



The Corporation of the City of Courtenay

Staff Report

To: Council

File No.: 7320-20

From: Kurt MacDonald, Fire Chief

Date: January 28 2026

Subject: 2026 UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund – Grant Applications

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to reapply for the following Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Community Emergency Preparedness Fund regional application streams: Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Equipment and Training, Emergency Support Services (ESS) Equipment and Training funding streams, Public Notification and Evacuation Planning and Indigenous Cultural Safety and Humility. This application is made in partnership with the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD), Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland, and K'ómoks First Nation (KFN).

BACKGROUND:

The Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) is a suite of funding programs intended to enhance the resiliency of local governments, First Nations, and communities in responding to emergencies through funding provided by the Province of BC and administered by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM). If a grant application submission is approved, the funding provided will support eligible costs and activities for:

Emergency Support Services Equipment and Training

The supports continuation of essential staff and volunteer training:

- ESS tabletop exercise, conflict management, Incident Command Systems 100, Psychological First Aid and Mental Health.
- Cross jurisdictional training delivery on Cultural Safety with Oceanside ESS, Parksville, Qualicum, and Regional District of Nanaimo.
- Supplies and equipment to improve on scene safety and technology.
- Conference participation and volunteer recognition, recruitment, and retention.

Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Equipment and Training

- Establish a common operating picture to strengthen local- to- regional emergency operations centre resilience.
- Advance regional emergency operations readiness by implementing structured data- sharing and data-sovereignty agreements within existing emergency services, geographic information systems and information technology structures and Provincial/Federal frameworks.
- Integrate internal comprehensive training and exercises capabilities to execute and sustain corporate support to regional EOC while maintaining business continuity.
- Continuing local EOC equipment readiness and interoperability testing with regional EOC.

2026 UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund – Grant Applications**Public Notification**

Integrate regional and local emergency operations, emergency and fire services, and critical infrastructure under a comprehensive notification framework.

- Connect existing tools and early warning systems with new capabilities to strengthen continuity, efficiency, and risk reduction.
- Ensure interoperability and timely alerts that deliver consistent communication for service partners and neighboring communities.
- Embed structured planning and regular testing to validate performance, readiness, and compliance across all systems.

Indigenous Cultural Safety and Humility

- Strengths-based 'Decolonial Story Mapping' initiative for understanding the legacy of deep-time and place-based community disaster risk reduction innovations and strategies.
- Participatory workshops and knowledge sharing sessions co-created by K'ómoks First Nation, Comox Valley Reconciliation Advisory Table members and CVEM service partners grounded in arts-based methodologies.
- Trauma-informed and decolonizing practice-based facilitation training for staff, volunteers, and lay service partners focusing on embedding cultural-safety practices across all phases of emergency management.

DISCUSSION:

With Council support, staff will work with the CVRD, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland and KFN on a regional application that could result in the following funding amounts:

- 2026 Emergency Support Services Equipment and Training stream in the amount of up to \$150,000.
- 2026 Emergency Operations Centre Training and Equipment stream in the amount of up to \$150,000.
- 2026 Public Notification and Evacuation Planning stream in the amount of up to \$150,000; and
- 2026 Indigenous Cultural Safety and Humility stream in the amount of up to \$150,000.

POLICY ANALYSIS:

The proposed grant applications align with the Emergency and Disaster Management Act (EDMA) by strengthening local and regional capacity for emergency preparedness, response, and recovery. The initiatives enhance EOC and ESS capability, public notification and evacuation planning, and culturally safe emergency management practices in support of coordinated regional response and community resilience.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

If successful, the total amount of grant funding would be \$600,000.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

2026 UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund – Grant Applications

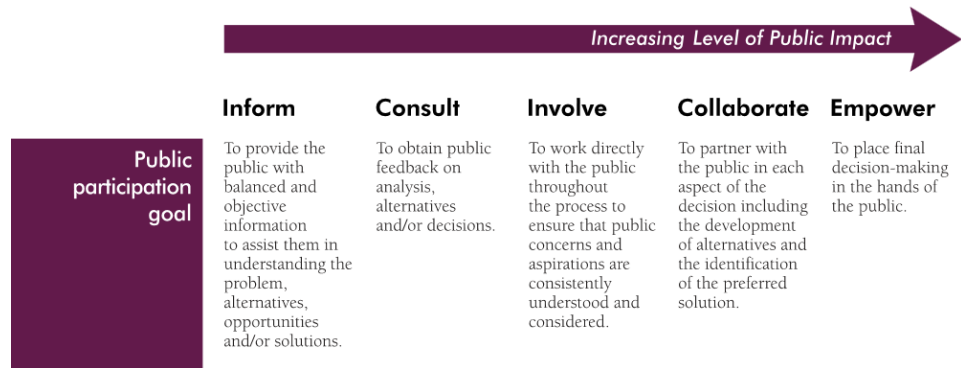
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REFERENCE:

This initiative addresses the following strategic priorities:

- Public Safety - Build capacity for emergency planning and local response

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Staff would inform the public based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation:



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OPTIONS:

1. THAT based on the January 28 2026 staff report “2026 UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund – Grant Applications”, Council approves OPTION 1 and authorize an application made to the Union of BC Municipalities Community Emergency Preparedness Fund’s Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Equipment and Training grant, Emergency Support Services (ESS) Equipment and Training grant, Public Notification and Evacuation Planning grant and Indigenous Cultural Safety and Humility grant;

AND FURTHER, THAT as a joint applicant, Council agrees that the primary applicant will apply for, receive, and manage the grant funding on their behalf.

2. THAT Council provide alternative direction to staff.

Prepared by: Kurt MacDonald, ECFO, Fire Chief

Concurrence: Geoff Garbutt, M.PI., MCIP, RPP, City Manager (CAO)