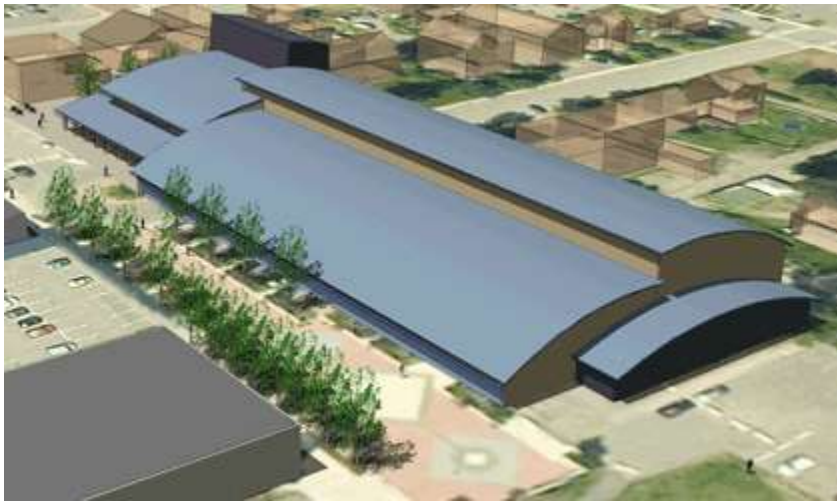


Quesnel Residents Ponder New Multi-Centre

By [Michelle Cyr-Whiting](#)

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Quesnel Multi-Centre Concept Drawing

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The old ice arena in Quesnel is approximately 50-years old and, with maintenance costs rising, the City and the Cariboo Regional District have commissioned a joint task force to examine the public appetite for a new multi-purpose events centre.

The task force first met back in the fall of last year to develop a "concept" for the centre and is now in the process of holding public meetings on a proposed complex that would include a 2,000-seat climate-controlled arena, a 450-seat theatre, and [meeting](#) and event space for up to 250 people.

Task Force Co-Chair, City Councillor Ron Craigmyle, says feedback at the public meetings has been decidedly mixed. He says some people don't want to see their tax bills rise to pay for a facility they wouldn't use, while others feel it would be [good](#) for families, recreation and a source of community pride.

He says the proposed downtown location - at the corner of Barlow Avenue and Vaughan Street - prompts parking concerns, as well. A parking lot is proposed for an adjacent lot. (For more information on the proposal, [click here](#))

As for just how much the project would cost. Craigmyle says, "It's always scary when you put numbers out there when it's a little bit early." He says, "We have a rough price, which I'm reluctant to mention, but it's between \$24- and \$28-million dollars at the present time." The Task Force Co-Chair admits escalating construction costs could push that figure even higher.

Two more public meetings are scheduled before the end of the month. Craigmyle says he expects the Multi-Centre proposal will go to a referendum, involving city residents and CRD residents, either by the end of the year or early in 2008.