



COUNCIL REPORT

To: Paul Gipps, CAO

Date: June 28, 2022

From: Jason Luciw, Communications and Engagement
Supervisor

Subject: **Strategic Priorities Fund Application**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council direct staff to apply to the Strategic Priorities Fund seeking \$2 million for the future design and construction of the replacement of Fire Station #32; and,

THAT Council amend the 10-year capital plan, as may be required, to reflect any awarded grant contributions; and,

THAT Council authorize the Mayor and the Chief Administrative Officer to execute the required contribution agreements for a successful application.

STRATEGIC AREA(S) OF FOCUS

Invest in Infrastructure, Strengthen Our Community and Foster Safety and Well-Being

BACKGROUND

The Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF) is an application-based grant component of the Canada Community-Building Fund (CCBF) in BC. The other component is dedicated semiannual, per-capita contributions to BC communities. The SPF program reinvests gas tax funds in local government infrastructure that is large in scale, regionally impactful, or innovative and that is supportive of economic growth, a clean environment, and strong communities. This SPF program intake will invest \$100 million in BC communities. Programs in 2015 and 2017 invested in 170 projects valued at \$291 million.

DISCUSSION

The 2022 Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF) opened April 1. New for this intake is fire hall infrastructure. Traditional categories include active transportation networks, sport and recreation facilities, and drinking and wastewater treatment systems. To date, the SPF is

one of the few grant programs in which fire stations are eligible. Applications are due in before end of day June 30.

The City of West Kelowna's senior leadership team reviewed and weighed application criteria against approved projects in Council's adopted 10-year capital plan. City staff also considered community benefits and Council's Strategic Priorities objectives; and, they contacted grant program staff to discuss project eligibility. The future design and construction of a replacement for Fire Station #32 rose to the top as the best project fit.

The SPF requires applicants to demonstrate value for dollars and submit fair funding requests. It is also merit-based, and program staff score all submissions against how well they meet criteria. Grant programs in BC are also heavily oversubscribed; so, the better a submission establishes eligibility, value for dollar and project readiness, the greater its chances of success in the face of stiff competition. It is also worth noting that the CCBF agreement expires in 2024; while renewal of an overarching agreement is likely, program staff are uncertain as to when a next SPF-specific intake might occur beyond 2022.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The SPF offers 100 per cent funding for eligible projects to a maximum of \$6 million. Average project funding under the 2015 and 2017 intakes was \$2.5 to \$3 million. Based on all aforementioned considerations, staff feel a request of \$2 million towards the future design and construction of the replacement of Fire Station #32 is a fair request.

CONCLUSION

Fire Station #32 replacement is a well-suited project for the SPF because it is large in scale for our city's size, regionally significant and supports economic growth and a strong community. The SPF is one of the few programs that considers fire station infrastructure.

REVIEWED BY

Warren Everton, Director of Finance/CFO

Shelley Schnitzler, Legislative Services Manager/Corporate Officer

APPROVED FOR THE AGENDA BY

Paul Gipps, CAO

PowerPoint: Yes ☐ No ☒