



# Surplus Property Consultation

## Public Input

# Brookmere Schoolhouse and Property



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

**Jackie Tegart, MLA**  
Fraser - Nicola

March 18, 2021

School District No. 58  
PO Box 4100  
1550 Chapman Street  
Merritt, BC  
V1K 1B8

Dear Ms. Ross:

**Re: Notice of Public Consultation - Brookmere Schoolhouse and Property**

I am pleased to provide this letter of support for the donation of the Brookmere schoolhouse and property (located on District Lot 659) to the Brookmere Property Owners Association.

The Brookmere schoolhouse and property has been used by the Brookmere community for over 45 years to host community functions and meetings. The Brookmere Property Owners Association, on a volunteer basis, has maintained the property for the community's benefit. Association members have also donated their time and energy to improve the building, including undertaking large projects such as installing a metal roof and baseboard heaters, and painting both the interior and exterior of the building. This facility is an important part of their community. It provides a critical facility where they can come together as a community.

The Brookmere Property Owners Association would like to become the permanent owners and caretakers of this property but cannot afford to purchase the property for full market value. I support their request to have the building and property donated to them to ensure the location continues to benefit the community in the same way as it does now, as a central community space for public social events and necessary public consultation information meetings.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this matter.

Yours truly,

MLA Jackie Tegart

Cc: Herb Graham, Director Electoral Area N (Beautiful Nicola Valley South)  
Brookmere Property Owners Association

**Ashcroft Constituency Office**  
405 Railway Avenue, Box 279  
Ashcroft, B.C. V0K 1A0  
T 250.453.9726 | F 250.453.9765

**Merritt Constituency Office**  
2-2152 Quilchena Avenue  
Merritt, B.C. V1K 1A1  
T 250.378.8831 | F 250.453.9765

**Legislative Office**  
Room 201, Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4  
T 250.952.7616 | F 250.387.9100





Herb Graham, Director, Area "N"  
(Beautiful Nicola-Valley South)

300-465 Victoria Street  
Kamloops, BC V2C 2A9

Tel: 250-377-8673

Toll Free in BC:

1-877-377-8673

The Region of BC's Best

March 16, 2021

Attention: Barbara Ross  
Merritt School Board Office  
PO Box 4100-1550 Chapman Street  
Merritt, BC V1K 1B8

**Re: Support for Donation of Brookmere School House and Property to Brookmere Property Owners Association**

Dear Barbara Ross,

My understanding is the Board of Education is currently considering the future of a number of surplus properties in Brookmere, including District Lot 659, where the Brookmere School House is located. As Director of Electoral Area "N" (Beautiful Nicola-Valley South), in the Thompson-Nicola Regional District, please accept this letter of support for School District No. 58 to consider donating the Brookmere School House and Property to the Brookmere Property Owners Association.

The Brookmere Property Owners Association has utilized the Brookmere School House building and grounds for over 45 years and hosted several community functions on the property. Recognizing the importance of the building and grounds for the community, the Brookmere Property Owners Association has also played a pivotal role in maintaining the property for community benefit. These citizen volunteers have been important caretakers; donating much time and energy to undertake large projects to improve the building, such as, installing a new metal roof and baseboard heaters and exterior and interior painting, on top of consistently mowing the grounds.

The Brookmere Property Owners Association would like to become the permanent owners and caretakers of this property, but cannot afford to purchase the property for full market value. I support their request to have the building and property donated to them to ensure the location continues to benefit the community in the same way it does now as a central community space for public social events and necessary public consultation/information meetings.

Thank you very much for your consideration into this matter.

Sincerely Yours,

Herb Graham, Director  
Electoral Area "N" (Beautiful Nicola-Valley South)

cc: David Laird, Director, Electoral Area "M" (Beautiful Nicola-Valley North)  
Kenneth Gillis, Chair, Thompson-Nicola Regional District  
Scott Hildebrand, Chief Administrative Officer, Thompson-Nicola Regional District  
Honourable Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Education  
Ms. Jackie Tegart, MLA Fraser-Nicola

***Please note: the views expressed in this letter are not those of the Regional District Board.***

MUNICIPALITIES: Ashcroft | Barriere | Cache Creek | Chase | Clearwater | Clinton  
Kamloops | Logan Lake | Lytton | Merritt | Sun Peaks

ELECTORAL AREAS: "A" "B" "E" "I" "J" "L" "M" "N" "O" "P"

[www.tnrd.ca](http://www.tnrd.ca)

## Sarah Blonde

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**From:** Barbara Ross  
**Sent:** March 27, 2021 1:43 PM  
**To:** Sarah Blonde  
**Subject:** Fwd: NOTICE OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION DISTRICT SURPLUS PROPERTY

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** jeff salazar  
**Date:** March 27, 2021 at 1:17:39 PM PDT  
**To:** Barbara Ross  
**Cc:** Tim Denobrega  
**Subject:** NOTICE OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION DISTRICT SURPLUS PROPERTY

Dear Secretary Treasurer,

FORMER BROOKMERE ELEMENTARY: 55975 Coldwater Road, Brookmere – PARCEL A, PLAN KAP7318B, DISTRICT LOT 659,

We are currently renovating the property and would like to acquire the former schoolhouse in the interest of recreation while restoring the schoolhouse and preserving the local history. We have been exploring the area since the 1990's and love the local railroad and mining history. There is an original outbuilding on our property that is on the property line to the school house. We would like to be stakeholders in the schoolhouse property in Brookmere and purchase this property from you.

We are not sure of the next steps required so please reply at your earliest convenience.

Attached are photos of our property and ongoing renovations neighbouring the Brookmere schoolhouse.

Sincerely,

Jeff Salazar

Tim DeNobrega

## Sarah Blonde

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**From:** Barbara Ross  
**Sent:** April 6, 2021 10:17 AM  
**To:** Ed and Leesa Kuit;  
**Cc:** Sarah Blonde  
**Subject:** RE: support Letter for Notice of Public onsultation- Brookmere Schoolhouse and Property

Thank you Leesa. We will add this to your submission.

Barb

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**From:** Ed and Leesa Kuit  
**Sent:** April 6, 2021 10:14 AM  
**To:** Herb Graham  
**Cc:** Barbara Ross  
**Subject:** support Letter for Notice of Public onsultation- Brookmere Schoolhouse and Property

good morning

Herb, Jackie and Barbara

please see the attached as to our updated request to possibly **donate** the Former Brookmere School House and Property to the Brookmere Property Owners Association

Thank you and a have a great day

BPOA President:

Leesa Kuit

April 6, 2021

To: Herb Graham, Jackie Tegart and Barbara Ross

The Brookmere Property Owners Association Board of Directors held a meeting on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 to discuss moving forward with our request to see if School District #58 would consider donating the former Brookmere School House and Property to the Brookmere Property Owners Association.

There was a quorum present and the result of this meeting of the Brookmere Property Owners Association Board of Directors was to move forward by way of a majority vote. Please see the attached sheet for verification of this by way of signatures from the board of Directors. We are sorry for any confusion in this matter.

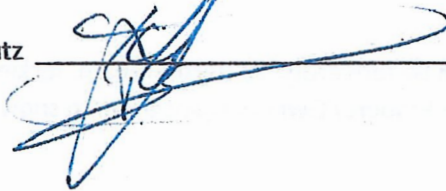
Brookmere Property Owners Association President:

Leesa Kuit



Brookmere Property Owners Association Vice President:

Don Lutz



Results of The Board of Directors for the Brookmere Property Owners Association Held April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2021

Topic of Discussion. Weather or not to move ahead to see if School District #58 would consider donating the Former Brookmere School House and Property to The Brookmere Property Owners Association.

A quorum of Directors was present at the meeting. We have decided to move ahead and await to see if they would release the said building and property To the Brookmere Property Owners Association.

We have the supporting signatures of 5 of the six bord of directors.

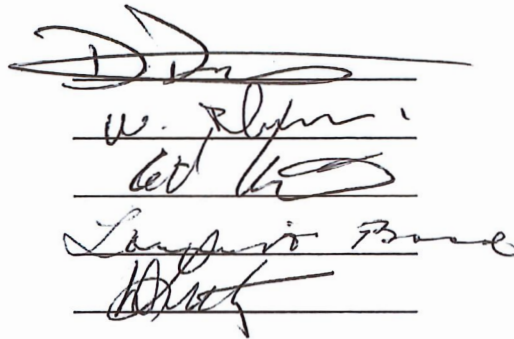
Dan Dispirito

Bill Buckingham

Ed Kuit

Lorne Bond

Darlene Lutz



We have one director opposed

Kim Parkhill

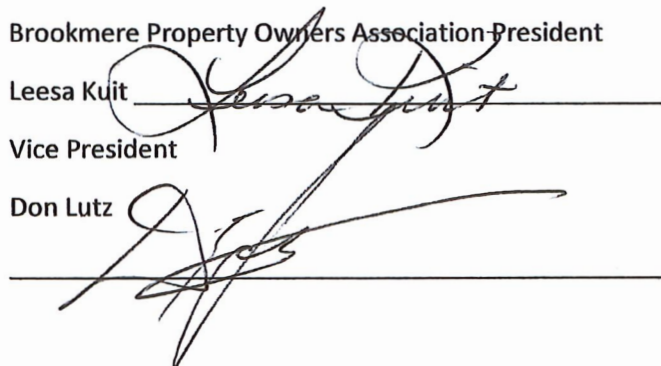
A letter will be forwarded to Herb Graham. Jackie Tegart, MLA, and Barbara Ross, on behalf of the Brookmere Property Owners Association to show these results.

Brookmere Property Owners Association President

Leesa Kuit

Vice President

Don Lutz





**From:** [Barbara Ross](#)  
**To:**  
**Cc:** [Sarah Blonde](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Former Brookmere Elementary and Brookmere Teacherage  
**Date:** April 14, 2021 8:37:41 AM

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Thank you for your comments.

Barb

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**From:**  
**Sent:** April 13, 2021 10:42 AM  
**To:** Barbara Ross  
**Subject:** RE: Former Brookmere Elementary and Brookmere Teacherage

Good Morning

I listened to the Zoom meeting last night concerning the Brookmere Property.

I'm at a loss for words when the TNRD spoke backing this. It makes me wonder what invested interest do they have with this. We both know any monies they promise has to be brought to a resolution then voted on by the board. If they turn it down our little community is in BIG trouble. There are a handful of people that don't seem to look at the 'bigger picture'. Let alone we have not had a community vote.

Thank you

----- Original message -----

From: Barbara Ross  
Date: 2021-04-07 8:42 AM (GMT-08:00)  
To:  
Cc: Sarah Blonde  
Subject: RE: Former Brookmere Elementary and Brookmere Teacherage

Good morning.

Thank you so much for your input. I will include it in our package for Trustees as we move through our process of reviewing school district properties.

Barbara Ross

Secretary Treasurer

School District No. 58 (Nicola-Similkameen)

(250) 378-5161 phone

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**From:**

**Sent:** April 6, 2021 6:26 PM

**To:** Barbara Ross

**Subject:** Former Brookmere Elementary and Brookmere Teacherage

Hello

My name

Our wishes for these two properties are to go for sale to the public so other families can enjoy this little community and it's surrounding beauty.

As you are aware Herb Graham sent a letter on behalf of Brookmere asking for the School House to be gifted to our community. He stepped over his boundry as there has been no public consultation and shouldn't speak on behalf of others without permission.

Brookmere has 16 full time home owners with most of them well over the age of 70 and 18 recreational owner's that frequent once in a while. With that said the burden of owning the Schoolhouse is tremendous on the community. I for one can not afford to be paying any money towards any upkeep or liability if this was to be gifted.

If you are going to sell the properties I would love to see you use the money for books, sports equipment , hire a special needs teacher and the list goes on.

Thank you for your time

Sincerely

**From:** [Barbara Ross](#)  
**To:**  
**Cc:** [Sarah Blonde](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Surplus properties  
**Date:** April 8, 2021 1:04:04 PM

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Good afternoon.

Thank you so much for your input. I will include it in our package for Trustees as we move through our process of reviewing school district properties.

Barbara Ross  
Secretary Treasurer  
School District No. 58 (Nicola-Similkameen)  
(250) 378-5161 phone

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**From:**  
**Sent:** April 8, 2021 11:17 AM  
**To:** Barbara Ross  
**Subject:** Surplus properties

School District 58

We saw the notice in the Merritt Herald concerning the potential sale of surplus school district properties, and we think it would be great to sell them and bring in some much needed money to School District 58.

we are aware of the proposal to donate the former Brookmere Elementary to our community. We feel that having the small community of Brookmere own this building would be a responsibility and financial drain that we don't need, especially since in recent years it has only been used for one meeting a year !

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## Sarah Blonde

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**From:** Barbara Ross  
**Sent:** April 14, 2021 8:37 AM  
**To:** Carol Heinbuch  
**Cc:** Sarah Blonde  
**Subject:** RE: Brookmere schoolhouse

Good morning.

Thank you for this email. I will ensure Trustees receive it.

Barb

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**From:** Carol Heinbuch  
**Sent:** April 13, 2021 4:56 PM  
**To:** Barbara Ross  
**Subject:** Brookmere schoolhouse

To whom it may concern: since we only use the building once a year I don't think it is necessary for us to have it. Besides it was mentioned that the Mla would secure funds for us to maintain the building and the property. If and when he is not elected what then.

Carol Heinbuch

# Riverside Community Centre



March 23, 2021

School District No. 58,  
P.O. Box 4100,  
Merritt, BC, V1K 1B8

Princeton Garden Club,

To Whom it may Concern:

In response to your "Notice of Public Consultations District Surplus Property" for Riverside Community Center.

We are writing this letter to make you aware of our feelings in the potential disposal of what is known as Riverside Community Center in Princeton, BC. An open sale of this asset will have a serious impact on our town. Over the years we understand it has been leased to the town of Princeton.

The local Rotary Club has donated 10's of thousands of dollars and man hours to put in a commercial kitchen! The Arts Council and many of their affiliated groups use one room as their central meeting place. The Drama club who put on amazing and entertaining plays in the wonderful Theater that has been built up over the years. There is so much there that we all feel a part of this wonderful community center. Riverside is currently the place where we will all get our Covid 19 vaccine shots. This is not just an old school it is a part of this town, a place that we are all proud to have in Princeton.

We would like to see at the very least an agreement made with our Town Council for the continued use of this facility and at the very best ownership transferred to the Town of Princeton.

A copy of this letter will be shared with our Town Council so they know that we are behind them in their efforts to keep Riverside as part of our town as our community center!

Thank you from the Princeton Garden Club and our friends.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Doreen Poulsen', written in a cursive style.

Doreen Poulsen, Treasurer.

## Sarah Blonde

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**From:** Barbara Ross  
**Sent:** March 15, 2021 8:27 AM  
**To:** Joyce Edwards  
**Cc:** Sarah Blonde  
**Subject:** RE: Riverside Center

Good morning.

Thank you so much for your input. I will include it in our package for Trustees as we move through our process of reviewing school district properties.

Barbara Ross  
Secretary Treasurer  
School District No. 58 (Nicola-Similkameen)  
(250) 378-5161 phone

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**From:** Joyce Edwards  
**Sent:** March 13, 2021 7:09 AM  
**To:** Barbara Ross  
**Subject:** Riverside Center

School District 58

The purpose of this letter is to encourage School District 58 not to sell the Bldg and Property, known as Riverside Center.

The Chamber of Commerce has used the facility many times to host Trade shows, Community Craft sales, Seminars, and hold gatherings to "welcome." groups that have come to Princeton to host events. Our membership is currently 63 members, and losing this facility would not allow us to hold our members' events.

To lose this facility will be a stab to the heart of all Princeton Groups.

It is vital to this Community for the Town of Princeton to take over the facility

Joyce Edwards  
President  
Princeton & District Chamber of Commerce  
Joyce Edwards  
The Winking Pedlar

## Sarah Blonde

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**From:** Barbara Ross  
**Sent:** March 10, 2021 3:25 PM  
**To:** Ed Vermette  
**Cc:** Spencer Coyne; Sarah Blonde  
**Subject:** RE: Riverside Community Centre

Good afternoon.

Thank you so much for your input. I will include it in our package for Trustees as we move through our process of reviewing school district properties.

Barbara Ross  
Secretary Treasurer  
School District No. 58 (Nicola-Similkameen)  
(250) 378-5161 phone

-----Original Message-----

From: Ed Vermette  
Sent: March 10, 2021 3:14 PM  
To: Barbara Ross  
Cc: Spencer Coyne  
Subject: Riverside Community Centre

10 March 2021

School District #58  
School Board Office  
1550 Chapman Street  
Merritt, BC  
V1K 1B8

The Vermilion Forks Metis Association and its community members write this letter to stress the importance of Riverside Centre in Princeton to all area residents.

As our only Community Centre, Riverside has become the hub for many major events and an asset for those making any long term event planning.

As a community, we need to know that the future of this community hub is secure and will be available to all area resident for many more years.

The Vermilion Forks Metis Association is a charter community of MNBC, and we have great plans for the future. Covid will not be with us forever, and our hopes could include a provincial Metis rendezvous. Without a venue capable of housing such an event, we may not be able continue with our plans or lose it to another town.

Many of our Metis citizens utilize the building through different programs and events, this is very important to our citizens.

The Vermilion Forks Metis Association hope that the School Board will reconsider selling the property, or perhaps a better option would be for the School Board to donate it back to the Town of Princeton so that all area residents can continue to enjoy the many benefits of this facility.

Thank you for any consideration to our letter of concern and we pray for a solution that is in the best interest of all.

Maarsi

Ed Vermette  
Vice-President  
Vermilion Forks Metis Association  
Princeton, BC

## Sarah Blonde

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**From:** Barbara Ross  
**Sent:** March 10, 2021 12:59 PM  
**To:** Heather Anderson  
**Cc:** Cody Naples; Sarah Blonde  
**Subject:** RE: Riverside Aquisition  
**Attachments:** Riverside Aquisition.docx

Good afternoon.

Thank you so much for your input. I will include it in our package for Trustees as we move through our process of reviewing school district properties.

Barbara Ross  
Secretary Treasurer  
School District No. 58 (Nicola-Similkameen)  
(250) 378-5161 phone

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**From:** Heather Anderson  
**Sent:** March 10, 2021 12:55 PM  
**To:** Barbara Ross  
**Cc:** Cody Naples  
**Subject:** Riverside Aquisition

Good afternoon

Please see attached letter of support, from Crimson Tine Players, for the Town of Princeton to purchase Riverside Community center.

**Thank you,**  
**Heather Anderson**



Crimson Tine Players Society,  
Princeton, BC

March 6, 2021

School Board office  
1550 Chapman Street  
Merritt, B.C.

Attention: Stephen McNiven, Superintendent, School District 58  
Barbara Ross, Secretary Treasurer, School District 58

**Re: School District Surplus Properties**

**To: Mr. McNiven and Ms. Ross**

Regarding SD58's plan to sell some surplus facilities in our community, and the Town of Princeton's public desire to take ownership of Riverside Community Center, the Crimson Tine Players would like to express their support for the Town's position.

The Crimson Tine Players, formally known as the Princeton Performing Arts Society, is run by 15- 20 dedicated individuals and another 20-30 volunteers and produces 10-12 performances a year with an average audience of 100 people per show. Princeton has enjoyed the performing arts through our group for nearly 15 years. Riverside has been vital for our group. There is simply no other location in Princeton to support the requirements of performing arts.

Riverside Community Center has provided the Crimson Tine Players with both secured and non-secured storage in the facility for our costumes; props and scene pieces. The secure, dry storage of our property on site allows us to benefit other groups in town through the loaning of these materials, at no charge.

Facilities, such as Riverside, benefits our community, by making groups like ours possible. Access to such things such a lighting and sounds systems would be otherwise unattainable to groups of our size. There no other buildings in Princeton that can match what Riverside can offer, and the size of Princeton limits our ability to fundraise to that level.

In short, the loss of Riverside to groups like ours, would mean the end to performing arts to groups like in Princeton.

Sincerely,

*Heather Anderson*  
Heather Anderson  
Treasurer,  
Crimson Tine Players Society,

Cc:  
Cody Naples  
Recreation, Tourism, and Cultural Events Coordinator, Town of Princeton – Recreation Department

Spencer Coyne  
Mayor, Town of Princeton

Lyle Thomas  
Chief Administrative Officer

## Sarah Blonde

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**From:** Barbara Ross  
**Sent:** March 10, 2021 9:04 AM  
**To:** Debbie Schulz  
**Cc:** Spencer Coyne; Sarah Blonde  
**Subject:** RE: Riverside Community Centre - 148 Old Hedley Road, Princeton

Good morning.

Thank you so much for your input. I will include it in our package for Trustees as we move through our process of reviewing school district properties.

Barbara Ross  
Secretary Treasurer  
School District No. 58 (Nicola-Similkameen)  
(250) 378-5161 phone

---

**From:** Debbie Schulz  
**Sent:** March 10, 2021 8:56 AM  
**To:** Barbara Ross  
**Cc:** Spencer Coyne  
**Subject:** Riverside Community Centre - 148 Old Hedley Road, Princeton

Please see our attached letter with respect to Riverside Community Centre in Princeton, BC.



**Debbie Schulz** • Client Services Clerk  
Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen  
101 Martin Street, Penticton, BC V2A 5J9  
p. 250.492.0237 • tf. 1.877.610.3737 • f. 250.492.0063

[www.rdos.bc.ca](http://www.rdos.bc.ca) • [dschulz@rdos.bc.ca](mailto:dschulz@rdos.bc.ca)

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8 March 2021

Transmitted by email:

School District #58  
School Board Office  
1550 Chapman Street  
Merritt, BC.  
V1K 1B8

**ATTENTION: SECRETARY-TREASURER**

**Re: RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY CENTRE: 148 Old Hedley Road, Princeton**

The Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen (RDOS) understands School District #58 has started a public process for the purpose of potentially divesting some surplus properties, including Riverside Centre in Princeton.

The RDOS would like to point out, Riverside Centre is more than a surplus property. The facility provides broader benefits for the community and this should be considered prior to any potential sale. School facilities in rural areas are community-building institutions and although the primary use of Riverside Centre is no longer educational, the venue serves as an important meeting and networking place. The facility serves as an activity, fitness and sports centre and also houses public offices and other vital functions. Due to the size of Princeton and Electoral Area "H", all these activities take place in one physical location currently owned by School District #58.

The nature of Princeton, with its mining, forestry and tourism-base is a destination for young families, many of whom take proximity to a school property into account when choosing a community to call home. By selling Riverside Centre and removing access to a valuable public resource, the school board would be penalizing the community by depriving residents of such a space. This decision would negatively affect young families moving into the area. Some of these families may choose to live elsewhere if amenities such as Riverside Centre are no longer available. The Regional District does not believe this is the intent of the school board, which may unintentionally reduce school enrollment by impacting the quality of life for young families.

As a previous leasee of Riverside Centre, the RDOS made a capital investment of well over \$100,000 as required by the school board in 2014. As a steward of tax-funded revenue, the school board would be conscious of the apparent disregard for local property tax funds that went into this community facility.

The challenge for the RDOS is Riverside Centre is owned by the school board, but has been available for use by the community for several years. As a result, Riverside Centre has become an important part of life for people living in Princeton and the communities in Electoral Area "H".



While the RDOS understands the school board's mandate is educational, this decision to consider selling the property will negatively impact our mutual constituents. The Regional District believes this partnership between School District #58, the Town of Princeton and the RDOS has benefited all parties over the past decade.

The RDOS respectfully requests Riverside Centre be removed from the surplus property roll School District #58 is providing to the Minister for disposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karla Kozakevich".

Karla Kozakevich  
Chair

c. Spencer Coyne, Mayor, Town of Princeton

## Sarah Blonde

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**From:** Barbara Ross  
**Sent:** March 8, 2021 4:31 PM  
**To:** Sarah Blonde  
**Subject:** FW: Riverside Community Centre

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**From:** Barbara Ross  
**Sent:** March 8, 2021 4:30 PM  
**To:** Lori Thomas  
**Cc:** Spencer Coyne ; Lyle Thomas  
**Subject:** RE: Riverside Community Centre

Good afternoon.

Thank you so much for your input. I will include it in our package for Trustees as we move through our process of reviewing school district properties.

Barbara Ross  
Secretary Treasurer  
School District No. 58 (Nicola-Similkameen)  
(250) 378-5161 phone

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**From:** Lori Thomas  
**Sent:** March 8, 2021 12:16 PM  
**To:** Barbara Ross  
**Cc:** Spencer Coyne ; Lyle Thomas  
**Subject:** Riverside Community Centre

Barbara Ross  
School District #58

Re: Riverside Community Centre, 148 Old Hedley Road, Princeton, B.C.

I am writing this letter to stress the importance of Riverside School as our one and only Community Centre.

I am the Coordinator for the Princeton Youth Ambassadors here in Princeton. Due to COVID we are currently not active, but once we can have group sessions again we hope to continue the Programme.

The Riverside Community Centre is an integral part of our Programme as it is the only venue in Princeton suitable to hold our 4 major events, our practice sessions, and our weekly meetings. We have tried using the school gym for our Fashion Show, and we book it months in advance only to find there is a band event right



next door or something equally as distracting going on. It just does not work! Also I find it imperative that our candidates meet away from their familiar school setting where they feel they can "rule the roost".

Princeton desperately needs to keep our Community Centre! I need to know we have a permanent facility that is large enough to house our Ambassador families, visiting Royalty, and other residents of Princeton. We need a facility we can book all year round. We are snow covered during the Winter months and without Riverside, indoor activities would be limited. In the Summer months the schools are closed and their venues are not available.

Without Riverside Centre the Ambassador Programme could not continue. Please help the Town of Princeton take possession of the building and land to secure the use of this facility.

Thank you for your consideration.

*Lori*

Lori Thomas, Coordinator  
Princeton Youth Ambassador Society

## Sarah Blonde

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**From:** Barbara Ross  
**Sent:** March 8, 2021 4:30 PM  
**To:** Becky Vermette  
**Cc:** Cody Naples; Sarah Blonde  
**Subject:** RE: Riverside Community Center

Good afternoon.

Thank you so much for your input. I will include it in our package for Trustees as we move through our process of reviewing school district properties.

Barbara Ross  
Secretary Treasurer  
School District No. 58 (Nicola-Similkameen)  
(250) 378-5161 phone

---

**From:** Becky Vermette  
**Sent:** March 8, 2021 12:25 PM  
**To:** Barbara Ross  
**Cc:** Cody Naples  
**Subject:** Riverside Community Center

To whom it may concern,

This email is in response to School District #58's Notice of Public Consultation in regards to Riverside Community Center.

In the past our Society has relied on the use of the Riverside Community Center for seasonal dances for adults with disabilities. PDCSS does not have the space necessary to host these dances that provide the opportunity for our local clients to meet and socialize with clients from neighboring communities. In addition to the space needed to host these events, we also utilize the community kitchen to provide meals during these events. Not only are these events an important social outlet for our clients, they are also fundraising opportunities that our New Beginnings Day Program relies upon.

Our clients and staff have also benefitted from the use of the gymnasium at Riverside Community Center for scheduled exercise classes being offered by the Town of Princeton or to rent the space when we need additional room to offer exercise activities that we would otherwise not have the room for. We have also had clients in the past who've attended The Bridge with staff for alternative education.

On a personal level I have attended many meetings at the Riverside Community Center over the years for minor baseball, minor hockey and adult slopitch. Riverside has much needed meeting rooms for our local sports organizations to conduct annual and regular meetings. The setup and space at Riverside has also proven to be a prime spot to host the Princeton Minor Hockey awards night and Annual General Meeting.

I do hope that SD#58 will see value in allowing the community of Princeton to continue using Riverside Community Center for its intended current purpose whether that be through the current lease arrangement or purchase in the future. Thank you for your time.

*Thank you,*

**Becky Vermette**  
**Executive Director**  
**Princeton & District Community Services Society**



**Please be advised that while we attempt to work remotely, the best means of contact will be by email or by calling the above cell phone number if I cannot be reached at the office.**

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## Sarah Blonde

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**From:** Barbara Ross  
**Sent:** April 1, 2021 12:36 PM  
**To:** Susan Delatour  
**Cc:** Cody Naples; Sarah Blonde  
**Subject:** RE: letter of support for Riverside Community Centre

Good afternoon.

Thank you so much for your input. I will include it in our package for Trustees as we move through our process of reviewing school district properties.

Barbara Ross  
Secretary Treasurer  
School District No. 58 (Nicola-Similkameen)  
(250) 378-5161 phone

-----Original Message-----

From: Susan Delatour  
Sent: April 1, 2021 12:34 PM  
To: Barbara Ross  
Cc: Cody Naples  
Subject: letter of support for Riverside Community Centre

Susan Delatour

March 31, 2021

Ms. Barbara Ross  
Secretary/Treasurer School District 58  
PO Box 4100, Merritt, BC, V1K 1B8

Dear Ms Ross,

I am writing concerning the future of Riverside Community Centre in Princeton BC.

It has been brought to my attention that the School District 58 is considering selling the building.

I would like to express my strong support for keeping the property as a public Community Centre for the Town of Princeton and Area H residents.

My history with Riverside Community Centre is as follows:

I am an artist/teacher specializing in Ceramics/Pottery, presently renting a room as a studio at Riverside Centre since 2006.

In 2005, I was involved with an ArtsNow survey with Princeton Arts Council to canvass the residents of Princeton and Area H as to what was needed to enhance the Arts in our community. The overwhelming response was a need for a Community Centre under one roof and also a theatre space for live performances and events.

At that time, there were several groups under the umbrella of Princeton Arts Council, including Bunchgrass Quilters, Princeton Performing Arts Society, Princeton Rockhounds, Princeton Writers Group, Vermilion Artists, and several individual artists including myself who were all working or teaching community classes in different locations around town.

When Lyle Thomas brought it to Princeton Art's Council's attention that Area H was to liaise with SD58 to create a Wellness Centre from the empty school building, our idea of including arts classes/ activities for kids and adults was well received by Lyle and his committee.

In early 2006, Princeton Art Council began renting space from the RDOS and the many Art Council groups blossomed and began using the room for meetings and workshops. They continue to use the space today (although during Covid 19 pandemic, all group activities and meetings are presently suspended.) Also that year, Marilyn Huycke, (Dream Weaver Studio) and myself (Riverside Pottery Studio) began renting a room that we turned into an Artist/Pottery studio. Shortly after, the gym was converted into a proper theatre in 2007 and has been a huge asset to our region accommodating a very active local theatre company.

A professional kitchen facility to accent the theatre productions and activities like weddings, parties, fundraisers, was created with funding from Princeton Rotary.

Riverside Pottery Studio has given back to the community in a number of ways. I have taught community clay classes to adults and children since 2006.

I also started a Potters Guild which ran for several years. I brought in professional artists from out of town to give pottery and sculpture workshops. The Tree of Life mural on the outside of the building was a ceramic project spearheaded by Robin Lowe and Ed Staples and Princeton Art Council. My studio was used as the community workshop for that project and included dozens of local residents who each made and fired a leaf. The walls and lighting were updated in the lounge and hallways and the Art Council purchased hanging hooks for the 2d work.

Marilyn and I put on an Open Art Exhibition for Princeton and area artists in 2010 in the Lounge and it was very well received.

Of course I have seen many changes over 15 years in the tenants of the building and the meetings and activities that have ensued.

The building has been accessible and well used for Emergency services during Fires, floods, and recently as a Covid 19 Vaccination Center.

Our community is growing with more young families looking for arts and recreational activities for themselves and their children.

The original vision for a Wellness Centre that Lyle Thomas so passionately pioneered is still evident today.

Seniors and retired people are participating in wellness activities, including pickle ball and bridge.

Riverside Centre is a fantastic meeting place for all residents.

It would be a huge loss to the Town of Princeton and Area H residents if Riverside no longer operated as a Community Centre.

Area H did a fantastic job launching the Riverside building as a community centre and it only makes sense to let the Town of Princeton continue to manage it.

Please consider this when you are deciding on the future of the building.

Sincerely,  
Susan Delatour



## Sarah Blonde

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**From:** Barbara Ross  
**Sent:** April 6, 2021 10:09 AM  
**To:** karyn kunderman  
**Cc:** Sarah Blonde  
**Subject:** RE: Riverside Centre

Good morning.

Thank you so much for your input. I will include it in our package for Trustees as we move through our process of reviewing school district properties.

Barbara Ross  
Secretary Treasurer  
School District No. 58 (Nicola-Similkameen)  
(250) 378-5161 phone

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**From:** karyn kunderman  
**Sent:** April 6, 2021 8:32 AM  
**To:** Barbara Ross  
**Subject:** Riverside Centre

School District #58  
PO Box 4100, Merritt, BC.  
V1K 1B8

To School District #58

My name is Karyn Kunderman, I am a local Princeton woman with connections to several organizations in town and I have a lot of ties to the use of Riverside Centre .

It has been brought to my attention that Riverside Centre is to be sold. ***I am writing to urge you to sell the centre to the Town of Princeton.***

I was shocked to discover the town does not own the property already. It would be very unfortunate to see the centre in the hands of a private investor.

Many of our clubs are all struggling to survive, especially since Covid, but even before.

I am a coach and one of the main organizers for the Princeton Highland Dancers, our group has been running for about 30 years. We try hard to keep the prices of dance lessons low so all families have access to dance lessons. Many of my hours spent assisting the highland dancers are volunteer hours. We do a lot of fundraising to help keep the dance company afloat. Our year end show is one of our bigger fundraising events. We hold the event at Riverside Centre, the town has been very flexible with payment for the venue space and because they do not over charge we are able to make a bit of money from ticket sales.

Last year we hosted the first Robbie Burns Night dinner in many years. Because the event was new we didn't end up selling a lot of tickets but still had a lot of expenses. The event was loved by attendees however, it was basically a break-even event. The town was able to help us out by not charging a lot for renting the space.

We have been able to hold our exams in the facility as well, hosting a judge from Scotland, the space provides a level of professionalism we strive for and again a price that allows us to keep operating and offering lessons at an affordable price for local families.

Over the years, hundreds of kids have been able to enjoy and learn dance through The Princeton Highland Dance Association. Highland dancers are able to work toward earning arts credits to put toward highschool graduation as well as learn confidence, life experience, and get a great workout. There have been a few other dance groups over the years but ours is the only one that has lasted.

These are just a few examples of how our local group, an important resource for local youth, have benefited from the Town of Princeton operating Riverside Centre. I can go on with many more examples and from different clubs but you get the idea. The facility is incredibly valuable to local groups and I truly hope it stays that way.

Thank-you for your time

Karyn Kunderman  
Princeton Highland Dancers

CC BY-NC-ND  
Princeton, NJ  
08540  
Karyn Kunderman  
Princeton Highland Dancers  
[karynkunderman@gmail.com](mailto:karynkunderman@gmail.com)

## Sarah Blonde

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**From:** Barbara Ross  
**Sent:** April 6, 2021 10:09 AM  
**To:** Terri Ortwein  
**Cc:** Sarah Blonde  
**Subject:** RE: Riverside Community Centre

Good morning.

Thank you so much for your input. I will include it in our package for Trustees as we move through our process of reviewing school district properties.

Barbara Ross  
Secretary Treasurer  
School District No. 58 (Nicola-Similkameen)  
(250) 378-5161 phone

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**From:** Terri Ortwein  
**Sent:** April 6, 2021 6:33 AM  
**To:** Barbara Ross  
**Subject:** Riverside Community Centre

Barbara Ross,  
Please find attached my letter regarding School District 58's disposal of Riverside Community Centre.  
Thank you:)

April 6, 2021

School District 58  
Nicola – Similkameen

Barbara Ross  
Secretary Treasurer

Dear Ms. Ross,

I am writing in regards to School District 58 disposing the property on 148 Old Hedley Rd, known as

The Bridge – Princeton Alternate School and the Riverside Community Centre.

This facility is crucial for the wellbeing of both The Bridge students and our community as a whole.

During the 27 years of employment with our school district I experienced working with Alternate Students both at Princeton Secondary School and The Bridge. Once an off campus school was set up, most students experienced notable success academically and socially.

When I was first employed in the 80's, a teacher once told me that we were working with "Million Dollar Kids"; if we weren't able to help them, they would cost society millions of dollars. Unfortunately, this statement is even truer today; with so many young people homeless and living on the streets. It is important that our School District's mission statement "Success for ALL Learners Today and Tomorrow" continues to meet the needs of our most vulnerable students, as well as all students attending school in Princeton.

Riverside Community Centre has facilitated many events that enrich a healthy community, for instance the theater with Fine Arts entertainment. Many local citizens, especially our young people, display amazing talents. Our local schools do not have a stage, so the theatre at Riverside Centre has been used for events such as band concerts and graduation as well as youth community events, including choir concerts, dance performances and sport awards. Riverside Centre is also the "go to" place in emergency situations such as wildfire, floods and most recently Covid vaccinations.

Little Seeds Daycare also uses this facility to provide quality care to children and prepares them for successful school entry.

On a more personal note, during the winter months a large group of us play Pickleball in Riverside's gym. This is significant for both our physical and mental health; having fun while socializing. We also have evenings for youth to join us for a very positive interaction of generations.

I understand the financial benefits of selling Riverside Community Centre, nevertheless, with the mental health and **wellbeing of School District 58's students** and their families being such a high priority in today's society **no amount of money** is worth the loss of this facility. At this time The Town of Princeton is currently unable to purchase Riverside Centre at market value. I truly hope School District 58 sees the value of Riverside Community Centre to their students and their families rather than the monetary value.

Kind Regards,  
Terri Ortwein



School District #58  
1550 Chapman Street  
Merritt, BC  
V1K 1B8

April 9, 2021

Delivered via email to: Secretary Treasurer [secretary@princeton.ca](mailto:secretary@princeton.ca)

To whom it may concern.

The Town of Princeton is writing this letter in response to the School District #58 notice of Public Consultation – District Surplus Property dated March 4, 2021. In the notice you are inviting input to the Board’s application requesting ministerial approval to potentially dispose of the property by sale to private interest, local government, community agency or community organization for alternate community uses at fair market value.

This action has created a lot of concern and confusion amongst the citizens of Princeton and District as it involves the Riverside Community Centre (formally Riverside Intermediate School). Most of which could have been avoided if there had been communication between the School Board and Town Council on this matter. Following the Provincial Disposition of Land or Improvement Order (MO M193/08) and the Province’s Surplus Property Program, there is provision for the School District #58 to sell the property to the Town without offering them up for sale on the open market. The Town has made it known to the School District Board and staff, on numerous occasions, their desire to acquire the Riverside property. It was hoped that a constructive discussion would have occurred to work out the details before a notice was posted in the paper.

I think it is important to revisit the history of this property and the connection it has to the community. Historical minutes from Council meetings in 1973-74 confirm that the Riverside Community Centre property was given to the School District #17 for nominal consideration as it was to be used for public purposes. When the School District closed the Riverside Intermediate School in 2004 and declared it surplus to their needs, the community saw an opportunity to convert it for use as a Community Centre. This aligned with the initial intentions of the 1974 council resolutions and was supported by the School District who worked with the community to attain a “School Community Connections” grant in 2006. A program specifically designed to help schools become centers of the community. This has proven to have been very successful for the past 16 years.

Since the community has taken over the management and use of the Riverside Community Centre in 2005, significant financial contributions have been invested into the building on renovations and improvements. This investment has greatly increased the value of the property at no cost to the School District. These improvements were made in good faith and understanding that the School District was supportive of the property being used as the Riverside Community Centre. The Town is wanting to protect the public investment and interest in this property and will be exploring all options.

The Town would like to register support of the School District disposing of the Riverside Community Centre and to express once again our interest in acquiring the property on reasonable terms and conditions, reflecting the historical transfer of the lands from the Town to the School District #17 and the significant financial improvements made by the community into the building.

District staff have stated that no discussions will be made by the Board before September 2021. The Town would encourage the School Board to initiate discussions with the Town and share its intention to dispose of Riverside Community Centre as soon as possible.

Respectfully,

Lyle Thomas  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Town of Princeton