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REPORT TO ELECTORAL AREAS COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 2021

SUBJECT **Community Emergency Preparedness Fund: Emergency Operations
Centres and Training Grant - Motion of Support**

ISSUE SUMMARY

The Capital Regional District (CRD) is responsible for emergency preparedness in the Electoral Areas (EAs). The CRD is applying to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) for funding to exercise and improve emergency response plans and train EA volunteers. UBCM requires that all grant applications be accompanied by a motion of support from the local government.

BACKGROUND

UBCM provides funding for many community based projects, including projects that support community resiliency and emergency preparedness. A 2021 grant opportunity is available to provide training opportunities for emergency program volunteers in all three EAs. Emergency planning and training exercises will be held with the goal of improving and validating emergency response plans.

In December 2018, the Auditor General for Local Government reviewed CRD's Emergency Program and offered the following recommendation:

"The Capital Regional District should consider conducting full-scale and/or larger-scale joint exercises that test the collaboration of all relevant parties involved in responding to a major emergency in the region. Staff should continue completing progressive, smaller, in-house exercises to further increase familiarity with their roles and responsibilities and to validate emergency plans in preparation for the larger scale joint exercise".

This grant opportunity facilitates meeting this recommendation.

Emergency Operation Centre and Training grant funding would benefit all CRD EA Emergency Programs: Juan de Fuca, Southern Gulf Islands, and Salt Spring Island. The maximum grant amount is \$25,000, which permits the CRD to facilitate two full-scale functional emergency exercises in the EAs, including participation from relevant first responder agencies, such as fire departments, police, ambulance, coast guard, search-and-rescue, and BC Ferries. Locations will be finalized upon grant approval.

As part of the application process, UBCM requires a motion of support from the local government to receive and manage grant funding.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Electoral Areas Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:
That the Board support an application to Union of British Columbia Municipalities Community Emergency Preparedness Fund for the Emergency Operations Centres and Training Grant and direct staff to provide overall grant management.

Alternative 2

That staff be directed to rescind the application to UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund for the Emergency Operations Centres and Training Grant.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

The grant will have no impact on annual Emergency Program budgets, but provides an opportunity for one-time projects that increase community resilience to emergencies.

Operational Implications

Under the *Emergency Program Act*, the CRD is obligated to provide Emergency Management Services to residents. Grants provide opportunity for one-time projects that increase emergency program capacity to support residents impacted by a disaster. Due to the expense and complexity of facilitating successful functional emergency exercises, this grant offers the CRD an important opportunity to provide staff and volunteers with experience.

CONCLUSION

The CRD is responsible for supporting emergency management programs in the EAs. The UBCM Emergency Operation Centres and Training Grant is a key opportunity to improve emergency plans and offer training and development in the EAs.

RECOMMENDATION

The Electoral Areas Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:
That the Board support an application to Union of British Columbia Municipalities Community Emergency Preparedness Fund for the Emergency Operations Centres and Training Grant and direct staff to provide overall grant management.

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