



REPORT

To: Chair and Directors

Report Number: CS-BRD-017

From: David Sturgeon, Protective Services Manager

Date: August 20, 2020

Subject: Fire Smart Grant Application

RECOMMENDATION: [Corporate Unweighted]

That the Regional Board authorize the submission of a grant application, to the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Community Resiliency Investment program, to apply for \$150,000 of funding for a PRRD FireSmart Campaign in 2021.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

The UBCM Community Resiliency Investment program was announced in 2018, and is intended to reduce the risk of wildfires and mitigate impacts on BC communities. The deadline for the next grant application intake is October 9, 2020. The funding model depends greatly on what Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) risk class the local government falls under. The PRRD is currently rated as a 1-3, which is considered high to extreme. Because of this, the PRRD is allowed to apply for up to \$150,000 per year to provide community FireSmart activities to decrease the overall threat of fires in the region. This type of program needs to be considered over multiple years to have the greatest impact. After engaging with other regional districts and a municipality, a draft plan was developed for year one of the PRRD's program. In year one, staff will test theories and use measurable data tracking to ensure residents are being engaged. It was cautioned that the process of engagement and buy in by residents can take multiple years to come to fruition.

Social media is a primary community building resource that FireSmart BC uses to spread the FireSmart message across British Columbia. FireSmart BC social media tools include Facebook (@FireSmart BC), Twitter (@BCFireSmart) and Instagram (@FireSmart BC). The engaging content is highly shareable and can be used to inform and engage the public in each community. This will be PRRD's primary platform to spread messaging about the program.

The other key component to this program will be direct engagement with residents to ensure they have the tools necessary to complete the FireSmart principles on their property. To achieve this, the PRRD will accept requests for "Site Information Visits". These visits will give the residents clear instructions about how they can achieve a FireSmart property, with tips and literature around completing a risk assessment for the property and the subsequent works that need to be done after the site visit to achieve the FireSmart principal results. The residents will have a clear link back to the PRRD to answer questions and provide guidance during and after the work is completed.

As a compliment to the risk assessments, another large component of the program will be a large-scale spring debris cleanup, with bins being provided by the PRRD for residents to dump their organic waste

at no charge. This program will piggyback on the solid waste spring cleanup program with a media campaign to coincide with the event.

The outline of services below are proposed for year one, with the possibility of enhancing the PRRD's service through partnerships with municipalities in year two and subsequent years.

Services the PRRD Will Provide

- Public education campaigns through social media, radio and print
 - a. Start a YouTube channel & Twitter (Use current Facebook)
 - b. Radio campaign
 - c. Newspaper articles (Features)
 - d. Direct mailers to extreme hazard zones
- Site information visits (not hazard assessments)
 - a. Attend sites by request
 - b. Provide all information to homeowner about FireSmart principles
 - c. Do a walk around the property and talk about mitigation & best practices
 - d. No formal hazard assessment to be provided
 - e. Guidance and follow up provided (risk assessment package left with homeowner)
- Attend home and garden shows, farmers markets etc. with an information booth
 - a. Gather data on residents for follow up
 - b. Provide information & take home packages
- Yard waste debris drop off locations throughout the PRRD.
 - a. Work in conjunction with the spring waste cleanup with solid waste. Provide bins and messaging.
- Work with BC Wildfire for consistent messaging

The FireSmart campaign will be a 6-8 month program, with data tracking in place to provide feedback for the future direction of the program and possible revision of the PRRD's community wildfire preparedness plan (CWPP).

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

1. That the Regional Board decline the submission of a grant application, to the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Community Resiliency Investment program, to apply for \$150,000 of funding for a PRRD FireSmart Campaign in 2021.
2. That the Regional Board provide further direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:

- ☒ Responsive Service Delivery
- ☒ Enhance Emergency Planning and Response Capacity

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):

Below is a breakdown of the estimated budget for the 2021 season. This program will be solely funded by the UBCM grant. If the grant is not allocated, the program will not proceed for the 2021 year.

Category	Amount	Notes
Marketing	\$22,500	
Advertising	\$22,500	
Wages or Contract Fees	\$40,000	
Print Media & Swag	\$5000	
Training	\$5000	
Risk Assessment Packages	\$20,000	(100 Properties a year @ \$200 ea.)
Yard Waste Debris Pickup	\$35,000	(Run in Conjunction with solid waste spring round up program.)
Total (1 Year)	<u>\$150,000</u>	

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATION(S):

If successful in obtaining the grant, a communications plan will be developed for the entire program.

OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):

None at this time.