



building communities together

2024 Business Plan Emergency Program Service All Electoral Areas (1385)

Stephanie Masun, Manager of Emergency Program Services

Working in partnership with communities large and small to offer local, sub-regional, and regional services to ensure that the Cariboo Chilcotin is a socially, economically, and environmentally desirable region.

Department/Function Services

The Cariboo Regional District Emergency Program Service was created as a result of provincial legislation requiring that Regional Districts develop an emergency management organization and prepare an emergency plan for their jurisdiction.

The CRD Emergency Program was established in 2004, authorized by Bylaw No. 3934. All electoral areas participate in this service and taxation is based on the assessed value of land and improvements. There is no requisition limit.

All Electoral Area Directors, representing Areas A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K and L, are responsible for the governance of this service.

2024 Business Plan Goals, Rationales & Strategies

1. **Goal:** To adapt and adjust the CRD's Emergency Program Service functions and plans to meet the significant changes required under new legislation as per the modernized Emergency and Disaster Management Act.
Rationale: The Province of B.C. has introduced Bill 31, Emergency and Disaster Management Act (EDMA), and is moving forward with the legislative process of enacting it into law. The modernized act requires substantial changes to local government emergency programming, resourcing, and service provision through incorporating new deliverables across all four phases of emergency management including requirements for preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery.
Strategy: Monitor legislation and regulation changes requiring adjustments/adaptation and access provincial allocation-based funding opportunities to supplement implementation costs.

2. **Goal:** To use appropriate grant funding to continue to augment CRD Emergency Program Service operations and planning functions in line with provincial legislation.
Rationale: UBCM CEPF grants support local government emergency program service functions such as Emergency Operations Centre Training and Equipment, Evacuation Route Planning, Cultural Safety, Emergency Support Services, etc.
 - UBCM CEPF grant for evacuation route planning will assist the Emergency Program Service to strengthen the emergency plan.**Strategy:** Apply for UBCM or other grants to support emergency program service functions in line with planned and emerging priorities.
 - Use the approved \$29,500 UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund Evacuation Route Planning grant funding.

3. **Goal:** To further develop and deliver the FireSmart program throughout the CRD through conducting FireSmart education and activities, establishing a FireSmart committee and hiring a FireSmart Educator.
Rationale: Wildfire continues to pose a risk to public safety in the Cariboo region. Education programs such as FireSmart are seen to increase community resilience to wildfire (living with fire) through fostering community adoption of appropriate risk-reduction principles and activities.
Strategy: Use staff time and the \$312,700 UBCM Community Resilience Investment (CRI) FireSmart grant funding to deliver the program with an additional budgeted amount of up to \$30,000 to cover potential grant shortfalls.

4. **Goal:** To participate in the CRD Business Continuity Planning process.
Rationale: The CRD allocated Covid Restart funds for the development of a Business Continuity Plan to facilitate interdepartmental coordination, communications, and appropriate and timely resourcing to reduce business interruption impacts across all departments and functions during disasters.
Strategy: Use staff time and previously allocated funds (Covid Restart).

2025 Business Plan Goals

1. **Goal:** To continue to augment the CRD Emergency Program by further developing emergency operations and planning functions in line with provincial legislation and regulations.
Rationale: The CRD is required to meet statutory obligations and respond, mitigate, recover from and prepare for all hazards emergencies, security threats and climate disasters.
Strategy: Remain agile and responsive to changing legislation and use staff time and UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) grant funding opportunities.

Significant Issues & Trends

Communities across the Cariboo Regional District are continuing to experience frequent, prolonged, and severe wildfires, floods, landslides, and extreme weather events such as heat domes and persistent drought.

Climate change conditions require more coordination, communication, and better preparedness from all agencies with emergency management roles and responsibilities. As a region-wide service, the CRD emergency program service is required to work closely with, and enter into agreements with, a number of parties, agencies, and departments including neighboring regions, municipalities, and

- First responders, dispatchers, qualified professionals, utility owners/operators, volunteer groups, and
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans, RCMP, Canadian Armed Forces, and
- Emergency Management Climate Readiness BC, Ministry of Forests, BC Wildfire Service, Water Management Branch, Ministry of Transportation, BC Housing, BC Emergency Health Services, Interior Health Authority, Northern Health Authority, and BC Conservation Service, and
- First Nations communities, Indigenous Governing Bodies, First Nations Emergency Services Society, Indigenous Services Canada, and First Nations Health Authority recognizing Public Safety Canada's commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The necessary coordination for effective emergency management in the CRD's rural and remote context can be challenged by complex emergency response and recovery operations, the geographic size of the region, inconsistent interoperable communication systems, staff changes, reduced volunteerism, increasing expectations from the population and changing regulations.

The CRD Emergency Program Service business plan aims to address these issues and trends while readying for the changes to the provincial Emergency and Disaster Management Act. These changes bring forward new provincial financial compensation guidelines, additional compliance and enforcement regulations, and enhanced responsibilities for the local government in the coordination of mitigation and preparedness pillars.

Measuring Previous Years Performance

1. **Goal:** To develop and deliver a community FireSmart program in the CRD's South Cariboo Community Wildfire Protection Plan area of interest.
Rationale: Wildfire continues to pose a risk to public safety in the Cariboo region. Education programs such as FireSmart are seen to increase community resilience

to wildfire (living with fire) through fostering community adoption of appropriate risk-reduction principles and activities.

Strategy: Use staff time and UBCM Community Resilience Investment (CRI) grant funding to design and deliver the program.

- Application has been submitted to the 2023 UBCM CRI FireSmart funding stream. Project is progressing as planned.

2. **Goal:** To develop and deliver a short-term flood and fire mitigation information campaign to communities throughout the region to enhance the emergency program's preparedness function.

Rationale: Flood and fire emergencies are a frequent occurrence in the CRD. Providing private property and business owners with educational materials and opportunities to engage on preparedness and mitigation tactics aims to increase disaster resilience and adaptation to climate and environmental change.

Strategy: Use staff time and Canadian Red Cross Society 2017 Wildfire grant funding to engage an appropriate consultant to design and deliver the project.

- Project is on track for completion in December 2023.

3. **Goal:** To undertake a planning process to determine strategic direction and operational parameters for the CRD emergency program as recommended by the 2021 Emergency Program Key Findings Report.

Rationale: Continuing to implement the 2021 Emergency Program Key Findings Report recommendations aims to ensure efficient regional service delivery while preparing the program to meet the changes to the provincial Emergency Program Act as anticipated in 2023.

Strategy: Use staff time and up to \$9,500 of previously allocated funds (Covid Restart) to develop a plan with a consultant.

- On track for completion in early 2024.

4. **Goal:** To implement the 24-hour Duty Officer concept as recommended by the 2021 Emergency Program Key Findings Report.

Rationale: The CRD emergency program service is expected to function 24/7/365. Staff are required to respond to calls routed through the CRD after-hours emergency line, the Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre, and the Fire Operations Coordination Centre. Adequate resourcing is necessary.

Strategy: Budget for, and develop, an appropriate staffing schedule, on-call policy, procedures, and training to ensure service continuity for evenings, weekends and holidays.

- Completed as planned.

5. **Goal:** To participate in the CRD Business Continuity Planning process.

Rationale: The CRD allocated Covid Restart funds for the development of a Business Continuity Plan to facilitate interdepartmental coordination,

communications, and appropriate and timely resourcing to reduce business interruption impacts across all departments and functions during disasters.

Strategy: Use staff time and previously allocated funds (Covid Restart).

- In progress.