, these sites could be retained by the City for other civic uses or sold at a later date to facilitate development. These sites are attractive because of their proximity to other Civic facilities such as Canada Games Plaza, the Two Rivers Gallery, the Bob Harkins branch of the Prince George Public Library, and the Rolling Mix Concrete Arena. Previous plans for the downtown indicate this area as ideally situated for various civic facilities and services.

HOW AND WHERE CAN I VOTE?

The ballot will include two separate questions: one for the re-building of the Four Seasons Leisure Pool and one for the re-building of Fire Hall #1. Residents can vote at one of the designated locations in the map to the right on October 28, 2017 or at one of the advance voting locations.
2017 Voting Locations

General Voting Day Voting Locations
- General Voting Day - Saturday, October 28, 2017
  8:00 AM - 8:00 PM

Advance Voting Location
- Advance #1 - Wednesday, October 18, 2017
  8:00 AM - 8:00 PM

Advance Voting Location
- Advance #2 - Thursday, October 19, 2017
  8:00 AM - 8:00 PM

Advance Voting Location
- Advance #3 - Tuesday, October 24, 2017
  8:00 AM - 8:00 PM
Refer to the City's website for more information.
www.princegeorge.ca/referendum