



## Media Release

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Facts about the Civic Arena replacement**

A candidate running for Vernon Council in the upcoming civic election, Mr. David Deshane, recently posted a video on Facebook making a number of false and incorrect statements related to the Civic Arena. The City of Vernon would like to correct the misinformation.

The RDNO, the Greater Vernon Advisory Committee and Vernon Council followed the lengthy and thorough process to carefully assess the condition of the Civic Arena and the practical decision to move forward with a replacement arena.

Mr. Deshane stated “we were misled about tearing down of Civic Arena” and that “they (presumably referencing Council) paid a City Councillor to write a nearly fictitious report condemning the Civic. Coincidentally, that same architectural firm received the contract for the new replacement arena.” Further, Mr. Deshane stated “the public was intentionally misled to clear the path for the new arena.”

Neither Vernon City Council nor the Regional District of North Okanagan “mislead” the public about the aging condition of the Civic Arena and practical need to replace a building at the end of its useful lifecycle with a modern, efficient facility designed to serve our community and many user groups. Over eight years there have been many studies directed, commissioned and reported in public meetings of the Greater Vernon Advisory Committee (Vernon, Coldstream, Electoral Areas B&C), the Board of Directors of RDNO and Vernon Council.

In January 2014, the RDNO retained Bruce Carscadden Architect Inc. (BCA) and their team of structural, mechanical, electrical and refrigeration engineering consultants to conduct a comprehensive architectural and engineering review and assessment of the Vernon Civic Arena.

The detailed Carscadden Architect Inc. report submitted to GVAC in March 2014, recommended a short term “Life Safety and Maintenance” investment of \$100,000, and further investments over two to five years in the order of \$5 to 6 million and numerous recommended actions to extend the useful life beyond five years. Due to the reported condition of the building and the significant investment necessary to maintain the basic ice function the Greater Vernon Advisory Committee recommended that the Civic Arena be decommissioned as an ice facility.

This initiated the process to replace the Civic Arena. A referendum to borrow \$13,000,000 was passed by electors in November 2015.

A competitive bid process was initiated in February 2016 to secure a qualified architect to design and manage construction of a replacement arena. Four skilled firms submitted responses to the Request for Proposals. MQN Architects (MQN) was the successful firm selected through a rigorous evaluation process.

Councillor Brian Quiring is a principal in MQN and has consistently publicly declared his interest in MQN, advised Council in public meetings and has excused himself from any related decision-making. MQN has guided a highly successful process to deliver Kal Tire North, the replacement arena, on time and within budget.

Council extensively debated the future use of the Civic Arena, including use as an enclosed “shell” once the ice surface was removed. Of note, the ice pad has heaved and fractured and has not been used for dry pad sports since 2012. Council directed that Bourcet Engineering and LTA Consultants Inc. be engaged to assess potential use as a shell and determine costs necessary to convert the structure.

Rene Bourcet, P.Eng. reported “renovating and repairing the Civic Arena, in my professional opinion, does not make economic sense. Upgrading requires two new wall systems to be added along with extensive repairs to the foundation and roof system. The cost would be much higher than new construction.” LTA Consultants Inc. was engaged to estimate probable costs to develop the Civic Arena as a “shelled building ready for redevelopment.”

LTA Consultants stated “our opinion of probable costs estimate develops a total project cost in the range of \$11,000,000 to \$12,000,000 to undertake the structural repair work and develop the building to an open shelled space, ready for interior improvements and fit-out work.” Further, LTA Consultants stated “in comparison, it is our opinion that the equivalent costs of a new modern purpose built shelled space, similar to the Civic Arena, or other recreational facilities, would cost in the \$8,000,000 to \$9,000,000 range.”

Based on the professional opinions of independent qualified consultants, Council decided the practical, cost effective direction was to demolish the 80 year old Civic Arena.

These reports, and the discussions of Council, were all held in open public meetings through to November 2017.