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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health Services  
Northern Health

### **RFP ISSUED FOR NEW FORT ST. JOHN HOSPITAL PROJECT**

FORT ST. JOHN – Northern Health today issued a request for proposals (RFP) to the two qualified proponent teams short-listed to participate in the RFP phase of the competition to design, build, finance and maintain the new Fort St. John Hospital and residential care facility project.

The RFP's release is a significant stage in the procurement process, bringing the start of the hospital's expansion one step closer.

“A new Fort St. John hospital and a new long-term care facility will improve the quality of care for residents in the northeast,” said Health Services Minister George Abbott. “This expansion is part of our commitment to renew and expand health-care facilities across British Columbia.”

The Fort St. John Hospital project includes:

- A 55-bed acute care hospital;
- A 123-bed residential care facility for seniors; and
- An integrated services building that will provide regional laundry and materiel services, and food services to the Fort St. John facilities.

The facilities will be constructed on a new 16-hectare (40-acre) site in Fort St. John, with land donated by the City of Fort St. John. The new 15,000-square-metre (161,000-square-foot) hospital will replace the aging existing community hospital constructed in 1962. The 5,000-square-metre (54,000-square-foot) residential care development will replace the aging North Peace Care Centre in Fort St. John and add new residential care capacity in the area.

“The need to replace the existing Fort St. John Hospital is clear to everyone, and our government is committed to providing Fort St. John area residents with the best possible care,” said Peace River North MLA Richard Neufeld. “This hospital project is now one step closer to meeting the future patient care and capacity needs for the northeast.”

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.

The two short-listed proponents have been invited to respond to the RFP. Once submissions to the RFP are received and evaluated, a preferred proponent will be selected and offered the opportunity to negotiate an agreement to finance and build the hospital project, as well as to provide hospital facility maintenance services in the long run.

“We are impressed with the level of expertise of the two bidding teams stepping forward to submit proposals for this important project,” said Karen Goodings, chair of the Peace River Regional Hospital District. “We’re happy to see the process moving forward, bringing us that much closer to the start of construction.”

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

The fairness adviser, the law firm Heenan Blaikie, is appointed to monitor the procurement process and has found the evaluation process to date to be fair and unbiased. The fairness advisor’s report will be made available as soon as it is complete, at [www.partnershipsbc.ca](http://www.partnershipsbc.ca).

Northern Health delivers health-care services in the northeast through a range of facilities and programs to a population of about 69,000, which 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.

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1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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