
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2012JAG0318-002014
Dec. 12, 2012

Ministry of Justice

Major step forward for Okanagan Correctional Centre

VICTORIA — The B.C. government takes an important step forward for the Okanagan Correctional Centre (OCC) project today with the release of a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to identify proponents capable of delivering the new facility in the South Okanagan.

The RFQ represents the first stage in the competitive selection process that invites companies to submit responses showing their interest in, and qualifications for, the public-private partnership project. The next step will be to identify a shortlist of up to three qualified proponents who will then be invited to submit proposals to design, build, partially finance and maintain the new correctional centre.

The 378 cell, high-security facility is the centrepiece of BC Corrections' second-phase capital expansion plan. When completed, the new centre will more than double corrections capacity in B.C.'s Interior and will enhance public safety for communities, correctional staff and inmates throughout the province.

The construction cost of the project is estimated to be approximately \$200 million. The OCC will generate significant economic benefits for the region, including the creation of up to 500 direct and 500 indirect construction jobs, as well as approximately 240 new, full-time correctional positions when the centre opens in late 2016. In addition, there will be a number of contracted staff on site such as nurses, doctors, dentists, counsellors, food service workers and trades personnel.

In February 2012, government selected the Osoyoos Indian Band's proposed site in the Senkulmen Business Park on Highway 97 as the preferred location for the new facility. Since then, BC Corrections has been developing a business case, securing funding and co-ordinating with the Osoyoos Indian Band on land use and utilities.

As part of the B.C. government's commitment to a green and energy efficient building strategy, the OCC will be designed to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification and will use wood in accordance with the B.C. Building Code and in keeping with government's Wood First Act.

The project is on target with preliminary site preparation to begin in 2013, construction expected to start in early 2014 and project completion by the summer of 2016.

Quotes:

Shirley Bond, Minister of Justice and Attorney General –

“A new correctional centre in the Okanagan is a significant, long-term investment and is the next step in our government’s aggressive capital plan to expand correctional capacity in the province. The Request for Qualifications is a major step forward for this project that will ultimately create over a thousand jobs and help to keep British Columbians and their families safe.”

John Slater, MLA for Boundary-Similkameen –

“This is an important milestone for a project that will create huge economic opportunities in the South Okanagan. The creation of 500 direct and 500 indirect construction jobs and approximately 240 new, full-time correctional positions will give citizens of the South Okanagan access to well-paying and long-term employment opportunities.”

Quick Facts:

- The OCC will more than double corrections capacity in the Interior and contribute to an overall increase of almost 800 new cells on the Lower Mainland and in B.C.’s Interior and North since 2008.
- The expansion represents the second phase of the BC Corrections capital expansion plan. This follows the \$185-million first phase - the largest capital expansion in BC Corrections’ history to address capacity issues. The first phase includes:
 - A 20-cell expansion for women at Prince George Regional Correctional Centre (opened in December 2010).
 - 104 cells at Alouette Correctional Centre for Women (opened in October 2012).
 - 216 cells at Surrey Pretrial Services Centre (scheduled to open in fall 2013).
- In the meantime, government has added 174 interim beds throughout the province to ease capacity pressures.

Media Contact: Government Communications and Public Engagement
Ministry of Justice
250 356-6961

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: www.gov.bc.ca/connect