

# Report to Council



**Date:** November 1, 2021  
**To:** Council  
**From:** City Manager  
**Subject:** Community Resiliency Investment Program Funding 2022  
**Department:** Parks Services

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT Council receives, for information, the November 1, 2021 report from the Urban Forestry Technician with respect to 2022 Community Resiliency Investment (CRI) Program funding;

AND THAT Council approves staff to apply for a grant from the CRI program to continue to support wildfire fuel mitigation initiatives;

AND THAT Council supports staff to execute all documents necessary to complete the grant, if successful;

AND FURTHER THAT upon confirmation of the grant award, the 2022 Financial Plan be amended to include the receipt of up to \$150,000 from the Community Resiliency Investment Program.

## **Purpose:**

To seek Council approval towards an application for funding through the Community Resiliency Investment (CRI) Program.

## **Background:**

The City of Kelowna has a well-established Community Wildfire Protection Program. Program priorities are determined by our current *Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)*.

The CWPP is a document that defines the risk from wildfires in an identified area, identifies measures necessary to mitigate those risks and outlines a plan of action to be implemented.

Many prioritized recommendations of the current CWPP have been, or are being, addressed through operational and external funding. Our primary source of external funding is that of the Community Resiliency Investment (CRI) Program; a provincial initiative intended to reduce the risk and impact of wildfire to communities in BC through community funding, supports, and priority fuel management

activities within municipal boundaries. From 2019 through 2021, the City of Kelowna has received \$350,000 through the CRI Program to complete activities related to CWPP recommendations.

Completed activities:

- Completion of wildfire fuel modification across the eastern portion of Knox Mountain Park (2019) and a parcel at 4295 Field Road (2020) to support a landscape level fuel break on our southern municipal boundary;
- Development of strategic policy and guideline documents to support improved wildfire development permit processes; and
- Development of a new Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan to assess current risk and receive recommendation on priority wildfire mitigation activities through 2026 (in progress, with anticipated presentation to Council in early 2022).

**Discussion:**

On October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 staff submitted an application for 2022 CRI Program funding of \$149,045 (of a maximum \$150,000). Allocation of these funds are proposed to be used for two activities:

- Develop and facilitate a residential debris chipping program to provide curbside removal of vegetation from FireSmart priority zones around homes in target neighbourhoods.
- Complete a fuel modification project within a small parcel in Knox Mountain Park.

The City has historically prioritized public interface areas for forest fuel treatment in order to reduce risk of wildfire entering municipal boundaries from surrounding forest or moving from natural areas to homes. This was necessary to create defensible perimeters around the city and along large, forested tracts. In the current funding application, the priority has shifted to address hazardous vegetation on private properties, and the ignition risk posed by wildfire ember showers from fires that are not directly adjacent to homes. Proper types and maintenance of landscape vegetation are critical aspects of ensuring homes meet FireSmart® criteria. The residential debris chipping program has been identified as a means to address barriers for citizens in managing or removing highly flammable vegetation, identified as such by FireSmart® BC, from priority zones around their homes. We anticipate targeting eight neighbourhoods in this first year of chipping, based on age and predominant vegetation types in the community.

Fuel modification work in City parks and natural areas will subsequently comprise a smaller portion of the grant funding request in 2022. Staff have identified a parcel within Knox Mountain Park for fuel treatment due to its current state of dense understory and overstory growth and proximity to the Paul's Tomb beach area. The project aims to reduce the amount of forest fuels in this polygon to improve the conditions for suppression efforts in the event of a wildfire. If this application is successful, the fuel modification project is expected to take place in early 2022, with the chipping program to follow from April through July, 2022.

**Conclusion:**

Staff seeks support in pursuing wildfire mitigation funding through the CRI Program, administered by the Union of BC Municipalities. Applications for CRI Program funding require a new Council resolution annually.

**Internal Circulation:**

Communications Advisor  
Financial Services Supervisor  
Fire Chief  
Grants and Special Projects Manager  
Infrastructure Operations Manager  
Landfill & Compost Operations Manager  
Park Services Manager  
Urban Forestry Supervisor

**Considerations applicable to this report:**

**Considerations not applicable to this report:**

***Legal/Statutory Authority:***

***Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:***

***Existing Policy:***

***Financial/Budgetary Considerations:***

***External Agency/Public Comments:***

***Communications Comments:***

Submitted by: T.Bergeson, Urban Forestry Technician

**Approved for inclusion:**

IW

Acting Divisional Director, Civic Operations

cc:

Kelowna Fire Department