

## Press Release

### City of Castlegar Receives Emergency Operations Centre Grant

- \$25,000 for Technology and Infrastructure -

April 5, 2019 — the City of Castlegar has received a \$25,000 grant from the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund managed through the Union of BC Municipalities that will improve ability to coordinate emergency or disaster response with other municipalities, government agencies, and industry.

The grant will fund 100% of project costs to purchase and install more advanced communications equipment.

“The Emergency Operations Centre is critical infrastructure when we disasters like forest fires, floods, or hazardous materials spills strike,” says Mayor Bruno Tassone. “In an emergency, time and communication can be a matter of life or death for people and property in peril. This upgrade is some peace of mind for all residents because it allows us to set up faster and communicate more effectively.”

The project will additionally provide:

- Enhancement of ability for communities, industry and agencies to all work better together to assist people with evacuation, and access to shelter, clean water and food in case of disaster.
- Support to all major industries and agencies (e.g. Mercer, Interfor, Fortis, BC Hydro, IHA, SD20 and others) in the City of Castlegar response area if their own operations and Emergency Operations Centres are impacted by disaster.
- A back-up Emergency Operations Centre location for neighbouring communities, the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary, and the Regional District of Central Kootenay if their Emergency Operations Centres become compromised in a disaster.
- Independent communications capability to co-ordinate disaster response or other types of emergencies should the city network servers go down.

The Emergency Operations Centre is located on the second floor of the Fire Hall. Funds represent a first significant upgrade of capability since the Fire Hall was built in 1999. City staff receive ongoing training to ensure maximum capability.

This project is included the approved 2019 capital budget. Grants will fund 26% of the City's \$10,100,000 capital budget in 2019. The City works hard to apply for grants given they provide good leverage of taxes paid by City residents.

## **About the City of Castlegar ([www.castlegar.ca](http://www.castlegar.ca))**

The City of Castlegar (pop. 13,700 City and area, trade area 70,000) is a service centre within British Columbia's West Kootenay interior, including presence of the West Kootenay Regional Airport and Selkirk College's main campus. The economy is diversified and growing, focused on forestry (Zellstoff Celgar Mill, Interfor), energy (Columbia Power), and mining (Teck) sectors in the Valley, and commercial services in the City. Quality of life features backcountry adventure and an increasingly dynamic urban culture, including addition of Millennium Ponds and the annual Sculpture Walk event in recent years. The City's desirability as an affordable business and lifestyle choice will continue to grow with anticipated investments in a new recreation complex, redevelopment of the City's primary commercial artery, first sales of West Kootenay Centre lands (39 acres) adjacent to the airport, and TELUS extension of 250/250 broadband service that will address the City's interest in attracting entrepreneurs and creative industries.

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