

REPORT

Council

Meeting Date: April 26, 2021

FROM: Finance Department

DATE: April 13, 2021

SUBJECT: Fire Safety Grant

LOCATION:

WARD: Town-wide

Page 1

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the staff report dated April 13, 2021, entitled *Fire Safety Grant* from the Finance department, be received.
2. That staff be authorized to accept the Fire Safety Grant and use of the funding for the fire safety activities outlined in this report.
3. That the CAO be authorized to execute the Transfer Payment Agreement with the Province of Ontario as represented by the Office of the Fire Marshal, to be executed in accordance with By-law 2013-057.

KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- Through the Fire Safety Grant, the Government of Ontario has announced a one time \$5M grant to municipal fire services in coordination with the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management (OFMEM),
- The Fire Safety Grant is to support challenges related to COVID-19 associated with training and Ontario Fire Code safety inspections,
- Town of Oakville Fire Chief has accepted a grant of \$52,400 in principle, pending approval by Council.

BACKGROUND:

Fire Safety Grant

The Fire Safety Grant ("FSG") was announced on March 11, 2021. The program funding is to be used for municipal fire services pressures resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic that relates to training and virtual inspection challenges.

FSG provides flexibility to fire departments by supporting two priority areas:

- a. Ongoing training needs:
 - Costs associated with registration
 - Costs associated with administration programming
 - Cost associated with technology upgrades
 - Associated costs for attending and providing services
- b. Code compliance and Inspections:
 - Cost associated with addressing opportunities for an inspection program
 - Costs associated with technology
 - Cost associated with training
 - Capital costs

The Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) required an application to be received by March 19, 2021, and permits the fire chief to accept the grant in principle on behalf of the municipality. OFM has issued a letter of intent and Transfer Payment Agreement, which are subject to council approval sought through this report.

The grant can cover 100% of related costs, and no town contribution is required. All grant monies received must be spent by August 1, 2021, and a final report must be provided to OFM by September 1, 2021.

COMMENT/OPTIONS:

The onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic made it necessary for Oakville Fire Department (OFD) to revisit its training syllabuses and delivery models, as well as its fire prevention program for inspections, code compliance and public education mandate. As a result, staff training was modified to adhere to recommended safe practices for social distancing and/or limited numbers. Additionally, training was shifted to online where possible, and, code compliance and inspections were limited due to public health directives.

Using the FSG, the department can provide training, upgrades, technology, and innovation to support Oakville Fire as well as enhance the Oakville Fire Training Centre of Excellence to be recognized as a Regional Training Campus by the Office of the Fire Marshal & Emergency Management (OFMEM). The Ontario Fire College is officially closing on March 31, 2021, as part of the OFMEM modernization process. With the modification to the delivery of training exercises, the OFD will create a business model to host courses as a recognized Regional Training Centre with potential revenue streams for services rendered.

CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) PUBLIC

Continuous training to enhance firefighter competencies is necessary for the protection of the public, and the Regional Training Centres will play a vital role in the OFMEM modernization. The grant will help support training initiatives for Company Officer command training, technical rescue specialty infrastructure, and Fire protection systems training for inspection practices and code compliance training. These initiatives support advancing the Oakville Fire Department and provide opportunities for other departments in Ontario, and specifically Halton Region. These initiatives through the FSG, all culminate to meeting legislated requirements that promote public safety during an unprecedented time with the pandemic.

(B) FINANCIAL

Funding received through the FSG program will assist the town in mitigating the financial impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has on fire services training and inspections programming. There is no budget impact associated with the receipt of the grant.

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

The Fire Safety Grant is specific to municipal fire service and will be utilized by Oakville Fire Department.

(D) CORPORATE STRATEGIC GOALS

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal(s) to:

- To continuously improve our programs and services
- To respond to legislative and industry standards
- Public safety

(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION

N/A

APPENDICES:

Appendix A: Oakville Fire Safety Grant Memo

Appendix B: Oakville Letter of Intent

Appendix C: Transfer Payment Agreement - Oakville

Prepared by:

Amanda Ibrahim

Senior Financial Analyst

Recommended by:

Paul Boissonneault

Fire Chief

Submitted by:

Jonathan van der Heiden

Deputy Treasurer and Director of Finance