

# STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

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DATE: January 26, 2022

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Adam Davey, Director of Public Safety

SUBJECT: UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund:  
Emergency Support Services (ESS) – Grant Application

ATTACHMENT(S): None

## RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council SUPPORTS the City submitting a grant application to the Union of British Columbia (UBCM) Community Emergency Preparedness Fund –Emergency Support Services (ESS) in the amount of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) to host and participate in the Annual 2022 Northern Emergency Social Services Training (NESST) Conference in April 2022, and other regional training events; to acquire additional equipment to support future potential city evacuation responses; and to recognize 2021 ESS Responders; and AUTHORIZES the City's Financial Officer and Director of Public Safety to sign the grant application and subsequent contract documents should grant approval be received.

## PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to seek a City Council resolution in support of a UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund – Emergency Support Services grant to acquire additional equipment to support potential future city-centric evacuation response. The City of Prince George sought similar grants in three previous years (2018, 2019, and 2020) to procure health and safety and computer equipment for use by both the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) and Reception Centre to streamline and modernize processes during an evacuation event. This year's application will aim to support:

- Modifying storage to support faster and more specific deployment of equipment needs based on ESS unit structure
- Adding reflective screen printing to existing equipment (eg. Tents) to ensure ease of access for on scene registrations
- Purchase of additional all-season PPE for on-scene registration; and additional plexiglass screens for reception centre operations

Additionally, due to COVID, the "Northern Emergency Support Services Training" (NESST) Conference was successfully held as a remote event hosted from Prince George in 2021, and will return in that format for 2022. The NESST organizing committee has also planned to return the conference to a live event hosted at

the Prince George Conference and Civic Centre for 2023 and to host this annual event in Prince George for the known future. As the site host, Prince George ESS plays a significant role on the conference committee and regularly makes the conference available to the PG team through funding of the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund grant. The CEPF grant also supports registrations for one member of each interested regional team to ensure that registration remains accessible for neighbouring local governments and First Nations communities' ESS teams. The NESST conference is provincially recognized as a provider of high quality education and training weekend for regional ESS teams. NESST focuses on 'best practices,' networking, education, and concludes with a practical, 'hands-on' training scenario. The 2019 conference hosted in Prince George attracted 224 attendees and the online conference in 2021 was viewed by approximately 200 delegates.

#### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

This item assists in meeting the 'Social Development' section goal areas of *Safe Environment, Clear Identity and Pride, Supportive and Engaged Community*, and the 'City Government' goals of *Organizational Excellence* and *Effective Governance*. *Emergency Preparedness* is also one of Council's three overarching strategic themes.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

The UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund – Emergency Social Services Grant supports local governments by building capacity to provide emergency social services through training, volunteer recruitment and retention, and the purchase of equipment. It is part of a larger funding program intended to enhance the resiliency of local governments and their residents in responding to emergencies. Funding is provided by the Province of BC and is administered by the Union of BC Municipalities.

This grant will ensure the purchase of equipment essential to meet the needs future large scale and on scene evacuation registration - and the health and safety of volunteers and staff tasked with future emergency evacuation responses. Additionally, it will provide registration funding for ESS-trained CPG and other regional staff and volunteers to attend and participate in NESST 2022, by covering their registration fees

The evacuee events hosted in Prince George in recent years, provide an ongoing reminder that the City's Emergency Management program and ESS capabilities must be regularly maintained and enhanced through modernization and training in case a future event occurs locally.

#### RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Adam Davey, Director of Public Safety

PREPARED BY: Tanya Spooner, Emergency Programs Coordinator

#### APPROVED:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

Meeting date: February 28, 2022