



INFORMATION ONLY COUNCIL REPORT
Finance, Administrative and Protective Services
For the May 28, 2019 Council Meeting

DATE: May 17, 2019
TO: Jim Zaffino, Chief Administrative Officer
FROM: Jason Brolund, Fire Chief
Stacey Harding, Parks and Fleet Manager
RE: 2019 Wildfire Mitigation Update

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In December 2018, Council was presented with the updated West Kelowna Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). As wildfire season approaches, a number of initiatives are completed, underway or planned:

- WKFR FireSmart Family Day
- Friends of Kalamoior Park Clean Up Day
- Huntsfield Green 'FireSmart Community' recognition
- \$100,000 Community Resiliency Investment Program (CRI) Grant approval
- Mitigation prescriptions and operational treatments as per the CWPP
- Initiatives to incite mitigation on private properties

BACKGROUND:

FireSmart Family Day:

With support from numerous partners, WKFR hosted its 5th annual FireSmart Family Day on May 4, 2019. Close to 1,000 attendees took part in free, fun and educational activities with a focus on learning how to be FireSmart. Interactive booths were setup to engage residents by providing information on making their homes and properties FireSmart and sharing details on the City and West Kelowna Fire Rescue's actions to help protect our community from fire threats. This annual event will continue in 2020.

Kalamoior Park Clean Up:

On May 4, 2019, as part of National Wildfire Community Preparedness Day, 35 volunteers cleaned up fine fuels from the forest floor and hauled out larger debris from Kalamoior Regional Park.

The Friends of Kalamoior Park teamed up with Regional District Parks Services to encourage volunteers to come out and help reduce fire fuel in the park. West Kelowna Fire Rescue provided support and the fire crew from Lakeview Heights attended. The event was an opportunity to reduce fire risks in the park and make people aware of the same kinds of protective works they should be doing around their own properties.

FireSmart Community Recognition:

Citizen involvement at the neighbourhood level is the cornerstone of the FireSmart Canada Community Recognition Program. FireSmart homes and neighbourhoods allow firefighters to concentrate on fighting wildfires, protecting lives and homes. FireSmart communities that have demonstrably reduced their vulnerabilities to wildfires are exponentially more likely to survive disasters with far less need for emergency response and recovery.

The Community Recognition program draws on a community's spirit and its willingness to take responsibility for reducing wildfire risks in their neighbourhood.

Recognition criteria include:

- A FireSmart assessment performed by WKFR staff
- Creating a plan that identifies solutions that the community can implement.
- Establishing a FireSmart Board, which maintains the FireSmart Community Plan and tracks its progress.
- Conducting events each year with emphasis placed on a FireSmart project.
- Investing a minimum of \$2.00 annually per capita in local FireSmart Community efforts (volunteer time is credited at \$21 per hour).
- Submitting an annual report to FireSmart Canada.



Huntsfield Green Strata on Horizon Drive recently became accredited as West Kelowna's first Fire Smart Community. The provincial Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative (SWPI) awarded the City of West Kelowna a \$10,000 grant in 2016 to support the FireSmart initiative. An event is being planned in early June to celebrate this achievement.

In 2017, Casa Loma completed required FireSmart activities, thanks to a \$10,000 SWPI grant. The final step of application for certification is outstanding and requires a community champion to complete this work.

Last year, FireSmart planning activities occurred in the Rock Ridge subdivision in the West Kelowna Estates neighbourhood. A SWPI grant of \$4,500 covered the cost of creating a FireSmart Community Plan, which is available to the neighbourhood, in the event that residents choose to create a board and begin implementing the recommended actions.

In September 2018, the provincial government amalgamated the various components of SWPI into the new Community Resiliency Investment Program (CRI). West Kelowna chose to dedicate the maximum \$100,000 in grant funds directly to operational treatments (discussed below). While FireSmart Community activities have not received grant funding in 2019, West Kelowna Fire Rescue has some resources to assist communities interested in pursuing recognition.

Community Resiliency Investment Program Grant

In December 2018, Council adopted the updated Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). Council further directed staff to apply to under CRI requesting the maximum grant contribution of \$100,000 to complete prescriptions and treatments on those municipal properties deemed the highest priorities in the CWPP update. Council allocated up to \$100,000 in the 2019 Operating Budget for prescriptions and treatments, subject to CRI funding approval.

On April 29, 2019, the Union of BC Municipalities advised West Kelowna staff that the City would receive the maximum CRI funding for 2019. This funding will be used in 2019 to complete prescriptions and operational treatments based upon the priorities established in the CWPP.

2019 Mitigation Prescriptions and Operational Treatments:

The CWPP includes a science-based risk assessment of City's 61 highest rated wildfire hazards. This priority list includes all jurisdictions of property ownership including Crown, RDCO, WFN, Private and City owned properties. Of the top 10 highest hazards, 4 are CWK owned properties. The four properties staff will address in 2019 are:

| Priority # | Property | Area | Size | Notes |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | Eain Lamont Park | South Mount Boucherie | 4.0 ha | City owned parkland |
| 4 | Smith Creek Rd | Smith Creek | 7.2 ha | Parklands along Smith Creek Rd. |
| 7 | Roseridge Court | Rose Valley | 3.2 ha | Roseridge Park north of Rosealee Lane |
| 10 | Shannon Heights Place | Shannon Woods | 6.4 ha | Davidson Creek Park |

Prescriptions are being developed for the four treatment areas. CWK Parks, with the assistance of WKFR will administer and supervise the program. The prescriptions will be sent to the Province for authorization and approval to tender the operational treatments.



Tender and award of these treatments will be conducted in the summer of 2019, when working with equipment in forested areas is not permitted. In the fall/winter 2019 treatment work will be completed until funding is exhausted.

The next intake of grant funding is expected in the fall of 2019 and CWK will seek the maximum amount of \$100,000, with the intent to treat additional properties in priority order.

A map showing the areas of risk is attached as *Appendix A*. A map showing all the areas of mitigation and their priority is attached as *Appendix B*.

Mitigation on Private Properties:

Local governments have very limited statutory authority to enforce fuel mitigation and fire prevention activities on private land. Consequently, public education and awareness of "FireSmart" principles has been the primary focus of wildfire prevention on private land. In 2019, we propose to change that.

As a pilot project, staff will dedicate \$25,000 in budget funds for innovative, out-of-the-box solutions to incite and encourage private property owners to do work to improve the survivability of their homes in a wildfire. While subject to change, staff anticipates allocating funding as follows:

- **\$2,000** – piloting a program to offset tipping fees at the Westside Transfer Station for private property owners who have completed mitigation works as per the FireSmart Guidelines. WKFR staff trained in FireSmart Assessments will verify and approve.
- **\$5,000** – piloting a program to provide collection bins or chipping services at the neighbourhood level for residents to deposit materials from mitigation activities on private properties. Staff may also consider supporting neighbourhoods during 'Cleanup Weekends' (BBQ's etc).
- **\$5,000** - completing mitigation works on a 'FireSmart Demonstration Property' that will serve as an example to promote mitigation activities.
- **\$10,000** – piloting a program to provide twenty \$500 grants to private property owners who undertake larger scale activities to improve their properties as per FireSmart guidelines. WKFR staff trained in FireSmart Assessments will give approval following verification. This could include actions such as: (but not limited to)
 - Replacing combustible roof and siding materials
 - Removing cedar hedges and replacement with low density, fire-resistant plants
 - Increasing tree spacing, removing limbs and creating defensible space around structures
 - Installing dedicated wildfire suppression systems (sprinklers on buildings)
- **\$3,000** - advertising and providing promotional materials related to the initiatives above.



Proposed 'wrap' of the storage 'Sea-Can' at Station #33 (Rose Valley)

In late 2019, staff will evaluate the success of the initiatives and determine if the activities should continue or be amended, or if the funds should be reallocated to other mitigation activities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

No new financial implications are included.

Staff will allocate existing funds, previously budgeted in 2019, as follows:

- Taking \$30,000 from remaining mitigation funding in 2018 and allocate towards operational treatments. This will either expand the scope of work on CWPP priorities or address spot treatments within the Parks system.
- Directing the \$100,000 in CRI grant funding approved in the 2019 Capital Budget and directing the funding towards the prescriptions and treatments as prioritised in the CWPP Update.
- Using \$25,000 added to the 2019 WKFR Operating Budget for prescriptions and operational treatments as per the CWPP and using the remaining \$25,000 to incent mitigation on private properties.

Respectfully submitted,



Jason Brolund
Fire Chief



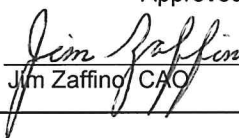
Stacey Harding
Parks and Fleet Manager

Powerpoint: Yes ☒ No ☐

Attachments:

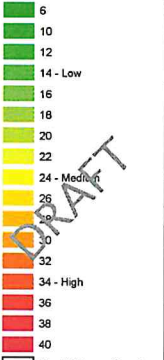
Appendix A – CWPP Map of Fire Behaviour Risk
Appendix B – CWPP Map of Proposed Mitigation

Approved for Agenda

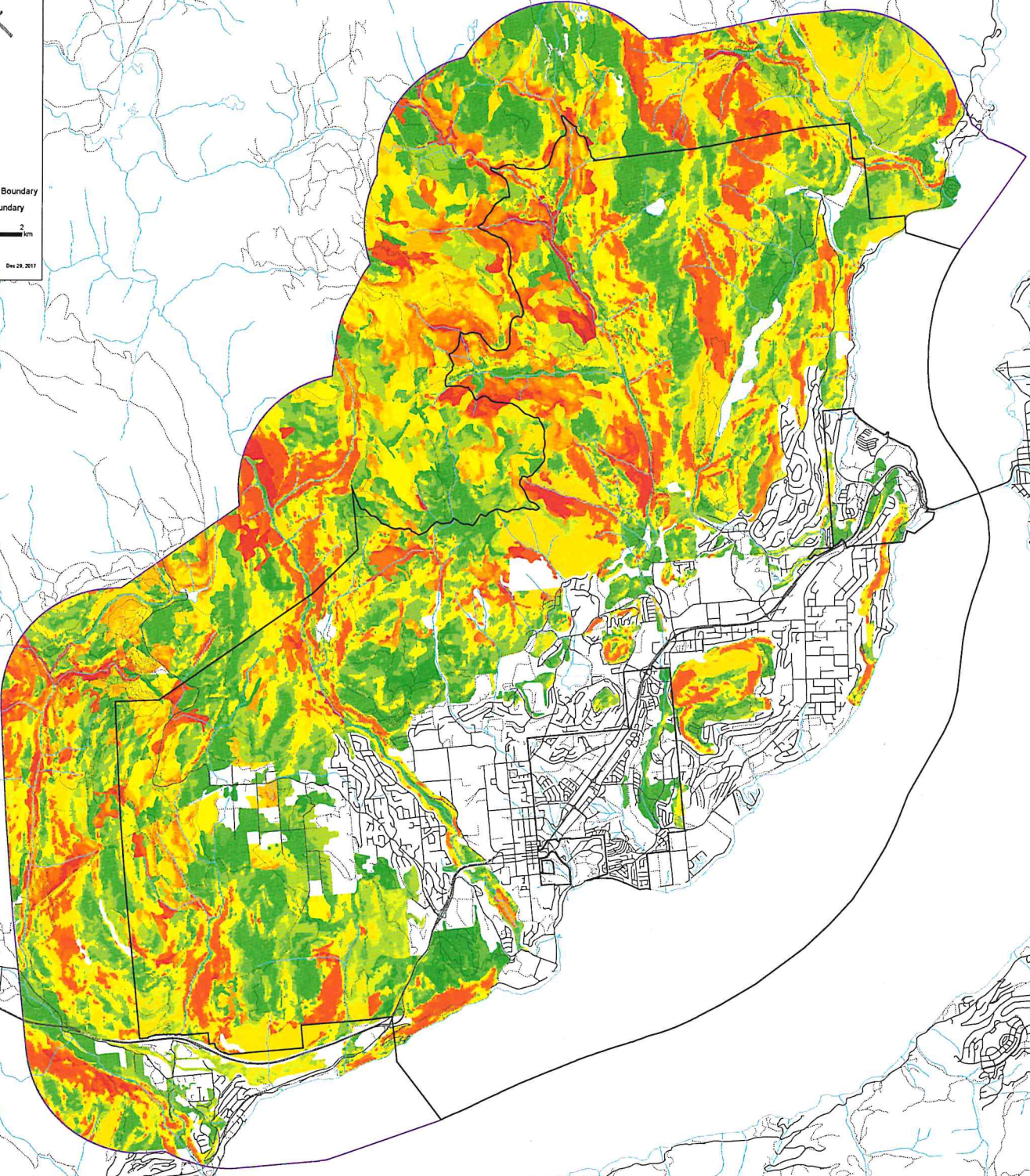

Jim Zaffino, CAO

May 21, 2019
Date

West Kelowna
Fire Behavior Rating



0 0.5 1 2 km
1:25,000



West Kelowna CWPP Map 8: Fuel Treatment

- Paved Roads
- Unpaved Roads
- West Kelowna Boundary
- CWPP AOI / Updated WUI
- Priority Treatments
- Fuel Breaks
- Indian Reserves
- Ownership: Crown
- Ownership: First Nation
- Ownership: Municipal
- Ownership: None/Unknown
- Ownership: Private
- Parks
- Community Forest (K1P)
- Fuel Treatments, Completed
- Fuel Modification Cutblocks (K1P)

| Priority | Polygon | Area, HA |
|----------|---------|----------|
| 1 | 65 | 4.9 |
| 2 | 115 | 5.6 |
| 3 | 23 | 5.7 |
| 4 | 64 | 7.2 |
| 5 | 94 | 0.8 |
| 6 | 117 | 0.1 |
| 7 | 87 | 3.2 |
| 8 | 44 | 1.2 |
| 9 | 95 | 1.1 |
| 10 | 76 | 6.4 |
| 11 | 116 | 1.7 |
| 12 | 88 | 0.0 |
| 13 | 63 | 0.8 |
| 14 | 43 | 0.9 |
| 15 | 125 | 2.7 |
| 16 | 59 | 0.1 |
| 17 | 22 | 1.3 |
| 18 | 54 | 1.2 |
| 19 | 7 | 1.4 |
| 20 | 57 | 0.1 |
| 21 | 147 | 1.2 |
| 22 | 66 | 4.9 |
| 23 | 45 | 0.1 |
| 24 | 69 | 13.9 |
| 25 | 73 | 0.0 |
| 26 | 99 | 0.1 |
| 27 | 111 | 0.1 |
| 28 | 150 | 1.0 |
| 29 | 70 | 0.2 |
| 30 | 55 | 7.8 |
| 31 | 5 | 0.6 |
| 32 | 9 | 15.5 |
| 33 | 3 | 5.2 |
| 34 | 4 | 5.5 |
| 35 | 29 | 6.5 |
| 36 | 51 | 15.2 |
| 37 | 53 | 0.2 |
| 38 | 151 | 0.5 |
| 39 | 72 | 3.3 |
| 40 | 97 | 13.1 |
| 41 | 140 | 7.9 |
| 42 | 82 | 0.0 |
| 43 | 85 | 0.7 |
| 44 | 94 | 0.8 |
| 45 | 123 | 0.0 |
| 46 | 101 | 0.3 |
| 47 | 75 | 6.3 |
| 48 | 102 | 1.1 |
| 49 | 41 | 0.4 |
| 50 | 86 | 2.7 |
| 51 | 126 | 0.9 |
| 52 | 127 | 0.2 |
| 53 | 122 | 1.0 |
| 54 | 109 | 1.5 |
| 55 | 153 | 0.1 |
| 56 | 14 | 1.8 |
| 564 | 999 | 2.6 |
| 57 | 91 | 2.6 |
| 58 | 137 | 1.1 |
| 59 | 119 | 0.1 |
| 60 | 78 | 5.2 |
| 61 | 27 | 0.3 |

0 0.5 1 2 km
1:25,000
Oct 25, 2018 - v1.1