



SUBJECT: Fire Safety Grant

TO: Environment, Infrastructure & Community Services Cttee.

FROM: Corporate Strategy

Report Number: CS-06-21

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 155-03-01

Date to Committee: April 8, 2021

Date to Council: April 20, 2021

Recommendation:

Authorize the Fire Chief to enter into an agreement, between the City of Burlington and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Ontario as represented by the Office of the Ontario Fire Marshal of Ontario, regarding the Ontario Fire Safety Grant, subject to the satisfaction of the Executive Director of Legal Services and Corporation Counsel.

PURPOSE:

Vision to Focus Alignment:

- Building more citizen engagement, community health and culture

Background and Discussion:

In March the Province of Ontario announced that it was providing \$5 million in funding to help municipal fire services address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. This one-time 2020-21 Municipal Fire Protection Grant will focus on the needs of municipal fire departments to ensure community safety with a focus on issues that are presented due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including:

- Training to offset the pressures in training as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Specialty training to respond to the dynamics of the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to ensure fire safety in their communities such as virtual inspections.

- Small improvements to fire department infrastructure, such as accessing high speed internet to support training and virtual inspections.

This funding program was allocation-based with each fire department throughout the province receiving an initial \$4,500 base grant plus additional funds depending on the population served. Burlington's allocation was \$49,800.

Departments were asked to complete an application form providing an overview of how the funds would be used.

The Burlington Fire Department's grant will be used to support the increased demand for virtual, online, and blended training capacities required over 2020/2021. Throughout the pandemic the Fire department expanded its modes of training in priority areas. Ongoing training initiatives in our Company Officer program were transitioned to online accessible platforms and upgraded and expanded in our simulated formats.

Many disciplines in our training syllabus required the purchase of new technologies and supporting hardware to reach individual stations and staff remotely (both career and volunteer). Where full online is not an option, the Fire Department is looking at blended registrations through Regional Training Centres to ensure our technical training is held to our service standards.

Due to the challenges of conducting in-person inspections during the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, the Burlington Fire Department conducted remote virtual inspections for many of our routine and vulnerable occupancy inspections in 2020.

To support and enhance both in-person and virtual inspections in 2021 and beyond, a number of technology upgrades are required to ensure efficient delivery of inspection and enforcement activities during the pandemic.

Financial Matters:

The 2020-21 Municipal Fire Protection Grant program does not require the City of Burlington to provide any matching funds.

Climate Implications

While not permanent, this temporary move to providing online training and virtual inspections will allow the Burlington Fire Department to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for 2020-21.

Engagement Matters:

N/A

Conclusion:

The City of Burlington is grateful for the funding provided by the Province of Ontario through the Fire Safety Grant Program. This funding will help ensure that staff and the community remain safe during this continued pandemic.

Respectfully submitted,

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Government Relations Manager

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Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director of Legal Services & Corporation Counsel.