

**By Keith Erickson,
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NIC Events Center

The board took under advisement a funding request from North Idaho College for a 60,000-square-foot events center to meet current demands not adequately provided by aging Christianson Gymnasium on the college campus. The facility is proposed for the Riverstone development within the LCDC's River District. The college is seeking \$10 million in funding from the LCDC. The planned 5,000-seat arena would cater mostly to NIC events but would also be available to multi-purpose community events, including concerts, trade shows, graduation ceremonies and job fairs. The LCDC board is expected to take action on the request later this summer or early fall. If built, the facility would be owned and operated by NIC. Estimated breakdown in costs: Facility: \$12.5 million. Land acquisition: \$2.5 million. Operation expenses: \$5 million (to be covered by an NIC endowment). If the project moves forward, construction is expected to take about 6 months and could be complete as early as the spring of 2014. Rod Colwell, chairman of the LCDC's finance committee, said the project is feasible, but needs close consideration by the board. "We can make it happen, but it would limit us (in funding) for other projects in the River District," he said. LCDC board chairman Denny Davis said it's an idea that "has merit," but needs to be more closely evaluated by the board. "Let's move forward and work with NIC to explore the possibilities," said LCDC board member and Coeur d'Alene City Council member Deanne Goodlander. "I'm not uncomfortable with the request. I would like to see this move forward and have NIC do their due diligence to show the merits of the project."

Planning for the future: Visioning 2030

So ... what will the Coeur d'Alene area look like 20 years down the road—and what efforts can be made to ensure it remains a vibrant community? That's what Visioning 2030 is all about. Officials are seeking financial assistance from the LCDC to help fund a study to plan for the community's future. Advocates of the plan are seeking \$15,000 in funding from the LCDC to shoulder the costs of a consultant to devise a plan. The process will weigh strongly on community participation, support and input, city attorney and project advocate Mike Gridley told the board. "What we want to determine is, 'what do we need to do today to get long-term goals in place to make the community as healthy as it can be in the future'" Gridley said. He emphasized that this study would not be a "dust-gathering" report away, but a working document to help community leaders shape future growth in a structured and beneficial way. "The plan is to establish goals, assign tasks and make it happen. Ultimately, there will be assigned responsibilities that will be followed up on. This will provide a road map to follow future growth that benefits the whole community," Gridley told the board.

LCDC Video

The audience and live TV viewing public were presented with the LCDC's new video. Communication Committee Chairman Dave Patzer shared that the intent behind the recent production of the 7-minute video is to explain the mission of local urban renewal efforts.

"We've seen the successes," Patzer said. "The Kroc Center. Riverstone development. Higher Education Campus. New downtown library." The video explains where the money for these successful initiatives came from. Members of the audience were provided with a first look at the video, which will be available on the agency's website at lcdc.org. "It's a great way to inform the public, in an easily understandable way, how urban renewal works and what the LCDC has helped provide to the community," Patzer said. Also available is an abbreviated 3-minute version to the video, also available on the agency's website. You can view the video here: <http://bit.ly/107AXsC>

New Vice Chairman

Sadly, with the recent passing of vice chairman Rob Elder, the board was faced with selecting a new vice chairman. Unanimously, Mr. Patzer was nominated and approved.

Next Up

The next LCDC board meeting is Wednesday, June 19, in the community room of the Coeur d'Alene Public Library downtown. All LCDC meeting are televised live. Links to past meeting are available on the agency's website (lcdc.org).