



CITY OF QUESNEL NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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City to host rally before Electoral Boundaries Commission hearing

QUESNEL, B.C. – The City of Quesnel will host a rally allowing people to learn more about the recommendations included in the B.C. Electoral Boundaries Commission's Preliminary Report.

The recommendation would see fewer rural ridings in B.C. while urban centres would see more representation in the provincial legislature. Included is a proposal to merge parts of the current Cariboo North and South ridings into one larger riding called Cariboo-Chilcotin.

In mid-September the Premier announced that the government intended to introduce legislation that would protect rural representation, but the legislature was adjourned without passing this bill. Under the current legislation the Commission is still required to submit their final report by February 15, 2008.

“We can't afford to sit back and presume the Commission has heard the message from the North and the rural ridings,” said Mayor Nate Bello. “We need to reinforce that representation at the provincial government level is vitally important.”

In order to meet the Feb. 15 deadline, the EBC has reduced the number of public hearings still to be held in the province to 6 – down from the 22 that were originally planned. The only public hearing north of Kelowna is scheduled for Quesnel on Tuesday January 22 at 1:30 p.m. at the Seniors' Centre. Council decided to host a rally that will take place that day at 12:30 p.m. and run until 1:15 p.m. at Four Corners Square.

There will be speeches from representatives of the City of Quesnel, Cariboo North MLA Bob Simpson, North Central Municipal Association President Eileen Benedict and Cariboo Regional District Vice-Chair Ronda Wilkins.

The public is encouraged to attend the rally and hearing to learn more about this issue, as representation is key to ensuring the needs and wishes of rural residents are heard at the provincial government level. For more information, visit the Electoral Boundaries Commission website at **www.bc-ebc.ca**.

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This release is available at www.city.quesnel.bc.ca.

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