

City of Maple Ridge – Ridge Meadows Search and Rescue Fee for Service Agreement

Recommendation:

THAT the Corporate Officer be authorized to execute the agreement attached to the report titled “City of Maple Ridge – Ridge Meadows Search and Rescue Fee for Service Agreement” in the amount of \$19,000 in year 2023, \$19,500 in year 2024, and \$20,000 in year 2025.

Report Purpose and Summary Statement:	Seeking Council approval to ensure adequate funding for the Ridge Meadows Search and Rescue
Previous Council Action:	Continued provision of Fee for Service Agreement since 1995
Financial Impact:	None, included in financial plan
Funding Source:	Police Services’ operational budget
Strategic Alignment:	Liveable Community; Engaged, Healthy Community
Climate Impact:	N/A
Communications:	N/A
Applicable Legislation/ Bylaw/Policy:	N/A

City of Maple Ridge – Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Community Services Fee for Service Agreement

BACKGROUND:

Recognizing Ridge Meadows Search and Rescue (SAR) as a vital community partner, this collaboration aims to provide high-quality search and rescue services by developing and maintaining the necessary resources and skills to effectively handle incidents identified as risks in the community.

The safety and well-being of community members are paramount. Effective emergency response capabilities are crucial for addressing various incidents, including natural disasters and missing persons. A key component of our emergency response infrastructure is the partnership between the municipality and Ridge Meadows Search and Rescue (RMSAR).

RMSAR contributes specialized skills, equipment, and personnel that enhance the capabilities of the RCMP and municipal emergency services. Their expertise spans multiple disciplines, including avalanche rescue, first aid, helicopter rescue, rope rescue, swift water rescue, tracking, boat operations, and other specialties, providing 365 days a year, 24/7 service to the community. Additionally, RMSAR often provides training and education to community members on safety, preparedness, and response strategies, thereby improving overall community resilience.

The partnership between the City and RMSAR is invaluable for ensuring the safety and security of our community. RMSAR's specialized skills, resources, and expertise significantly bolster the City's public safety strategies. In an emergency, RMSAR, becomes an extension of their partnering agencies, such as the RCMP and the Maple Ridge Fire Department, when resources are at capacity, or the response does not fall within their scope of practice.

In 1995, the Council of the day authorized a fee for service agreement between the City and RMSAR in recognition that Maple Ridge received valuable service from the group, and Provincial funding did not cover their costs. RMSAR has provided Council with updates on their activities in the past but has not done so for a number of years. The agreement between the City and RMSAR outlines expectations and reporting back requirements.

ANALYSIS:

Discussion:

The Ridge Meadows Search and Rescue (SAR) has been in partnership with the City of Maple Ridge since 2016, fostering a safer, more resilient community.

Desired Outcome:

Adequate funding ensures the RMSAR are well equipped, properly trained, and able to respond swiftly and efficiently to emergencies. With adequate funding, RMSAR can maintain a state of high readiness, allowing for rapid deployment in emergencies. Additionally, funding allows for regular and advanced training programs for RMSAR volunteers, ensuring they remain proficient in the latest search techniques, rescue operations, and emergency care. Funding can support initiatives to raise public awareness about the role of SAR and promote safety and preparedness within the community.

Strategic Alignment:

Engaged, Healthy Community – Ensure the safety and enhance the well-being of residents.

Financial Impact:

There will no additional financial implications for the municipality funding the RMSAR. The necessary funding for these activities has already been allocated within the Police Services' operational budget. This allocation ensures that RMSAR can continue their critical work without the need for further financial adjustments or impacts.

ALTERNATIVES & IMPLICATIONS:

- 1) Recommended: Council renews and fund the agreement to continue to provide search and rescue services in and around the City of Maple Ridge.
- 2) Council could choose not to renew/fund the agreement that would negatively impact search and rescue efforts in and around the City of Maple Ridge.

CONCLUSION:

By leveraging the unique strengths and capabilities of RMSAR, we can enhance our emergency response, save lives, and foster a safer environment for all residence. It is imperative that we continue to support and strengthen this collaborative partnership.

Prepared by: Allison MacRae, Manager of Police Services

Attachments: (A) MRPM Community Services Fee for Service Agreement

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Fee for Service Agreement, Search and Rescue.docx
Attachments:	- Appendix A - City of Maple Ridge - Ridge Meadows SAR Fee for Service Agreement.docx
Final Approval Date:	Sep 17, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Scott Hartman, Chief Administrative Officer