

RDN Receives Funding for Oceanside Place Arena Energy Upgrades

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) is pleased to announce that a contribution of \$686,369 for the Oceanside Place Arena Heat Recovery and Energy Upgrades project has been approved under the Government of Canada's Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) and the Province of BC's CleanBC Communities Fund (CCF) Program. Oceanside Place Arena uses natural gas heating and is the second largest producer of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of all the RDN's facilities. The grant will fund upgrades to the arena that will reduce the RDN's GHG emissions by 86 per cent and energy use by 47 per cent and support the RDN's long-term plan to reduce facility GHG emissions to near zero.

A detailed evaluation of the arena found the most cost-effective way to reduce GHG emissions and improve energy efficiency is to replace natural gas use with waste heat recovery from the arena's ammonia refrigeration plant. Heat that would normally be emitted externally will instead be retained and combined with new electric heat pump technology to heat the rest of the facility, saving an estimated \$40,000 per year in natural gas costs and reducing overall natural gas usage by 90 per cent. Further GHG reductions and efficiencies will be achieved by:

- Replacing low efficiency natural gas heating and dehumidification equipment with high efficiency electric equipment.
- Modifying existing heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment to be more efficient.
- Ensuring that any new equipment is designed to meet future climate conditions and uses renewable energy sources.
- Reducing water use by approximately 200,000 litres annually, equivalent to two Olympic-sized swimming pools. This is achieved due to a reduction in demand for water as a cooling source for the refrigeration plant.

"In communities across British Columbia, federal infrastructure funding is helping to provide more people with clean, affordable, and reliable energy," said the Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources on behalf of the Honourable Sean Fraser, Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities. "The Oceanside Place Arena Energy project is a great example of how investing in green infrastructure can enhance energy efficiency, save money, and build healthier, more vibrant communities."

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"Investing in local infrastructure like community centres, medical facilities, wastewater systems, and universities directly supports families living across British Columbia," said the Honourable Terry Beech, Member of Parliament for Burnaby North-Seymour and Minister of Citizens' Services. "These projects promote a cleaner, more resilient future while putting more money back into the pockets of Canadians. By focusing on these critical areas, we are not only supporting immediate community needs but also investing in long-term benefits that will improve quality of life and drive economic growth across the province."

"With this joint investment, we are providing communities increased supports to address the climate crisis and create innovative opportunities for everyone," said George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy. "By investing into clean energy projects, we can build a more climate-friendly and affordable future for British Columbians."

"The Regional District of Nanaimo is very grateful for this grant as it will help us get closer to our goal of corporate carbon neutrality by 2032," said Vanessa Craig, RDN Chair. "In addition to reducing GHG emissions, conserving water, and substantially reducing heating and cooling costs, the project also highlights what can be done with new heat pump technologies in larger facilities such as arenas."


Built in 2003, Oceanside Place Arena provides recreational services to residents of Oceanside and surrounding areas. Recent extreme heat events have shown the importance of adding energy-efficient cooling to the arena, and changing demographics show an increased demand for non-ice, community recreation space. Once the upgrades are complete, the arena will have improved indoor air quality, more suitable program space and the ability to operate over a broader range of temperatures to accommodate a variety of uses.

For information on RDN energy and sustainability initiatives and resources, visit rdn.bc.ca/energy-and-sustainability. To view the Regional Growth Strategy and Official Community Plans visit rdn.bc.ca/long-term-plans. To learn about the BC Climate Action Charter, visit: bit.ly/CBCACharter.

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