



REGIONAL
DISTRICT
OF NANAIMO

Funding Endorsement for a Geohazard Risk Prioritization Study

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board endorse a grant application to the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund for a Geohazard Risk Prioritization Study for the region.

BACKGROUND

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) completed a Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Analysis (HRVA) in 2019¹. The results reveal flood hazards and landslides pose a risk to the region. The risk of floods is anticipated to worsen as sea levels rise and extreme weather events become more frequent. Landslides can be a result of a natural sequence of events (e.g., mega thrust earthquake) and/or human activities often resulting from land alterations. The HRVA recognizes the growing importance to acquire the most up-to-date information with the goal of better supporting land use decisions to prevent or reduce injury or loss of life, environmental damage and economic loss due to natural hazard events.

In response, since 2018, the RDN Interdepartmental Working Group (planning, water and wastewater and emergency services professionals) and external consultants have completed a range of coastal and riverine flood hazard studies and mapping products aligned with the provincial guidelines and professional best practices. The proposed grant funding request builds upon this body of work to enhance our community resilience to natural hazards.

Further details on the completed projects can be found on the RDN webpages: www.rdn.bc.ca/sea-level-rise-adaptation-program and www.getinvolved.rdn.ca/river-floodplain-map-update

Geohazard Risk Prioritization Study

Geohazards are the result of natural, active geophysical processes with the potential to result in some undesirable outcome to people or infrastructure, or they may occur in remote areas with no hazard impact. The primary objective of this Geohazard Risk Prioritization Study is to characterize and prioritize riverine flood area (unmapped) and conduct an overview assessment to identify steep slope geohazards which might impact developed properties (includes lands with development potential). The study will

¹ Regional District of Nanaimo Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Assessment, 2006 & 2019 and Flood Risk Assessment Report, September 2019

encompass both the electoral areas and municipalities, with the risk prioritization study focused on the electoral areas.

To fund this proposal, the RDN is eligible to apply to the provincial Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF), under the Disaster Risk Reduction – Climate Adaptation stream. The CEPF is an application-based program administered by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM). Under Category 1 (Foundational Activities), the CEPF can contribute a maximum of 100% of eligible project costs – up to a maximum of \$150,000. All funded activities must be completed within two years of notification of funding approval. More funding program details can be found on the UBCM webpage: www.ubcm.ca/cepf

If endorsed by the Board, the RDN would seek 100% grant funding to support the completion of the following eligible activities:

- risk mapping - geospatial information for both geohazard areas and elements at risk;
- risk assessment - identification and prioritization of geohazard areas based on the principles of risk assessment (i.e., consideration of both hazards and consequences);
- a web-based communication toolⁱ to view prioritized geohazard areas and supporting information;
- discussion of the relative sensitivity of geohazard areas to climate change; and
- information gap identification and recommendations for further study.

Funding permitting, two application deadlines are scheduled for 2022/2023: September 30, 2022, and February 24, 2023. To apply for the September 30, 2022, deadline, the grant application must have a Board resolution showing support of the proposal.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Obtaining grant funding has the potential to significantly reduce the financial impact of this project on RDN residents. The grant funding program is very competitive, if the grant application for the Geohazard Risk Prioritization Study is not successful, work would not proceed until adequate funds are secured in future years.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

By continuing to invest in natural hazard risk reduction, the RDN demonstrates leadership in adapting to a changing climate with the aim to ensure a high standard of land use planning and public safety into the future.

Climate Change - Be leaders in climate change adaptation and mitigation, and become net zero by 2032.

REVIEWED BY:

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ⁱ An example of a web-based communication tool is the Columbia Shuswap Regional District GIS map with geohazard risk map layer available at: <https://web.csr.d.bc.ca/maps/?viewer=public>