

Report

Date February 7, 2024

File:

Subject Community Emergency Preparedness Fund Grant Application

PURPOSE

To seek Council endorsement of an application to be submitted by the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) for a Union of BC Municipalities Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) grant to enhance Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) capacity through training and exercises.

BACKGROUND

The Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) regularly releases a grant program to assist with developing, sustaining, or enhancing emergency preparedness for communities within the province.

Emergency Management Cowichan continues to build the regional emergency management model for the Cowichan Valley. Emergency management grants will be used to support the growth and improvement of the entire program, benefiting all local authorities and First Nation members. Wherever practical, grants shall be applied for regionally (all four municipalities and the CVRD).

In 2022, Council supported the CVRD's proposal to apply for a regional grant under the CEPF's Emergency Support Services funding stream, to purchase two towable generators to provide backup energy sources for reception centres and other supplies.

In 2023, Council supported the CVRD's proposal to apply for a regional grant under the CEPF's Emergency Support Services funding stream. The grant was for supplies for the EOC and Emergency Support Services and equipment and development of evacuation and route plans for Lake Cowichan, Saltair, Chemainus, Ladysmith, North Diamond, Maple Bay, Genoa Bay, Crofton, Westholme, and Mount Sicker.

DISCUSSION

For 2024, Emergency Management Cowichan is considering submitting a UBCM CEPF grant application to enhance EOC capacity through training and exercises. The proposal, if successful, is for the CVRD to hire a full-time temporary Training and Exercise Technician for one year to increase the Regional Emergency Operation Centre's (REOC) capacity by:

- developing and delivering exercises and drills for REOC staff and support functions to the REOC (Evacuation Group, Damage Assessment Group); and,
- developing and delivering EOC function-specific training to all communities.

The proposed budget for the technician position, including administration, office space, software licensing, and office supplies, is \$150,000.

OPTIONS

1. **(Recommended Option)** THAT Council support an application by the Cowichan Valley Regional District to receive and manage the Union of BC Municipalities Community Emergency Preparedness Fund - Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) 2024 grant, funding up to \$150,000, on behalf of the Municipality of North Cowichan to enhance EOC capacity through training and exercises.
2. THAT Council advise the Cowichan Valley Regional District that the Municipality of North Cowichan does not wish to participate as a partnering applicant in their regional application under the Union of BC Municipalities Community Emergency Preparedness Fund stream.

IMPLICATIONS

The recommended option supports Council’s previous motion (September 1, 2021) to move toward a regional Emergency Management organization model and would not impact North Cowichan’s budget. However, it would prohibit North Cowichan from making a separate grant application for the same funding stream. It is also consistent with Council’s Strategic Plan and Engagement Strategy of working collaboratively with regional government partners, ensuring a strong relationship with the CVRD.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council support an application by the Cowichan Valley Regional District to receive and manage the Union of BC Municipalities Community Emergency Preparedness Fund - Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) 2024 grant, funding up to \$150,000, on behalf of the Municipality of North Cowichan to enhance EOC capacity through training and exercises.

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Attachment: EMC 2024 Emergency Management Grants