

Service 270 Comox Valley Emergency Management

PURPOSE

To provide supplementary information for the Comox Valley Emergency Management (CVEM) service workplan.

OVERVIEW

CVEM is a regional service administered by the CVRD in partnership with the City of Courtenay, Village of Cumberland, Town of Comox, and K'ómoks First Nation to provide multi-jurisdictional emergency management support.

Funding: 70% external grants, 30% core budget; reserves are recommended to reduce dependency and to safeguard programming and service continuity.

2026-2027 Planned Initiatives

- **Multijurisdictional Governance & Indigenous Engagement:** Co-develop a framework and mutual aid agreements to clarify thresholds, inform bylaws/regulations, and advance all-hazard, whole-of-society planning.
- **Operational Resilience:** Strengthen Regional EOC readiness and ESS, and Emergency Radio capabilities through training, volunteers, and equipment.
- **All-Hazards Approach:** Continuing comprehensive community emergency preparedness initiatives for households, neighbourhoods, and critical infrastructure partners, alongside key regional and provincial representatives.
- **Climate Adaptation:** Growing regional disaster risk reduction capacity and temporary mitigation capabilities in the face of growing extreme temperature and weather events.

Challenges: Reliance on external grants, limited administrative and staffing supports, increasing legislative requirements, and localized socioeconomic issues linked to compounding impacts of housing, public health, and climate-related disasters.

Opportunities: To strengthen multijurisdictional governance with Indigenous engagement, build reserves for fiscal stability, leverage consultants while retaining local knowledge, strengthen continuity of operations, and increase resilience through shared long-term investment strategies in funded programs.

The CVEM work plan is driven by legislative and regulatory requirements. The 2026 workplan includes initiatives that are grant funded (Table 2) and those that are supported within the base budget (Table 1). Initiatives funded by provincial grants are confined by eligibility requirements and are meant to support the advancement of various multi-

jurisdictional emergency management plans for regional risk reduction, readiness, response and recovery.

Table 1 – 2026 Work Plan (excluding grant driven initiatives)

Initiative	Objective	Planned Outcome	Budget
Core Training	Maintain annual training and exercises to ensure readiness and legislative compliance for all partners.	Deliver annual entry-level EOC, ICS, and ESS in-person training offerings, offset by external grant funding to ensure cost efficiency and to broaden access.	\$60,000 2026 Proposed budget
24/7 On-call	Establish a 24/7 after-hours Regional CVEM Rotational On-Call team to ensure continuous emergency management readiness, legislative compliance, and coordinate partner and contractor support.	Implement an annual rotational On-Call calendar with 6–8 trained personnel to support regional after-hours emergency notifications and coordinate initial activations (ESS/ EOC, Level 1–3 activations)	\$13,266 2026 Proposed Budget
Operational Readiness	Safeguard reliable, compliant regional emergency equipment and notification systems through ongoing maintenance and upgrades.	Core emergency systems and assets remain reliable and compliant, with readiness upheld through back-up EOC capacity, emergency generators, and secure storage of evacuation equipment.	\$50,000 2026 Proposed Budget
Communication & Engagement	Comprehensive community emergency preparedness public relations and partner engagement strategy.	A Regional Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) subsite of main CVRD website that supports consistent regional messaging related to active emergency response operations. Subsite launch integrated into the regional community emergency preparedness campaign/materials to socialize subsite and alerting tools as primary trusted source of information.	\$29,500
Fleet	Upgrade CVEM Vehicle aligned with Board direction sustainability commitments and operational requirements.	Replace the older hybrid SUV with a plug-in hybrid van (\$10,000 + \$60,000K from 2025), providing expanded space for emergency operations. Includes outfitting and installation for commercial radio, amber flashing lights and roadside visibility/safety PPE for 24/7 response operations.	2025 Capital Budget \$60,000 2026 Operating Budget \$5,000 2026 Capital Budget \$10,000

Initiatives included within Table 2 are multiyear endeavours. Projects are at various stages with work expected to continue through to 2027.

Table 2 - Regional initiatives Supported with External Funding

Funding Source	Objective	Planned Outcomes	2025 Budget	2025 Actual and Projected	2025 Carry Forward
UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Funding (4 x regional grant streams for 2025-2026):	Continue regional implementation of joint emergency management and disaster risk reduction initiatives funded by existing grants.	Regional Emergency Operations Centre and Emergency Support Services are strengthened through ongoing training and equipment upgrades. Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Adaptation funding supports public education and equitable acquisition of assets such as misting stations, air quality monitors, and flood mitigation infrastructure to protect against extreme weather and storm surge.	\$512,026	\$187,981	\$324,045
Union of BC Municipalities Community Resilience Investment Grant 2025-2027 FireSmart Community Funding & Supports (FCFS) (1 x regional grant stream)	Regional implementation of the 2024 Comox Valley Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan.	Coordinated FireSmart activities reduce wildfire risk and strengthen emergency preparedness for residents and critical infrastructure through prevention, education, and risk reduction initiatives to advance community-based planning and readiness.	1,841,915	71,485	1,770,430
Provincial Indigenous Engagement Requirements Funding: Year Two (2025-2026) (2 x contributions)	Advance Indigenous Engagement in emergency management through co-developed, multi-jurisdictional governance frameworks and partnership agreements that meet legislative requirements.	Co-develop a governance framework for multi-jurisdictional emergency management services to guide agreements on risk assessment, coordinated emergency planning, and continuity of operations, all grounded in shared responsibility. Intentionally support organizational restructuring and resource alignment to strengthen operational readiness, enhance interoperability across jurisdictions, and ensure alignment with legislation.	346,098	203,544	142,554

Staff continue to actively apply for grant opportunities. Recently, the Board endorsed an application to the UBCM and there is a high expectation that this item will become a further 2026 work plan initiative.

Table 3 -2026-2027 Pending Grant Applications

Funding Source	Objective	Planned Outcomes	Estimated budget <i>*pending UBCM approval</i>
Union of BC Municipalities Community Emergency Preparedness Funds <i>(4 x proposed regional grant streams for 2026-2027)</i>	Strengthen regional emergency management readiness and resilience through coordinated training, equipment, notification systems, and culturally safe practices.	Initiatives advance emergency management systems by strengthening shared capacity to support evacuees; building EOC resilience with shared data, interoperability, and readiness; modernizing public alerting and emergency notification; and embedding Indigenous cultural safety through story mapping, co-created workshops, and trauma-informed practices.	Up to \$650,000: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$150,000 for 2025 Emergency Support Services Equipment and Training • \$150,000 for 2026 Emergency Operations Centre Training and Equipment • \$150,000 for 2026 Indigenous Cultural Safety & Humility • \$200,000 for 2026 Public Notification and Evacuation Planning