
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health Services
Northern Health

TWO TEAMS SHORT-LISTED FOR NEW FORT ST. JOHN HOSPITAL

VICTORIA – Another key milestone has been reached today with the announcement of two pre-qualified bidding teams selected to participate in the request for proposals (RFP) stage to design, build, finance and maintain the new Fort St. John Hospital project, announced Health Services Minister George Abbott.

“Building a new replacement hospital and a new residential care facility in Fort St. John will improve access to even better health care for people in the northeast,” said Abbott. “This project demonstrates our government’s ongoing commitment to providing modern state-of-the-art health-care facilities, while ensuring value for taxpayer dollars.”

The Fort St. John Hospital project includes:

- A 55-bed hospital;
- A 123-bed residential care facility for seniors; and
- An integrated services building for centralized food, laundry and material services.

The new 15,000-square-metre (161,000-square-foot) hospital will replace the aging existing community hospital constructed in 1962. Additionally, the project will bring expanded regional programs and services to the community. The facilities will be constructed on a new 16-hectare (40-acre) site in Fort St. John, with land provided from the City of Fort St. John.

Two bidding teams responded to the request for qualifications (RFQ) that closed on July 8, 2008. Following evaluation of the responses received, both teams were short-listed. They are:

- Peace River Healthcare Solutions; and
- ISL Health.

The teams each have a variety of members who represent B.C.-based companies, as well as national and international companies.

“Short-listing qualified proponents is an exciting step forward in the construction of a new hospital and residential care facility for Northern Interior residents,” said Peace River North MLA Richard Neufeld. “Today’s announcement demonstrates the significance and importance of the project and we are pleased with the highly skilled and qualified bidders that came forward to participate in the process.”

The announcement of the pre-qualified bidders completes the RFQ process, which began on May 6, 2008. The RFQ process identifies bid teams with the development, construction and financial capacity to undertake a project of this size and complexity. An RFP is expected to be issued in late summer 2008.

“This project is important to the northeast,” said Peace River Regional Hospital District chairperson Karen Goodings. “The replacement hospital will provide a tremendous opportunity to improve health care in our community.”

Construction of all the facilities within the project is expected to begin in 2009, with completion targeted for 2011. The new facility will be pursued as a public private partnership. Northern Health will retain ownership of the land and the facilities.

The fairness advisor, Joan Young of the law firm Heenan Blaikie, is the appointed monitor of the procurement process and has found the evaluation process to be fair and unbiased. The fairness advisor’s report will be made available as soon as it is complete, at www.partnershipsbc.ca.

Northern Health delivers health-care services in the northeast through a range of facilities and programs, including hospitals in Fort St. John and Dawson Creek. Those two hospitals share programs to provide a range of specialized services for area residents. Fort St. John Hospital works with hospitals and health facilities across the northeast and currently serves a population of about 69,000, compared to around 4,000 people when the hospital was built in 1962. The northeast population is projected to increase by 21 per cent, to approximately 84,000, by 2028.

All health services will be funded by the Province of British Columbia through Northern Health, in keeping with the Canada Health Act. British Columbia's health system will benefit from more investments like Fort St. John over the next three years as part of the Province’s \$2.7-billion health sector capital plan.

1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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