

**Date:** 31/08/2021

**To:** Chair and Directors, Committee of the Whole

**And To:** John MacLean, Chief Administrative Officer

**From:** Kevin Erickson, Chief Financial Officer

**Date of Meeting:** Committee of the Whole\_Sep09\_2021

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## **Short Summary:**

Addition of Firehalls and Fire Station Infrastructure as Eligible Projects for Community Works Funds

## **Background:**

On August 11th, 2021, the Cariboo Regional District received notice that we would be receiving a top-up payment of \$1,704,188.45. Included in the communication was an expansion of eligible project categories to include fire halls and fire station infrastructure.

On August 18<sup>th</sup>, I received notice from UBCM that guidance regarding fire halls and fire station infrastructure eligibility had been posted on their web page; this is provided here for the Board's information.

### **The following projects examples are ineligible uses of Community Works funding:**

- Fire truck purchases as stand-alone projects\*
- Emergency Operations Centres and Search and Rescue Facilities
- City halls, public works buildings and other administrative buildings
- Child care centres
- Social housing
- Seniors care facilities and housing
- Health care related infrastructure
- Small equipment purchases as stand-alone projects
- Feasibility studies and detailed design plans (without additional capital spending)

*\*Note: The eligibility criteria for fire halls and fire station infrastructure have been expanded. Please see page 5 of this document for more details.*

<b>Fire Halls and Fire Stations</b>	Fire hall and fire station infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– New fire hall (building) for housing fire-fighting apparatus and staff (may include attached dorms, basic training facilities and administration areas)</li> <li>– Retro-fit and modernization of existing firehalls and attached building space</li> <li>– Acquisition of a fire-truck as a capital asset as <b>part of an overall</b> capital upgrade to an existing fire hall or construction of a new firehall</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: the following investments are <b>not eligible</b> in the fire hall category:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Acquisition or replacement of fire trucks or other vehicles as a standalone project</li> <li>– Personal protective equipment (PPE) and gear and other fire station related equipment</li> <li>– Fire hydrants and reservoirs</li> <li>– Communications devices (Ex.: Cell phones, radios, pagers)</li> <li>– Structural Protection Units and contents</li> </ul>
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There is potential for great demand from the Regional Fire Services. Our fire infrastructure is aging, and demand for funds to finance renovations and additions has the potential to overwhelm the funds available for distribution.

The CRD Community Works Fund Prioritization Policy will require revision. Fire halls and fire station infrastructure will need to be added as an eligible project category. Consideration will need to be given to the prioritization of how Community Works Funds are allocated. Currently the policy states:

### **Prioritization**

In order to ensure that funds are distributed as equitably as possible, the following priorities are established in order of importance:

- 1) Projects that benefit rural taxpayers will be prioritized over regional or subregional initiatives;
- 2) Projects that support the following key environmental outcomes will be prioritized over projects in other eligible categories:
  - a. Reduced greenhouse gas emissions;
  - b. Cleaner water;
  - c. Cleaner air; and
  - d. Solid Waste.

- 3) Projects that provide incremental value that would not otherwise be obtained or maximized through regular taxation.
- 4) Sub-regional or regional projects.
- 5) Projects that promote regional economic growth.

While investing in fire halls and fire station infrastructure can be said to benefit rural taxpayers and provide incremental value, the current Community Works Funds Allocations end in 2024. It might be prudent to formalize where firehalls and fire station infrastructure are in distribution hierarchy should the program not get renewed and the available funds get oversubscribed.

**Attachments:**

UBCM Letter dated August 11, 2021

UBCM Examples of Eligible CWF Project, Updated August 2021

Cariboo Regional District Community Works Fund Prioritization Policy