

DATE: February 23, 2021

FILE: 1855-03

TO: Chair and Directors
Electoral Areas Services Committee

Supported by Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

R. DYSON

**RE: UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund Application:
Emergency Support Services Funding Stream**

Purpose

As required by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Community Emergency Preparedness Fund, to obtain a board resolution in support of the Comox Valley Regional District's (CVRD) Emergency Program application for funding via the Emergency Support Services (ESS) funding stream and provide overall grant management.

Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer

THAT the board support the Comox Valley Regional District's Emergency Program, Electoral Areas Service function 271, application to the Union of BC Municipalities Community Emergency Preparedness Fund for funding up to \$11,357.95 to support the purchase of resources and development of specialized training for Emergency Support Services, and provide overall grant management.

Executive Summary

The funds requested will support ESS capacity and resilience as well as Emergency Management BC's (EMBC) modernization project. Specifically:

- Purchase of IT equipment
- A recruitment and training needs assessment
- Two training sessions
- A new Reception Centre Kit

The project completion date is no later than one year from project approval. The application and application budget are attached as Appendix A.

Prepared by:

G. DOERKSEN

George Doerksen
Deputy Emergency Program
Coordinator

Concurrence:

H. SIEMENS

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Concurrence:

D. DEMARZO

Doug DeMarzo
General Manager of
Community Services

Background

The Comox Valley Emergency Program (CVEP) is a regional service that supports and includes all Comox Valley Electoral Areas A, B and C, municipalities, as well as collaborates closely with K'ómoks First Nation.

CVEP is seeking approval to apply for funding through the ESS stream of the UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF). CEPF is a suite of funding programs 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 UBCM.

The intent of the ESS funding stream is to support eligible applicants to build local capacity through volunteer recruitment, retention and training, including in-house training, and the purchase of ESS equipment. The focus of the ESS funding stream for the 2021 intake continues to be in support of the modernization of local ESS programs in order to move toward digital registration and reporting through the ERA Tool. Additionally, focus will also be on local ESS programs that prepare to act as host communities.

To meet the required timeframe, the application has already been submitted. Staff are now seeking a board resolution to support the grant application and willingness to provide overall grant management. This resolution is a requirement of the application.

If successful, CVEP will use the funds for the following:

- Purchase of IT equipment. (A minimum of three laptops, a laser printer, and storage cases for each. These will be used for training and use of the new online ERA Tool. The ERA Tool is an online program that allows evacuees to self-register, responders to enter registration and referrals digitally, and suppliers to submit invoices and receipts online through any web browser.
- A recruitment and training needs assessment. (ESS is currently in a state of flux, largely due to the pandemic. We are needing more volunteers in management positions. Training has been difficult to obtain as it was typically provided in-person. Online training is becoming available but many volunteers are not comfortable participating via computer.)
- A minimum of two training sessions in preparation for a region wide functional earthquake exercise. (In the event the functional earthquake exercise that was planned for 2020 is delivered in fall of 2021)
- A new Reception Centre Kit to be stored at the new arts centre on Hornby Island. (Currently there are no ESS supplies stored on Hornby Island to support operation of a reception centre during a disaster.)

If not being used by ESS during a response, the IT resources requested could also be used to support the Harmston Emergency Operations Centre operations and staff training.

Policy Analysis

UBCM requires a board resolution indicating support for the current proposed activities and willingness to provide overall grant management.

Financial Implications

The UBCM funding stream provides a maximum of \$25,000. CVEP is seeking \$11,357.95. The costs identified are based on recommendations received from the CVRD's Information Systems Branch, recommendations from other ESS teams, prior purchases made by the Comox Valley ESS team and historical costs for training. CVEP will provide overall management of the funds as well as procure all resources and training. Financial Services will provide assistance.

All funded activities must be completed within one year of notification of project approval.

The ongoing cost of support services for the new equipment will be covered through the Emergency Program, function 270 budget.

Interdepartmental Involvement/Implications

Updates on the progress of the UBCM CEPF application will be shared with the Financial, Community and Corporate Services and other key CVRD departments as required.

Citizen/Public Relations

The role of ESS is to meet the basic needs of British Columbians impacted by disasters by providing short-term support in a compassionate manner. These resources will further enhance our ESS team’s ability to continue supporting our residents and those throughout BC after an emergency or disaster.

Attachments: Appendix A – CVEP UBCM application and budget

Community Emergency Preparedness Fund Emergency Support Services 2021 Application Form

Please complete and return the application form by **January 29, 2021**. All questions are required to be answered by typing directly in this form. If you have any questions, contact cepf@ubcm.ca or (250) 387-4470.

SECTION 1: Applicant Information	AP <i>(for administrative use only)</i>
Name of Primary Applicant: Comox Valley Regional District	Date of Application: 28 January 2021
Contact Person*: George Doerksen	Position: Deputy Emergency Program Coordinator
Phone: 250-334-8890 / C: 250-897-6040	E-mail: gdoerksen@comoxvalleyrd.ca

* Contact person must be an authorized representative of the applicant.

SECTION 2: For <u>Regional Projects Only</u>
<p>1. Identification of Partnering Applicants. For all regional projects, please list all of the partnering eligible applicants included in this application. Refer to Section 2 in the Program & Application Guide for eligibility.</p>
<p>2. Rationale for Regional Projects. Please provide a rationale for submitting a regional application and describe how this approach will support cost-efficiencies in the total grant request.</p>

SECTION 3: Project Summary
<p>3. Name of the Project: Enhancement of Comox Valley ESS Capacity and Resiliency</p>
<p>4. Project Cost & Grant Request: Total Project Cost: \$11,357.95 Total Grant Request: \$11,357.95</p>

Have you applied for or received funding for this project from other sources? If yes, please indicate the source and the amount of funding received or applied for.

No

5. Project Summary. Provide a brief summary of your project in 150 words or less.

To support ESS Modernization and use of the Evacuation Registration & Assistance (ERA) Tool we want to increase our IT capacity through the purchase of 3 new laptops, 3 cases, a LaserJet printer, and a printer case. Our current laptops are dated and not suitable for ERA use.

In addition, we would like hire a consultant to conduct a recruitment and training needs assessment and provide a minimum of 2 training sessions in preparation for a region wide functional earthquake exercise, scheduled for the fall of 2021. The focus of the training will be providing reception centre services in a virtual environment, including use of the ERA Tool.

A new Reception Centre Kit stored on Hornby Island will enhance ESS capacity. Currently there are no ESS supplies stored on the island. This is a remote community with a population of over 4000 in the summer.

6. Emergency Plan. Describe the extent to which the proposed project will specifically support recommendations or requirements identified in the local Emergency Plan.

Although the Comox Valley Emergency Plan does not directly reference what has been requested, it identifies the roll ESS is to play.

Section 1, Page 3 states:

The Comox Valley Emergency Plan has been developed using the BCEMS standard and follows this standard throughout. Priority Response Goal number 3 is to 'Reduce Suffering'.

Section 1, Page 7 states:

Emergency Support Services will provide for the basic needs of persons impacted by disaster (i.e. information, family reunification, emotional support and coordination of services)

The Comox Valley ESS mandate, identified in the ESS Plan, states:

CVESS coordinates the temporary provision of food, clothing, shelter and any additional services for individuals affected by an emergency or disaster within the CVRD jurisdictional boundaries, including the K'ómoks First Nation, Denman Island, and Hornby Island.

The capacity to provide all of these will be greatly enhanced if this grant is approved.

SECTION 4: Detailed Project Information

7. Proposed Activities. What specific activities will be undertaken as part of the proposed project? Refer to Section 4 of the Program & Application Guide for eligibility.

Purchase of supplies and equipment in support of modernization. (3 laptops, laptop cases, a printer and a storage case)

Training and exercises both in-house and remote to increase capacity for the provision of emergency support services, including travel costs. (A training needs assessment and a minimum of 2 training sessions)

Purchase of supplies and equipment. (A reception centre kit)

8. Modernization of local ESS programs. How will the proposed activities support the modernization of the local ESS program? Will the Evacuee Registration & Assistance (ERA) Tool be implemented?

We have 4 volunteers and 2 staff trained in the use of the ERA Tool and will be training additional volunteers this coming year. We currently have 2 dated laptops, not suitable for use of the ERA Tool. The new laptops and printer will be put into use for ERA immediately. Being able to do R&R remotely also promotes safety during this pandemic.

The focus of the needs assessment and training will be operating a reception centre in a virtual environment, including use of the ERA Tool, all of which support modernization.

The new RC Kit will be used to support Hornby Island and stored in a new arts facility.

9. Capacity Building. Describe how the proposed project will increase emergency response capacity (i.e. having the physical resources and the skills to respond to emergencies) in your community.

We have ERA trained volunteers but poor IT capacity. The laptops and printer we are seeking will allow ERA use immediately and support Level 1-3 responses. They will also be used to enhance training.

As a result of Covid, our membership this year is down 50%. Training was drastically reduced but has begun again due to Zoom and ERA. The needs assessment will help identify recruitment strategies as well as training requirements. The training will be focused on operating in a virtual environment.

The new RC Kit will be stored on Hornby Island, a remote community with a summer population in excess of 4000. There are currently no ESS supplies on the island and getting them there during a crisis would be difficult and time consuming.

10. Host Community Capacity. Describe how the proposed project will increase emergency response capacity as a host community?

The Comox Valley is recognized as a host community for Powell River and the qathet Regional District. We occasionally also host evacuees for our neighbouring RD's and communities. The resources we seek will improve our capacity to serve as a host.

11. Transferability. Describe the extent to which the proposed project may offer transferable resources and supplies to other local governments and/or First Nations (e.g. ESS volunteers, training resources, cots, blankets, etc.).

The CVRD emergency program is willing to offer this equipment, as well as our volunteers, wherever needed, provided we can still maintain a reasonable level of

capacity within our region. The CVRD Emergency Program is a member of the Mid Island Emergency Coordinators and Managers (MIECM), a group of emergency managers and coordinators that covers the Malahat to Port Hardy, Powell River to the Sunshine Coast. This group prides itself on having a strong level of collaboration and a commitment to aid each other in any way possible during a crisis.

Members of the Comox Valley team have also been deployed around the province during activations to support other communities. These project resources could go with our volunteers in support of that response.

Training will be offered to neighbouring ESS teams, which will build confidence and relationships and strengthen overall volunteer interest and engagement.

12. Partnerships. In addition to Question 1, if applicable, identify any partners you will collaborate with on the proposed project and specifically outline how you intend to work together.

The Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) is a federation of three electoral areas and three municipalities (City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland) working collaboratively on services for the benefit of the diverse urban and rural areas of the Comox Valley. The CVRD's Emergency Program, through a regional services agreement, supports all of these municipalities and the K'ómoks First Nation.

The Emergency Program is able to submit this application on behalf of all the noted LG's without individual approval. The resources of the Emergency Program are shared resources and as such are very cost effective.

13. Evaluation. How will the project be evaluated? How will performance measures and/or benchmarks be used to measure outcomes? (e.g. tracking the number of training events and recruitments, external evaluators, etc.)

Besides the purchase of the items identified, the project will be evaluated in the following ways:

1. Additional ERA training in 2021 including use of the new equipment. This will build confidence as well as strengthen volunteer interest and engagement.
2. The ESS Plan will be updated to reflect the use of the ERA tool and how this equipment will support RC activation.
3. The laptops will be distributed to Level 1 team members for training and testing in actual situations, followed by an evaluation.
4. Completion of a recruitment and training needs assessment, with recommendations.
5. Completion of a minimum of 2 training sessions, focused on operating in a virtual environment.
6. Delivery of the new RC Kit to the Hornby Island Arts Centre upon building completion.

14. Progress to Date. If you received funding under the 2017, 2018 or 2020 Emergency Support Services funding stream, please describe the progress you have made in increasing ESS capacity.

Comox Valley ESS has not been funded through this program previously. Due to the pandemic, increased use of technology, and an aging membership, our team is in a state of transition. We need to bolster our membership but also ensure most of our members are computer literate and trained in use of the ERA Tool. This grant will help us achieve these goals.

15. Additional Information. Please share any other information you think may help support your submission.

Due to our emergency program being regional in nature, serving 3 electoral areas, 3 municipalities, and 1 first nation, this is a very cost-effective use of resources.

SECTION 5: Required Application Materials

Only complete applications will be considered for funding.

The following separate attachments are required to be submitted as part of the application:

- Local government Council or Board resolution, Band Council resolution or Treaty First Nation resolution, indicating support for the current proposed activities and willingness to provide overall grant management.
- Detailed budget for each component identified in the application. This must clearly identify the CEPF funding request, applicant contribution, and/or other grant funding.
- For regional projects only: local government Council or Board resolution, Band Council resolution or Treaty First Nation resolution from each partnering applicant that clearly states their approval for the primary applicant to apply for, receive and manage the grant funding on their behalf.

SECTION 6: Signature

I certify that: (1) to the best of my knowledge, all information is accurate and (2) the area covered by the proposed project is within our jurisdiction (or appropriate approvals are in place).

Name: George Doerksen

Title: Deputy Emergency Program
Coordinator

Signature: *George Doerksen*
An electronic or original signature is required.

Date: 28 Jan 2021

Submit applications to:

Local Government Program Services, Union of BC Municipalities

E-mail: cepf@ubcm.ca

Budget: 2021 UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund**Funding Stream: Emergency Support Services****Project Name: Enhancement of Comox Valley ESS Capacity and Resiliency**

	Item Description	Estimated Project Cost	CVRD Contributions of Funds	Setup and Maintenance
1	Recruitment & Training needs assessment and a minimum of 2 training sessions on virtual reception centre operations	\$5,000	None anticipated	CVRD will arrange hiring of contractor and provide project oversight
1	Three (3) Laptops (Suggested: HP 250 G7 - 15.6" - Core i5 1035G7 - 8 GB RAM - 256 GB SSD - US or similar)	Approx. \$1,050 each Total 3,150	None anticipated	CVRD will cover setup and the ongoing cost of annual maintenance
2	Three Pelican Model 1495 Protector laptop cases or similar	Approx. \$260 each Total \$780	None anticipated	N/A
3	One (1) LaserJet Printer (Suggested: HP LaserJet Pro M203dw Wireless Monochrome Laser Printer or similar)	Approx. \$220	None anticipated	CVRD will cover setup and the ongoing cost of annual maintenance
4	A protective case for the printer, such as the Husky 37-inch Mobile Job Box or similar	Approx. \$200	None anticipated	N/A
5	HP 30A (CF230A) Black Original LaserJet Toner Cartridge	Approx. \$92		N/A
6	Reception Centre Kit for Hornby Island	Approx. \$1500 (2017 exact cost was \$1357.30) Detailed list of kit contents attached as RC Kit Contents - Sheet 2.	None anticipated	CVRD will cover setup and the ongoing cost of annual maintenance

Approximate Project Costs

\$10,942.00

Approx. tax (PST)

\$415.95

Total Funds Requested:**11,357.95**