
TO: Electoral Area Services Committee **MEETING:** January 8, 2019
FROM: Catherine Morrison
 Manager, Emergency Services **FILE:** 7320-20 CRI FS
SUBJECT: FireSmart Community Funding Grant

RECOMMENDATION

That the grant application by the Regional District of Nanaimo for \$47,390 to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities Community Resiliency Investment Program for the completion of FireSmart education, cross training and FireSmart for private land activities be endorsed.

SUMMARY

The Community Resiliency Investment program is a new provincial program intended to reduce the risk and impact of wildfire to communities in British Columbia (BC) through community funding. The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) can request grant funds to provide the Local FireSmart Representative Workshop, the FireSmart Community Champion Workshop, a FireSmart Community Event and to provide FireSmart home assessments with incremental staff wages for volunteer fire department members to assist in the completion of assessments. As an incentive to complete home assessments, the RDN has requested grant funds to include yard waste disposal vouchers to the first 150 homeowners who have an assessment completed. The application deadline for the grant funding was December 7, 2018. To meet this deadline, the application was submitted prior to receiving Board support, therefore this report is now seeking Board endorsement for the proposed project activities and grant application.

BACKGROUND

The BC Flood and Wildfire Review identified a critical need to strengthen public understanding of the risks and personal responsibilities associated with living in a community where Wildland and Urban Interface. Wildfires can have significant public safety and economic impacts, properly preparing homes and communities can reduce the risk of damage caused by wildfires. Findings from a study of the 2016 Horse River wildfire in Fort McMurray indicate that FireSmart principles were one of the main reasons why individual homes survived.

The 2-day Local FireSmart Representative Workshop will equip the Fire Departments and RDN emergency services staff with the tools to work with community groups to commence the implementation of the FireSmart Canada Community Recognition Program (FCCRP). The FCCRP is the second major component of the FireSmart Canada Initiative and is especially effective on private land in the wildland/urban interface, an area that is beyond the reach of provincial wildfire hazard mitigation programs. Local FireSmart Representatives will have the knowledge and training to deliver the Community Champion Workshops and assist homeowners in the completion of FireSmart home assessments. Should the grant application be successful,

the Community Champion Workshops and FireSmart home assessments will take into account the restrictions on lands that are environmentally sensitive or hazardous, and any requirements to follow land use regulations that may apply.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That the grant application by the Regional District of Nanaimo for \$47,390 to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities Community Resiliency Investment Program for the completion of FireSmart education, cross training and FireSmart for private land activities be endorsed.
2. That alternate direction be provided.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

RDN staff will need to dedicate time to the workshops, community event and home assessments. The Community Resiliency Investment program grant will cover the costs for all proposed project activities.

To support the continuation of FireSmart activities each year, the RDN can work with active community groups to apply for the Wildfire Community Preparedness Day project funding awards offered by FireSmart Canada aimed at reducing wildfire risks within their communities.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

Focus On Service And Organizational Excellence - We View Our Emergency Services As Core Elements Of Community Safety



Catherine Morrison
cmorrison@rdn.bc.ca
December 3, 2018

Reviewed by:

- D. Pearce, Director of Transportation and Emergency Services
- P. Carlyle, Chief Administrative Officer