# REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

# STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Electoral Area Services Committee    **MEETING:** April 14, 2020

**FROM:** Melissa Tomlinson
Emergency Planning Coordinator    **FILE:** 7130-07 CEPF

**SUBJECT:** Gabriola Evacuation Route Plan Grant 2020

## RECOMMENDATION

That the grant application by the Regional District of Nanaimo for $25,000 to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities Community Emergency Preparedness Fund for the completion of Evacuation Route Planning for Electoral Area B be endorsed.

## SUMMARY

Efficient and safe evacuation routes are needed for the movement of people, livestock, animals and personal property from an area of imminent or actual threat to an area of safety. Successful and detailed planning is the key to effectively executed evacuations when an event occurs that requires these actions. Electoral Area B has unique evacuation challenges with limited capacity of the ferry. The funds from this grant stream will identify strategies and alternate evacuation methods to coordinate a safe an orderly multi agency evacuation response for Gabriola, Mudge and De Courcy Islands.

## BACKGROUND

In October 2017, Union of British Columbia (UBCM) introduced the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund, intended to enhance resiliency of local governments in responding to emergencies. Funding streams are available for four categories, including Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), Emergency Social Services (ESS), Evacuation Route Planning, and Flood Planning and Mitigation. The Regional District of Nanaimo successfully applied for the Evacuation Route funding stream in 2019 for Electoral Area E and the District of Lantzville which is just coming to an end on March 31, 2020 and will be presented to the Electoral Area Services Committee in the coming months. We are recommending an application for the Evacuation Route Plan stream for 2020 to undertake evacuation route planning for Electoral Area B.

Electoral Area B has been identified as requiring evacuation route planning due to the limited capacity to evacuate residents off the islands and time required to access alternate resources to assist in evacuations. The islands have unique evacuation challenges with the limited capacity of the ferry, transportation on the islands, parking and managing thousands of vehicles.

The Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) for Gabriola Island identifies that 97% of the island is classified as in either being high or extreme fire danger risk class. The CWPP also identifies that Gabriola Island has two to three serious fires every year. The island is heavily

forested and while a complete evacuation is extreme, a wildfire could cause entire neighbourhoods to be ordered to evacuate on short notice. Many of these neighbourhoods have been identifed as having limited access or as having delayed response times. An evacuation route plan for Electoral Area B will identify strategies and alternate evacuation methods to coordinate a safe and orderly multi agency evacuation response.

## ALTERNATIVES

That the grant application by the Regional District of Nanaimo for $25,000 to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities Community Emergency Preparedness Fund for the completion of Evacuation Route Planning for Electoral Area B be endorsed.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications for this project are primarily around staff time and meeting with community associations and stakeholders to develop and familiarize those with a role in the execution of the Evacuation Route Plans. The Regional District Emergency Services has annually budgeted funds for ten community events per year in addition to funds allocated for training exercises.

## STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

Social Wellbeing – Make the Region a safe and vibrant place for all, with a focus on children and families in programs and planning.


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March 19, 2020

Reviewed by:
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- P. Carlyle, Chief Administrative Officer