Regional Board Report

Request for Decision

Approved for Board Consideration

Brian Reardon, CAO

To: Regional Board

From: Todd Cashin, Director of Community Services

Date: May 12, 2022

Subject: UBCM Community Excellence Awards Application

Voting Entitlement: *All Directors – Unweighted Corporate Vote – Simple Majority (LGA s.208)*

Purpose: To request Regional Board support for a UBCM – Community Excellence Awards Application under the Sustainability category.

Executive Summary:

Since 2004, through the Community Excellence Awards, the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) recognizes its members that have implemented projects or programs that demonstrate excellence in meeting the purposes of local government in BC. Staff are currently preparing an application to submit for consideration in the 2022 Community Excellence Awards under the category of Sustainability for the Regional Floodplain Management Plan – Phase 3 Flood Mitigation Planning project.

A Board resolution supporting RDCO's application is required as part of the application package. Accordingly, this matter is now before the Board for its consideration.

Recommendation(s):

THAT the Regional Board approves submitting an application under the Union of BC Municipalities – 2022 Community Excellence Awards under the category of Excellence in Sustainability for the Regional Floodplain Management Plan – Phase 3 Flood Mitigation Planning project.

Respectfully Submitted:

Brittany Nichols, Environmental Planner, for
Todd Cashin, Director of Community Services

Prepared by: Brittany Nichols, Environmental Planner

Attachment(s):

- Regional Board Presentation Slides

Strategic Plan Alignment:

Priorities: Sustainable Communities, Environment

Values: Regional Perspective, Collaboration, Good Governance, Resiliency

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Background:

Community Excellence Awards
The Community Excellence Awards recognize and celebrate UBCM members that have implemented projects or programs that demonstrate excellence in meeting the purposes of local government in BC. The purpose of the awards is to showcase projects or programs that demonstrate excellence in a selected category, and to encourage local governments to learn from the success of other members in order to implement changes in their own communities.

The awards are only open to UBCM members, including local government and First Nation members. There are four different categories, including:

1) Excellence in Governance
2) Excellence in Service Delivery
3) Excellence in Asset Management
4) Excellence in Sustainability

This application is focused on profiling the works completed under the Regional Floodplain Management Plan. The deadline for submissions is May 20, 2022.

Regional Floodplain Management Plan
In June of 2016, the RDCO Regional Floodplain Management Plan (RFMP) Phase 1 Report was completed. The RFMP identified high risk areas in a region-wide high-level risk assessment and gap analysis and established the scope and priorities intended to be completed with Phases 2 and 3. Phase 2 included development of flood hazard maps for a number of streams, the shores of Okanagan, Ellison, and Kalamalka/Wood lakes, as well as ongoing risk assessments and dam inundation studies around the region. Phase 3 seeks to use the information collected through Phases 1 and 2 to develop non-structural flood mitigation strategies; where non-structural describes mitigation activities that do not involve large, engineered structures (e.g., dikes, dams, etc.).

About the Flood Mitigation Planning Project
In early 2021, the RDCO embarked on an extensive communications and engagement strategy to gain input from member local governments, Syilx communities in the region, stakeholders, and the public to build a shared understanding of the wicked nature of flood management with a focus on non-structural flood mitigation actions. Throughout this process, the project leadership team with the support of a steering committee, developed a strategic resource guide to assist governments and others to act both individually and collectively to enable non-structural flood mitigation actions. Two broad categories were explored, including:

1) Risk Reduction:
   - Land stewardship – maintaining and restoring natural areas (e.g., watersheds, wetlands, riparian areas, natural waterways) to help reduce flooding.
   - Land use management - encouraging or requiring types of land use in flood hazard areas that will prevent or reduce potential damage. For example, a green space would be less affected by flooding than a new subdivision.
   - Building management - regulations and strategies that make structures and belongings less susceptible to flood damage. For example, using flood-resistant materials for the ground floor of a building.

2) Resilience:
   - Education and awareness - homeowner guides, flood and climate change education, neighbourhood preparedness programs, and other learning resources.
   - Emergency response - early warning systems, temporary barriers, evacuation route planning, and other flood response programs.
   - Insurance and disaster financial assistance - managing financial risks where no other mitigation strategies are available.

This project will be integrated with all other flood risk assessment, flood mapping and flood mitigation activities underway in the Central Okanagan and adjoining regional districts. The experiences of 2017 and 2018 have demonstrated that the Central Okanagan is especially vulnerable to flood damage because of the density of population near flood prone creeks and lakeshores.

While much of the work to plan, make decisions, and implement non-structural flood mitigation will be carried out separately by many actors across the region, there are also a suite of actions needed at a regional level to enable and support those distributed actions and to reduce the potential for working at cross-purposes. The Resource Guide offers a number of recommendations that aim to enhance success through a more consistent and coordinated approach at a regional level and offer an excellent opportunity to reduce flood risk and gain valuable co-benefits.

Demonstrating Excellence in Environmental Sustainability

Through each Phase completed under the RFMP, the RDCO has demonstrated the importance of this program in meeting the RDCO's purpose as a local government by focusing on good governance, providing stewardship of public assets, and fostering environmental sustainability. This is shown through proactively planning to better prepare for and adapt to future changes in climate and the associated impacts that flooding has on the community.

Taking a proactive and regional approach offers the benefit of strengthening and building on the foundation of regional and provincial knowledge sharing and consistency. The RDCO has demonstrated exceptional leadership by bringing partners together from up and down the valley to focus policy and planning efforts on identifying potential flood hazards. Works completed to date will assist with future land use decisions, mitigation planning, future flood risk assessment, or other flood-related works.

Furthermore, this project has incorporated a long-term sustainability approach by considering the cultural, social, economic, and environmental impacts associated with flood hazards and risks. This work is critical to maintaining wellbeing, including robust ecosystems, a thriving community, and a vibrant economy. Early efforts to prepare infrastructure and communities to the impacts climate change, such as increased

precipitation and flooding, will reduce regional reliance on continued emergency management activations and support the ability of the region to thrive over time.

Considerations:

Organizational/External: The RDCO was recently awarded the 2022 Southern Interior Local Government Association (SILGA) Award for Community Excellence in Environmental Sustainability for the Flood Mitigation Planning project.

Alternate Recommendation:

THAT the Regional Board, receives the report from the Director of Community Services, dated May 12, 2022, with respect to the UBCM – Community Excellence Awards.

Considerations not applicable:
- Financial
- Legal/Statutory Authority