

To: Fraser Valley Regional District Board

Date: 2020-09-02

From: Reg Dyck, Manager of Electoral Area Emergency Services

File No: 7340-01-

Subject: Grant Application: Community Resiliency Investment Program

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Fraser Valley Regional District Board endorse a grant application of up to \$550,000 under UBCM's Community Resiliency Investment program (CRI) to reduce the risk of wildfires and mitigate their impacts on the FVRD.

STRATEGIC AREA(S) OF FOCUS

Provide Responsive & Effective Public Services

BACKGROUND

The Community Resiliency Investment (CRI) program was announced by the provincial government in 2018 and is intended to reduce the risk of wildfires and mitigate their impacts on BC communities. CRI includes two streams: FireSmart Community Funding & Supports, administered by UBCM, and Crown Land Wildfire Risk Reduction, administered by the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations & Rural Development. Under this program the 2019 Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) was recently completed and presented to the Board on July 28th 2020. Due to the size of the FVRD three separate zones were created with a separate plan for each zone. Completion of these plans enables the FVRD to apply for further grants within this funding stream.

DISCUSSION

As a grant application for up to \$50,000 per Electoral Area for FireSmart activities and an additional \$150,000 base funding is available, staff, working with the consultant B.A. Blackwell who created the FVRD CWPP plans, has created a list of proposed activities to apply for under this funding program.

Within the CWPP a total of 143 general and specific recommendations have been outlined for the three FVRD zones to reduce the overall wildfire risk profile. If successful, this grant project will begin to address those recommendations.

Proposed projects include:

1. Promote/distribute FireSmart education activities and tools
2. FireSmart day, events and workshops, and wildfire season open houses
3. Conduct site visits/FireSmart assessments
4. Amend OCPs, Comprehensive Community Plans and/or bylaws
5. Multi-agency fire and/or fuel management tables
6. Attend 2021 FireSmart BC Conference
7. Local FireSmart Representative Training
8. Cross-train fire department members
9. Neighbourhood Wildfire Risk Assessments
10. Provide off-site debris disposal

A draft worksheet for proposed activities has been attached for additional details and for discussion purposes which shows an application of \$49,100 per EA and base funding application of \$98,750. A discussion with a Wildfire Prevention Officer (WPO) is required 30 days before the deadline to discuss and approve proposed activities. As this report deadline occurred before the discussion with the WPO, the final application totals may be adjusted but will not exceed the recommendation.

The deadline for the grant application is October 9th 2020.

COST

As this funding stream can contribute a maximum of 100% of the cost of eligible activities, it is anticipated to have little budgetary impact for 2021 should the FVRD be successful. Additional future costs, depending on implementable actions, could be incurred such as the potential for the creation of steering committees, sub-committees, administration costs for a continuation of the FireSmart program including additional staff time and contracted work. If future costs are required a report will be brought forward to the board for discussion and recommendations.

CONCLUSION

Staff is recommending that FVRD apply for funding of up to \$550,000 from UBCM's Community Resiliency Investment program to reduce the risk of wildfires and mitigate their impacts on the FVRD.

COMMENTS BY:

Tareq Islam, Director of Engineering & Community Services: Reviewed and supported.

Kelly Lownsborough, Director of Financial Service/ CFO/: Reviewed and supported.

Jennifer Kinneman, Chief Administrative Officer: Reviewed and supported.