

DATE: March 17, 2023

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Adam Davey, Director of Public Safety

SUBJECT: 2023 UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund:
Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) – Grant Application

ATTACHMENT(S): None

RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT Council;

1. SUPPORTS the City submitting a grant application to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) Community Emergency Preparedness Fund – Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) in the amount of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) to support the EOC Training plan for 2023/24 and purchase additional equipment for the EOC; AND
2. AUTHORIZES the City's Director of Finance and IT Services 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 Operations Centre grant (CEPF grant) to support the proposed EOC training plan for 2023/24 and purchase additional equipment for the effective operation of the EOC. The City of Prince George received grants through this funding stream in three previous years (2018, 2019, and 2020) that supported EOC training and emergency exercises; procured 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; and, to outfit the permanent EOC location at Fire Hall #1.

In 2017 and 2018 the City had a well trained and experienced pool of EOC designated staff when the City hosted significant emergency events which required activations of a Level 3 EOC (full EOC was activated). Since that time there have been several retirements and/or other personnel changes, and the COVID pandemic limited the ability to conduct training or exercise events. At present, the majority of staff who are designated to the EOC have had limited amounts of training and have not participated in any formal exercise or live emergency events.

The Emergency Programs divisional workplan for 2023 has EOC training identified as a priority and has proposed an 18-month training plan for 2023 through to Spring of 2024 which will include introductory

level training for all EOC staff in Incident Command Systems and EOC core concepts; functional workshops in the primary functions (Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration); applied EOC training including tabletop exercises; Information Officer training; and training facilitated by EMCR on the provincial emergency plan developed to strengthen ties between the two levels of government. This is an ambitious plan and CEPF grant funds will be necessary to cover the costs of facilitation.

In addition, Emergency Programs staff have identified two professional development conferences that will provide valuable networking, best practices and skill development in disaster risk reduction and business continuity. This will support the City's ability to comply with new emergency program legislation being drafted by the province of BC, including additional mandates for local governments to draft business continuity plans and incorporate greater disaster risk reduction into emergency plans. It is proposed that CEPF grant funding be used to support staff attendance at both the Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Conference (EPBC) and the Disaster Risk Reduction CRHNet Symposium in 2023.

In addition to the training plan, grant funding is being sought to purchase a smart board for the EOC to improve efficiency in displaying and collaboration between working groups in the EOC, and a digital sign in/out system to be used in both the EOC and in EOC Operations within Reception Centres to provide greater accuracy when tracking staff time within the EOC.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

The UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund – Emergency Operations Centre Grant supports local governments by supporting the establishment of public emergency communications systems or programs. 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 support the City's ability to activate and effectively respond to emergency events with a fully trained EOC staff and will provide essential equipment needed within the EOC for future large-scale emergency and evacuation events.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Adam Davey, Director of Public Safety

PREPARED BY: Tanya Spooner, Manager Emergency Programs

APPROVED:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

Meeting date: March 27, 2023