



STAFF REPORT

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL
FROM: JOHN THOMAS
SUBJECT: COUNCIL SUPPORT – EMC GRANT APPLICATION
MEETING DATE: MARCH 10TH, 2026 – COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is seeking Council's support through resolution for Emergency Management Cowichan for 2026 UBCM Grant.

BACKGROUND

EMC is seeking to apply for the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund – Emergency Support (ESS) Grant for 2026 for \$150,000.

IMPLICATIONS

- a. **Financial:**
There will be no direct financial impact to the Town of Lake Cowichan.
- b. **Policy/Legislation:**
N/A
- c. **Strategic Priority:**
N/A
- d. **Sustainability:**
N/A

e. Communication:

N/A

f. Staffing Implication:

N/A

Options:

- 1.) Accept this staff report and supports the application for funding.
- 2.) Do not approve this staff report.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff is recommending option 1.

THAT COUNCIL supports the Cowichan Valley Regional District to apply for, receive, and manage the UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund Emergency Support Services 2026 grant funding up to \$150,000 on behalf of the Town of Lake Cowichan.

Signed:

John T

John Thomas, Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments:

- Draft EMR Grant Application



**EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT
COWICHAN**

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
REGIONAL GRANTS:
Application Process and Proposed
Project Summaries**

2025 / 2026

DRAFT



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EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT
COWICHAN

BACKGROUND

A. Regional Approach to Emergency Management Grants

As agreed in 2022, Cowichan local authorities continue to approach emergency management grants regionally to support the growth and improvement of the full program benefiting all local authority members and interested First Nation service recipients. Under several grant programs, the regional emergency management program is eligible for the maximum funding available based on the number of eligible applicants included in the regional application. A larger funding base increases the options for projects, and a regional approach ensures consistency and cost effectiveness in the Cowichan region.

Wherever practical, emergency management grants are applied for regionally (all four municipalities and the regional district). This process is facilitated by Emergency Management Cowichan (EMC). Projects are determined based on need, validated against the regional Hazard Risk Vulnerability Assessment, and subject to final review by the CAOs and approval from the Board.

The regional emergency management program continues to build its partnerships with First Nations. Where First Nation partners choose to join in a regional application, this will be supported.

The following 2025/26 grants will be approached regionally:

- UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund Emergency Operations Centre and Training Grant (EOC) – All five (5) local authority partners
- UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund Emergency Support Services Grant (EOC) – All five (5) local authority partners
- UBCM Community Resiliency Investment Fund FireSmart Community Funding and Supports (FCFS) – Three (3) local authority partners – City of Duncan, Town of Ladysmith and the CVRD. Lake Cowichan continues to run an independent program through the Fire Department, MNC is determining/adjusting their approach to FireSmart internally.
- EMCR Indigenous Engagement and Reconciliation (for the requirements under the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*) – All five local authority partners under a single project administered by the CVRD.

The following grants (not a fulsome list) 2025/26 will be managed independently or will be discussed at a future date:

- EMCR Disaster Resiliency and Innovation Fund (DRIF)
- Next Generation 9-1-1

B. Expectations & Process for Regional Grants

Notwithstanding specific grant application requirements, the general process below will be used for regional grants:

1. ***New for this year:*** Grant scope will be collaboratively developed, and summaries will be drafted for the Technical Advisory Group.
2. Grant projects will be presented to the CAO Advisory Committee for recommendation. Project briefs will provide budget and expectations for all partners.
3. Full Grant application will be drafted by Emergency Management Cowichan staff for recommended projects.
4. All Indigenous groups in the region will be provided with an opportunity to provide feedback on recommended project prior to final submission.
5. Grant application will be provided to the CVRD Board and CFO for approval and shared with all applicant partners.
6. Where required by the grant, each applicant partner will provide an agreement or resolution in support of the grant and the Cowichan Valley Regional District as the administrator of the grant.
7. Grant will be administered by Emergency Management Cowichan, Cowichan Valley Regional District staff to include project administration and financial reporting.
8. Projects will be managed by the relevant local authority staff, and/or by EMC as appropriate.

GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARIES

A. UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund Emergency Support Services (ESS) Regional Grant 2026

Background

As part of the regional approach to emergency management, the local authorities and Indigenous partners in the Cowichan area work together under a single Emergency Support Services (ESS) program administered by the CVRD (EMC). This critical legislated function (with teams, equipment, supplies and facilities) supports residents of any community following an evacuation (e.g. single house fire, large flood, widespread wildfire, etc.).

UBCM Funding Intent

The intent of this funding stream is to support eligible applicants to build local capacity through the purchase of supplies required to maintain or improve their ESS program, and to enhance ESS capacity through training and exercises.

Cowichan's 2026 ESS Grant Proposal

To continue to increase regional ESS capacity within the local authorities with:

- Staff and volunteer recruitment, training, response supplies, and recognition events
- Mental Health Support kits for Responders at Reception Centres
- Sleeping unit supplies (cots, sleeping bags) to stock centres more appropriately to populations and risk
- Reception centre supplies and equipment to support evacuee registration (Cell phone charging stations and social/cultural support kits for reception centres, emergency food rations)
- Weather resistant updates to mobile ESS units

FOR ACTION:

Each municipality to resolve:

For the Cowichan Valley Regional District to apply for, receive, and manage the UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund Emergency Support Services 2026 grant funding up to \$150,000 on behalf of insert Municipality.

Your resolution should be provided **by November 17, 2025** if possible.

2026 CEPF ESS Grant Proposed Budget		
Description	TOTAL	CEPF Portion
Cell phone charging stations	\$9,000	\$9,000
Volunteer & Responder Recruitment (events, kits, recognition, training and exercise-eligible costs)	\$30,000	\$30,000
NESST Conference x 2 delegates	\$5,000	\$5,000
Mental health kits for responders at each RC location	\$1,500	\$1,500
Social support supplies x 6 locations (family and cultural activities/supplies)	\$2,000	\$2,000
Disposable plates, cups, napkins, cutlery for all 6 locations	\$1,500	\$1,500
ESS trailer ceiling upgrades (2 mobile units)	\$12,000	\$12,000
Food/water for ESS Reception Centres	\$35,000	\$35,000
Group Lodging supplies (cots, sleeping bags, sheets, extension cords, power bars, etc.)	\$40,000	\$40,000
Contingency	\$14,000	\$14,000
TOTAL	\$150,000	\$150,000

ESTIMATED ESS PROJECT DEVELOPMENT / IMPLEMENTATION IMPACTS

	Core Service Impact – No, Low, Med, High	Extraordinary Impact (outside of normal service expectations) Y/N	Description of Impact
CVRD HR	N	N	n/a
CVRD IT/GIS	N	N	n/a
CVRD Finance	LOW	N	Invoice processing & payment, Final grant review
CVRD Procurement	N	N	Procurement managed within dept
CVRD Communications	N	N	n/a
Other CVRD Groups	N	N	n/a
External Groups	LOW	N	Training will be delivered to staff identified for ESS roles

B. UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Grant 2026

Background

As part of the regional approach to emergency management, the local authorities in the Cowichan area work together under a single Regional Emergency Operations Centre (REOC). This critical function (with teams, equipment, supplies and facilities) coordinates response and recovery actions, prioritizes resources, supports emergency response personnel in the field, and coordinates all official communications during a significant emergency.

UBCM Funding Intent

The intent of this funding stream is to support eligible applicants to build local capacity through the purchase of equipment and supplies required to maintain or improve EOC/REOC functionality, and to enhance EOC/REOC capacity through training and exercises.

Cowichan's 2026 EOC Grant Proposal

To increase REOC capacity with:

- 72-hour non-perishable food supplies for REOC locations
- Engaging a qualified GIS consultant/trainer to review planning section procedures and processes around geospatial data and software; configure customized mapping templates and dashboards aligned with local hazard, asset, and infrastructure data; and deliver hands-on training to REOC staff.
- Minor equipment and supplies (sat phone, digital white boards, mobile shredders, workstation peripherals, lockable storage units, signage, vests, dollies, mobile charging centres, and phone headsets)

FOR ACTION:

Each municipality to resolve:

For the Cowichan Valley Regional District to apply for, receive, and manage the UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund Emergency Operations Centre 2026 grant funding up to \$150,000 on behalf of insert Municipality.

Your resolution should be provided **by November 17, 2025** if possible.



2026 CEPF EOC Grant Proposed Budget

Project	Deliverable / Milestone	TOTAL	CEPF Portion
REOC Supplies	General Supplies	\$4,000	\$4,000
REOC Equipment	Mobile Shredder x 3	\$2,500	\$2,500
REOC Equipment	REOC Portable Digital Whiteboards x 4	\$20,000	\$20,000
REOC Supplies	Function Specific Signage	\$4,000	\$4,000
REOC Equipment	Peripherals (keyboards, mice, monitors and laptop stands, headsets)	\$25,000	\$25,000
REOC Equipment	Dollies	\$1,435	\$1,435
REOC Equipment	Satellite Phone and Prepaid Minutes x2	\$6,000	\$6,000
REOC Equipment	Mobile Power Tower x 14	\$7,500	\$7,500
REOC Supplies	REOC Function Specific Vests	\$20,000	\$20,000
REOC Supplies	Lockable Storage Units for Equipment x3	\$5,000	\$5,000
Training / Exercise Delivery	GIS Planning Section Review and Update	\$20,000	\$20,000
REOC Supplies	REOC Staff 72-Hour food kits/water	\$15,000	\$15,000
	Contingency (15%)	\$19,565	\$19,565
PROJECT TOTAL		\$150,000	\$150,000

ESTIMATED EOC PROJECT DEVELOPMENT / IMPLEMENTATION IMPACTS

	Core Service Impact – No, Low, Med, High	Extraordinary Impact (outside of normal service expectations) Y/N	Description of Impact
CVRD HR	N	N	n/a
CVRD IT/GIS	N	N	n/a
CVRD Finance	Low	N	Invoice processing & payment, Final grant review, payroll
CVRD Procurement	N	N	Procurement falls within delegation authority of managers and would not require Procurement support
CVRD Communications	N	N	n/a
Other CVRD Groups	N	N	n/a
External Groups	N	N	n/a

C. UBCM Community Resiliency Investment FireSmart Community Funding Support 2026-2028

Background

FireSmart programs have been operating in the Cowichan formally for more than ten years. Over time different partnerships have been involved based on the needs of the communities, focus of the grant year, and capacity. In 2022 the CVRD partnered with North Cowichan and Cowichan Tribes, and in 2023 the CVRD partnered with Ladysmith. Most recently the CVRD, Duncan and Ladysmith undertook a tri-party program. This program will wrap up in Sept 2026. To support collaboration among the various FireSmart approaches in the Cowichan, EMC chairs a voluntary regional Wildfire Resiliency Committee quarterly which includes all local authorities, interested First Nations, provincial partners and practitioners.

UBCM Funding Intent

The intent of this funding stream is to increase community resiliency to wildfire through education, vegetation management, legislation and planning, development considerations, interagency cooperation, cross-training, and emergency planning. The funding can be managed annually or bi-annually.

Cowichan's 2026-2028 Firesmart Grant Proposal

The CVRD, the City of Duncan and Town of Ladysmith will continue efforts on the tri-party regional program to advance community wildfire resiliency. The 2026-2028 FireSmart program will support wildfire risk reduction activities, and build long-term capacity to mitigate the impacts of wildfire through:

- A new Community Wildfire Resilience Plan (CWRP) for participating areas of the Cowichan Region to prioritize wildfire mitigation in the community;
- Community engagement and education including workshops, FireSmart Community Preparedness Day, event presentations and outreach, and regional awareness campaigns;
- Three Dedicated full-time FireSmart positions, and two sessional student positions;
- Advocacy, collaboration, and leadership at the Cowichan Wildfire Resiliency Committee; and
- Residential and community projects, including the FireSmart Plant Program, home ignition zone assessment, and neighbourhood recognition communities.

FOR ACTION:

For the CVRD, Duncan and Ladysmith to resolve:

For the Cowichan Valley Regional District to apply for, receive, and manage the 2025 UBCM Community Resiliency Investment FireSmart Community Support Fund up to \$200,000 on behalf of insert Municipality.

Your resolution should be provided **by November 17, 2025** if possible.

CRI FIRESMART PROPOSED BUDGET 2026-2028							
Activities	CVRD		Ladysmith		Duncan		TOTAL
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 1	Year 2	Year 1	Year 2	
FireSmart Positions (2 LFR+1 FSC+1 Summer Students)	\$145,733	\$145,733	\$ 90,580	\$90,580	\$90,580	\$90,580	\$653,786
Education	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$7,750	\$7,750	\$7,750	\$7,750	\$171,000
Community Planning	\$137,300	\$137,300	\$17,000	\$17,000	\$17,000	\$17,000	\$342,600
Emergency Planning (includes SPU)	\$57,000	\$57,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$314,000
Development Consideration	\$11,880	\$11,880	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$23,760
Interagency Co-operation	\$22,000	\$22,000	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$53,000
New Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan	\$162,000	\$162,000	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$396,000
Activities Rebate/ Homes and Properties	\$144,000	\$144,000	\$14,420	\$14,420	\$28,000	\$28,000	\$372,840
Total Expenses	\$ 749,913	\$ 749,913	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$2,299,826
						TOTAL APPLICATION	\$2,300,000

* Note: The CVRD may be eligible for an additional \$100K (Impact from Wildfire Funding)". The budget summary is based on approval for the top-up. It may be subject to some reductions if additional funding is not approved.

ESTIMATED FIRESMART PROJECT DEVELOPMENT / IMPLEMENTATION IMPACTS

	Core Service Impact – No, Low, Med, High	Extraordinary Impact (outside of normal service expectations) Y/N	Description of Impact
CVRD HR	MED	N	Temporary positions are difficult to retain, and may vacate more frequently
CVRD IT/GIS	LOW	N	Map upload from CWRP
CVRD Finance	LOW	N	Invoice processing & payment, final grant review
CVRD Procurement	LOW	N	Procurement of CWRP consultant
CVRD Communications	N	N	Managed by EMC
Other CVRD Groups	LOW	N	Land Use, Env, Utilities/Water Systems staff will need to review CWRP draft
External Groups	LOW	N	Duncan and Ladysmith staff will be required to review CWRP

D. Ministry of EMCR Indigenous Engagement and Reconciliation Funding

The Current Cowichan Approach

Risk reduction and mitigation initiatives have been locally and regionally planned and implemented. Structural projects require substantial effort to manage and coordinate, and for grant eligibility, must often be shovel ready. Mitigation projects (and grants) will vary in regional or local content and therefore local authorities may chose to proceed individually or regionally.

Intent of the EMCR IER Funding

The intent of this funding stream is to support the engagement, collaboration and coordination requirements under the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*.

Cowichan's Regional Proposal

Across two years of funding, the region intends to approach Indigenous groups collaboratively through a single project intended to provide space and opportunities to share knowledge and discuss next steps.

FOR ACTION:

CVRD will submit reporting for first phase of project by end of 2025.

Where municipalities have not yet, transferred funds to CVRD, the following resolution could be used:

For the Cowichan Valley Regional District to manage the 2025/26 funds received on behalf of the municipality to organize a collaborative approach to emergency management agreements with Indigenous Governing Bodies in the Cowichan Region.