

DATE: October 22, 2019

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Adam Davey, Associate Director, Community Services

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

ATTACHMENT(S): None

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council:

1. SUPPORT the Union of British Columbia (UBCM) Community Emergency Preparedness Fund –Emergency Social Services (ESS) Grant Application in the amount of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) to host and participate in the 8th Annual 2020 Northern Emergency Social Services Training (NESST) Conference and to acquire additional equipment to support future potential city evacuation responses; and
2. AUTHORIZE the City’s Financial Officer and Associate Director of Community Services to sign grant application and 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 Social Services grant to acquire additional equipment to support potential future city-centric evacuation response. The City of Prince George sought similar grants in both 2018 and 2019 to procure computer equipment for use by both the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) and Reception Centre to streamline and modernize processes during an evacuation event. Phase 3 of this modernization project will aim to support:

- Additional equipment for the anticipated spring 2020 release of a digital registration system by the province of BC.
- Modernization of the sign in/out process to provide automated, accurate records of staff and volunteer time.
- Health and Safety equipment including staff/volunteer identification and ergonomic workstations for registration workers.

Additionally, as a result of the successful 2019 “Northern Emergency Support Services Training (NESST) Conference, the NESST organizing committee has planned to return the conference to Prince George for a second consecutive year. The conference will be held at the Prince George Conference and Civic Centre from April 24-26, 2020. This grant will aid to ensure registration fees

remain low for neighbouring local governments and First Nations communities' ESS teams, and will provide a high quality educational and training weekend for up to 15 members of the City of Prince George ESS Team – both staff and volunteers, from the Canadian Red Cross.

NESST is an annual two-day educational and training conference for ESS members within northern BC, with the host community changing most years. It 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 it is predicted that the 2020 conference will host up to 275 attendees.

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 of the Province's ESS Modernization project – the City of Prince George is one of four communities piloting the new digital system - and the health and safety of volunteers and staff tasked with future emergency evacuation responses. Additionally, it will provide registration funding for up to 15 ESS-trained CPG staff and 'Canadian Red Cross' ESS volunteers to attend and participate in NESST 2020, by covering their registration fees. In order to keep registration fees as low as possible, this grant will also assist with venue costs of renting facilities at the Prince George Conference and Civic Centre.

The evacuee events, hosted in Prince George in 2017 and 2018, 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.

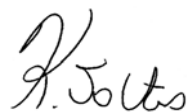
RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:



Adam Davey, Associate Director Community Services

PREPARED BY: Tanya Spooner, Emergency Programs Coordinator

APPROVED:



Kathleen Soltis, City Manager
Meeting date: November 4, 2019