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Nechako Valley Exhibition Society Completes Phase 1 of Major Planned Arena Renovation

In 2020 the Nechako Valley Exhibition Society embarked on a multi-phase strategy to upgrade the Indoor Riding Arena & Grandstands portion of the 42-acre Fairgrounds. Grant funding was awarded for the Fire & Life Safety Initiative by District of Vanderhoof, Four Rivers Co-operative Community Support Fund, Northern Development Initiative Trust Community Halls & Recreation Facilities Program, and the federal Gas Tax Fund.

The \$110,000.00 capital project encompassed the replacement of all doors to the arena to meet Fire Code standards including fire resistance and breakaway hardware. The fire alarm system was replaced in entirety, and new emergency and exit lighting were installed. This endeavour significantly improves public safety measures in the building which is used as a year-round recreation facility, equestrian athlete training centre, and the home of two major tourism-drawing events: The Fall Fair and Indoor Rodeo.

Phases 2-4 of the Arena Renovation are in the planning and fundraising stages. These will incorporate upgrades to energy efficient lighting and air filtration systems, replacement of the grandstands, and a restructuring of the mezzanine and lobby areas for universal accessibility and improved marketability.

“I’m pleased to see that residents of Vanderhoof, B.C. and surrounding communities will benefit from safety related upgrades to the multi-use fairground facilities,” said Ron McKinnon, Member of Parliament for Coquitlam – Port Coquitlam. “Through collaboration with our regional partners, we are investing in projects that build strong communities and improve the quality of life for British Columbians now and for the years to come. Canada’s infrastructure plan invests in thousands of projects, creating jobs across the country, and building cleaner, more inclusive communities.”

“These important upgrades in Nechako Valley are a great example of a community-led project that will benefit families in the region,” said Josie Osborne, Minister of Municipal Affairs. “Together with the federal government, the Province is proud to invest in community spaces that will promote an active and healthy lifestyle that will benefit both community members and visitors.”

RDBN Director for Electoral Area “F” Jerry Petersen and NVES Vice President Courtney Siemens are shown here in front of the new entrance doors to the Arena. Director Petersen has been a long-time proponent of the agricultural industry and an instrumental figure in the development of the Exhibition Society. Jerry Petersen said that ‘RDBN Electoral Area “F” (Vanderhoof Rural) is pleased to partner with the Nechako Valley Exhibition Society on this important infrastructure project. The Nechako Valley Fairgrounds support many local club operations and activities and the annual Exhibition is a large tourist attraction for the area. We are so glad to know that this Fire and Life Safety project will help protect the

safety of residents and visitors to the grounds and enable the Fairgrounds to remain a valuable community asset far into the future.’

“The federal Gas Tax Fund is helping B.C. communities to renew and upgrade sport and recreation facilities,” said Councillor Brian Frenkel, president of the Union of B.C. Municipalities. “The fairground is a treasured resource in our community and I am pleased to see this next phase in the renewal of this facility.”

The federal Gas Tax Fund is administered in British Columbia by the Union of B.C. Municipalities.

For more information or to become involved in the next stage of capital improvements, please contact Executive Director Carolyn Leigh at the NVES Office: (250) 567-3011 or NechakoExSociety@outlook.com.

