
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Jail replacement to bring local jobs, enhanced programs

NANAIMO – With \$157 million in capital funding approved, the replacement of Nanaimo Correctional Centre (NCC) will proceed, creating approximately 1,000 project-related jobs and a purpose-built facility that enhances safety, security and space to continue successful programs.

“NCC and the therapeutic community within it have an impressive history of changing lives for the better, and that’s a testament to the hard work of both staff and people in our custody,” said Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General. “We envision a new centre that will better support staff and enhance NCC’s unique, effective programs, including the Guthrie Therapeutic Community (GTC) and vocational and educational programs delivered in partnership with Vancouver Island University.”

Today, government posted a request for qualifications (RFQ) to identify proponents capable of designing and building the new facility on provincial land next to the existing NCC facility. The RFQ is the first stage in a competitive process that invites companies to detail their expertise in delivering a project of this scale. The RFQ is posted at:

<https://www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca/open.dll/welcome?language=En>

“It’s estimated that replacing NCC will bring major regional economic benefits, including approximately 650 direct and 275 indirect jobs, plus nearly 100 spinoff jobs associated with spending by those workers,” said Jinny Sims, Minister of Citizens’ Services.

With a campus-style configuration to maximize the use of the natural surroundings of Brannen Lake, the new centre will be designed to:

- maintain the 190-room capacity of the current centre (80 rooms for medium custody, 50 rooms for GTC and 60 rooms for secure and remand custody);
- add a new 12-room unit for short-term custody for women from Vancouver Island;
- offer modernized spaces for educational, vocational, certified trades and rehabilitative programming, plus specialized areas for food services, health care and working with those with complex mental health and other needs; and
- support culturally responsive programming and spaces through collaboration with the Snuneymuxw and Snaw’Naw’As First Nations.

“Greenlighting NCC’s replacement is great news for construction jobs here in Nanaimo and a compliment to the life-changing programs NCC’s team delivers,” said Sheila Malcolmson, MLA for Nanaimo.

“While completion of this project is a few years away, I want everyone involved with the existing centre to know that it will be business as usual during the construction, with every effort made to mitigate disruptions to work routines and the daily lives of the individuals NCC

supports,” Farnworth said.

Site clearing for the new centre begins in summer 2019 and BC Corrections expects it will be operational by spring 2023.

Quick Facts:

- Originally built as a reform school in 1953, NCC is one of two provincial correctional centres housing only sentenced, open and medium classified individuals who do not require higher levels of supervision.
- GTC accepts sentenced men from correctional centres throughout B.C. The 12-year-old substance treatment program combines work, treatment, counselling and round-the-clock behavioural modelling to address the root causes of addiction, teach fundamental life skills and prepare residents to live crime free upon release. A pilot study found that individuals who have gone through GTC are 33% less likely to reoffend.
- In completing its business case, which determined that NCC should be replaced at its existing location, the project team considered:
 - how it would meet long-term programming needs;
 - the impact on staff, inmates and other justice sector partners;
 - the cost to taxpayers over a 30-year period; and
 - land availability, preparation costs and related implications.
- The project team is working with all impacted stakeholders, including the Snuneymuxw and Snaw'Naw'As First Nations, to discuss opportunities for their involvement with the project.
- Construction will emphasize a net-zero energy-ready performance. This describes a facility that reduces energy usage to the lowest level possible with available technologies and provides infrastructure to support future energy production to achieve net-zero energy use.

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