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**TO:** CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 2020 Apr 14

**FROM:** DIRECTOR - PUBLIC SAFETY AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICES

**SUBJECT: BURNABY FIRE DEPARTMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

**PURPOSE:** To provide Council with information regarding a Needs Assessment that was undertaken on the Burnaby Fire Department.

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. **THAT** Council receive this report for information purposes.

**REPORT**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The City of Burnaby is a dynamic and growing community encompassing 98.6 square kilometers of diverse geography including Burnaby Mountain, the central valley, two fresh water lakes and 25 per cent of the city's land base protected as park and conservation area. In addition to this natural splendour, Burnaby is the third largest city in British Columbia, with four vibrant town centres and large districts for technology, business and education. Burnaby's citizens live in a broad range of neighborhoods served by an outstanding park system and innovative civic facilities.

It is in this wide-ranging and challenging setting that the Burnaby Fire Department (BFD) is tasked with ensuring the protection of life and property through fire suppression and prevention, technical rescue services and first response emergency medical care.

In order to ensure the BFD is responsive to the ever changing environment, a *Needs Assessment* was undertaken to ensure the continued efficiency and effectiveness of fire protection and emergency related services to the community.

**2.0 POLICY SECTION**

The Fire Service Review contributes to the vision of Burnaby being a world-class city committed to creating and sustaining the best quality of life for the entire community. The goal of this Needs Assessment Study is to align with the City of Burnaby's Corporate Strategic Plan by supporting the following goals and sub-goals of the Plan.

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- A Safe Community
  - Emergency Services – Provide responsive emergency services.
- A Healthy Community
  - Healthy Life - Encourages opportunities for healthy living and well-being
- An Inclusive Community
  - Serve a Diverse Community – Ensure City services fully meet the needs of our dynamic community
- A Dynamic Community
  - Community development – manage change by balancing economic development with environmental protection and maintain a sense of belonging.
- A Thriving Organization
  - Organizational Culture – Ensure that our core values are reflected in our policies, programs and service delivery.

### 3.0 BACKGROUND

The City of Burnaby recently completed a Corporate Strategic Plan (CSP) which subsequently identified six strategic goals, one of which is *A Safe Community*. A critical pillar in maintaining a safe community is the provision of emergency services which includes fire protection and first response emergency medical care. The BFD is tasked with providing these services throughout the City from seven locations:

1. 4867 Sperling Avenue
2. 7578 Edmonds Street
3. 6511 Marlborough Avenue
4. 2326 Duthie Avenue
5. 4211 Hastings Street
6. 3620 Brighton Avenue
7. 3151 Gilmore Diversion

As part of the Vision within the Corporate Strategic Plan to be “A world-class city committed to creating and sustaining the best quality of life for our entire community” an initiative was undertaken to review the current fire services provision to understand and evaluate why each function is required, analyze how the functions are being performed, identify gaps, and determine priorities going forward to address the gaps between the current service profile and future fire services demand. It was determined the best approach to undertake this assessment was to engage an independent qualified consultant with extensive experience in municipal fire services to complete a comprehensive needs assessment.

The design of this comprehensive study was aligned with the Corporate Strategic Plan for responsive emergency services and a Request for Proposals (RFP) was completed and issued by the City with the successful proponent being Dark Horse Analytics who commenced their work in 2019 August. The study consisted of the following phases:

- Stakeholder Engagement
- Historical and Diagnostic Analysis
- Benchmarking
- Best Practice Assessment
- Predictive Modelling

The Needs Assessment study was completed by Dark Horse Analytics after significant data was gathered and analyzed. The report was completed and submitted with numerous observations and recommendations for consideration.

#### **4.0 NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY**

The BFD 2019 Needs Assessment Study (Attachment 1) identified the following:

*Findings ranging from leadership and organizational structure, to resource needs, to the unique and changing risks in the city. Four key themes of focus emerged from the findings: organizational effectiveness, organizational health and wellness, resource deployment and coverage, and community risk reduction. Dark Horse designed the assessment's immediate recommendations around these themes.*

Within each of these four key themes are findings along with numerous recommendations which staff are currently reviewing and assessing to determine which would be appropriate and/or practical for implementation.

One of the immediate recommendations of note is the development and communication of a BFD 24 month strategic plan. Preliminary consideration of this recommendation reveals that a two year Strategic Plan does have considerable merit and would be an excellent tool for the identification and implementation of appropriate recommendations from the study.

Of additional note, the BFD Fire Chief position is currently vacant and a process will begin shortly to select and appoint the next Burnaby Fire Chief. A 24 month strategic plan developed from the appropriate recommendations of the study, will provide the new Chief with a "road map" to not only enhance the service delivery of the BFD but also provide a safer community for all.

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## 5.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council receive this report for information purposes and staff will continue to review and assess the recommendations contained in the needs assessment. Recommendations will be prioritized and submitted to Council for approval as part of the budget approval process.



Dave Critchley  
DIRECTOR - PUBLIC SAFETY & COMMUNITY SERVICES

Attachment: Burnaby Fire Department Needs Assessment Study

Copied to: Acting Fire Chief  
Director Corporate Services  
Director Finance  
Director Building and Planning