

**DATE:** December 18, 2023

**TO:** MAYOR AND COUNCIL

**NAME AND TITLE:** Adam Davey, Director of Public Safety

**SUBJECT:** 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 thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000) to support the EOC Training plan for 2024/25 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 Emergency Operations Center (EOC) training plan for 2024/25 and purchase additional equipment for the effective operation of the EOC. The City of Prince George received grants through this funding stream in previous years (2018, 2019, 2020, 2022 and 2023) that supported EOC training and emergency exercises; procured health and safety and computer equipment 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 and 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 the beginning of 2023, the majority of staff who were designated to the EOC had limited amounts of training and had not participated in any formal exercise or live emergency events. The Emergency Programs Division identified EOC training as a priority for 2023/24 and used CEPF grant funding to provide introductory level training for all EOC staff in Incident Command Systems and EOC core concepts and provided functional workshops in the primary

functions (Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration), with positive session comments from staff. The 2023/24 training plans will continue with Information Officer training set for January 2024 and Applied EOC training including a tabletop exercise set for February 2024.

The Emergency Programs division seeks CEPF funding to support a new 2024/25 EOC Training plan which recognizes the importance of continuing to develop the skills of current EOC staff, and will develop additional staff as part of succession planning for the EOC and as part of business continuity planning for the City overall. This new training plan also incorporates plans for a regional unified command exercise/workshop or tabletop to be held in conjunction with provincial, regional and first nations partners to refine and practice procedures related to EOC operations for an interface fire overlapping municipal boundaries.

In 2023 the annual Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Conference (EPBC) was not held, but there are strong indications that it is in development for 2024. This is a professional development conference that is a core opportunity to develop valuable networking, seek best practices and skill development in disaster risk reduction and business continuity. It is also anticipated that additional training or information opportunities will be made available to Local Authority Emergency Program staff in 2024/25 that will be necessary to support the City's ability to comply with Emergency Disaster Management Act (EDMA) which received Royal Assent in October 2023, and which regulations have yet to be released for. The new Act includes new mandates for local governments to provide additional reporting during and after emergency events, and to draft business continuity plans and incorporate climate change, and 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) if it is being held in 2024, or any new provincially supported conference significant training event on emergency management, business continuity, climate change or 2024/25 wildfire, drought or flood/freshet seasons.

In addition to the training plan, grant funding is being sought to purchase a second smart board for the EOC. This new board will be specific to GIS needs within the Planning section of the EOC. A similar unit purchased in 2023 was found to be beneficial for displaying and collaboration between working groups in the EOC and a request was made during training for the additional board.

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:**

The UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund – Emergency Operations Centre Grant supports local governments by supporting the purchase of equipment and supplies required to maintain or improve Emergency Operations Centres (EOC) and to enhance EOC capacity through training or exercises. 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: January 8, 2024