

# STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

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**DATE:** April 29, 2024

**TO:** MAYOR AND COUNCIL

**NAME AND TITLE:** Eric Depenau, Acting Director Administrative Services

**SUBJECT:** **Structure Protection Unit Purchase 2024**

**ATTACHMENT(S):** Item G.5 Correspondence from Oct 16, 2023 Council meeting

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That Council APPROVES the “Structure Protection Unit Project” detailed in the report dated April 29, 2024, from the Acting Director of Administrative Services titled “Structure Protection Unit Purchase” be added to the Financial Plan with a budget of \$180,000 to be funded from 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Funding.

**PURPOSE:**

This report seeks Council approval to accept a \$180,000 donation from Miracle Theatre for the purpose of purchasing a Structure Protection Unit.

**BACKGROUND:**

In October 2023, the Emergency Programs Division worked with the Prince George Community Foundation and Miracle Theatre to identify a suitable project to benefit from the fundraising efforts of the 2024 Miracle Theatre production “A Comedy of Tenors.”

Recognizing the significant public concern for wildfires after the 2023 provincial wildfire season, proponents sought specifically to fund a project that would mitigate or assist the community of Prince George if it were to face the immediate threat of a wildfire. The purchase of a Structure Protection Unit (SPU) was identified in 2008 as part of the City’s Wildfire Mitigation Strategy, with the Community Wildfire Protection Plan, and Miracle Theatre’s anticipated funds would be sufficient to purchase a Structure Protection Unit for the 2024 wildfire season, and at the same time would not negate plans to apply for grant funding to purchase a similar unit over the next four years, greatly increasing the City’s capacity to place structural protection on homes within the path of an oncoming wildfire.

SPU’s are trailers used by fire departments, BC Wildfire Service and trained structure protection specialists across the province. They contain equipment such as pumps, hose, sprinklers and water delivery attachments for defending structures and other sites against wildfire by creating a “humidity bubble” around a structure, or by establishing a “wet line” around a property to slow or stop an advancing wildfire.

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

Supporting the continued implementation of the Wildfire Mitigation Strategy is identified as one of the Environmental Leadership and Climate Action Goals to address the impacts of climate change. Further, improving the City's capacity in the face of wildfire would support the City's Social Health and Well-being goals and provide a community where people feel safe and included.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

Funds for the purchase of the SPU have been raised by Miracle Theatre during the March 13 – April 7<sup>th</sup> run of the "Comedy of Tenors" production and are secured by the Prince George Community Foundation. It is intended that these funds will fully cover the cost of the intended SPU, with recognition that the contents of the SPU can be altered to fit within the budgeted amount of \$180,000 if the cost of such unit is found to exceed the budget through the procurement process.

**OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

The purchase of the SPU will proceed through the City's procurement process; and will presumably need to be custom built by a supplier.

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:**

To finalize the process of accepting the donation by Miracle Theatre as indicated during the October 16, 2023 regular council meeting (Item G.5). The Emergency Programs Division seeks to move forward to begin the procurement process for a SPU. This unit will greatly increase the ability of the emergency personnel to protect homes and other structures in the event that a wildfire threatens the community.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:**

Eric Depenau, Acting Director Administrative Services

Prepared by:

Tanya Spooner, Manager, Emergency Programs

**APPROVED:**

Walter Babicz, City Manager

Meeting Date: May, 6 2024