



Report to Council

Department: Community Services

Division: Fire and Rescue Services

Date: March 3, 2025

Prepared by: Jason Pillon, Fire Chief

Report Number: Fire and Rescue Services – 2025-03

Subject: Grant Funding – The Ministry of the Solicitor General,
Office of the Fire Marshal - Fire Protection Grant

Number of Pages: 4 (plus attachment)

Recommendation(s)

That Fire and Rescue Services Report – 2025-03 entitled “Grant Funding – The Ministry of the Solicitor General, Office of the Fire Marshal - Fire Protection Grant”, prepared by Jason Pillon, Fire Chief dated March 3, 2025, be received, and

That Council approve the 2025 post budget approval for the Capital Project “Firefighter Cancer Prevention Supplies” in the amount of \$24,691.35, to be fully funded from grant funding received from the “The Ministry of the Solicitor General, Office of the Fire Marshal” which will further strengthen and improve the Essex Fire and Rescue Services cancer prevention measures.

Purpose

Council approval is required to approve allocations outside of the annual budget.

Background and Discussion

In 2024, the Ministry of the Solicitor General, Office of the Fire Marshal, received Treasury Board (TB) approval for a \$30 Million grant over three years to support municipal fire services in acquiring essential equipment and addressing other needs, including health and safety measures, minor infrastructure improvements, and specialized tools. The goal is to enhance and improve the level of fire protection services provided. These funds are allocated through the Fire Protection Grant.

The first year of the Fire Protection Grant focuses on firefighter health and safety, particularly cancer prevention measures, as well as minor infrastructure updates. These priorities were identified based on input from fire service stakeholders across Ontario regarding the risks and challenges faced by firefighters in their roles.

The Ministry has defined four eligibility categories:

- Cancer Prevention – Equipment (e.g., exhaust extraction systems for fire stations, gear washing machines to remove contaminants, etc.)
- Cancer Prevention – Personal Protective Equipment (e.g., face pieces, balaclavas, etc.)
- Cancer Prevention – Minor Infrastructure (e.g., installation of showers in fire stations, etc.)
- Technology – Minor Infrastructure (e.g., providing internet access to fire stations that currently lack connectivity to enhance training and communication, etc.)

The Essex Fire and Rescue Service is enhancing firefighter safety and cancer prevention with upgraded personal protective equipment (PPE), decontamination practices, hood exchanges, and clean cab concepts. However, a challenge remains in cleaning all exposed gear promptly without affecting firefighter availability. While spare bunker gear is available, there are insufficient second sets of structural gloves, balaclavas, and helmet liners, creating a risk of skin contamination. Although these items can be washed, quick drying is often not possible during back-to-back emergencies.

The Town of Essex has been approved for \$24,691.35 in funding. This funding will be dedicated to acquiring advanced personal protective equipment (PPE) specifically designed to reduce the risk of cancer among firefighters. The upgrades will include enhanced PPE, with the aim of equipping each firefighter with an additional balaclava (protective hood), an extra pair of firefighting gloves, and spare helmet liners for the stations. This second set of gloves, balaclavas, and helmet liners will ensure that firefighters always have access to clean PPE during emergency responses, bolstering the department's cancer prevention initiatives.

Financial Impact

There is no net financial impact on the Town of Essex as the project is fully funded through a \$24,691.35 grant from the Ministry of the Solicitor General, Office of the Fire Marshal.

Consultations

Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services

Kate Giurissevich, Director, Corporate Services

Doug Sweet, Chief Administrative Officer

Link to Strategic Priorities

- ☒ Embrace asset management best practices to build, maintain, and continuously improve our municipally owned infrastructure.
- ☐ Leverage our Town's competitive advantages to promote jobs and economic investment.
- ☐ Take care of our natural environment and strengthen the sense of belonging to everyone who makes Essex "home".
- ☒ Deliver friendly customer service in an efficient, effective, and transparent manner while providing an exceptional working environment for our employees.
- ☐ Build corporate-level and community-level climate resilience through community engagement and partnership and corporate objectives.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Grant Funding - Fire Protection Grant.docx
Attachments:	- Essex - TPA 2025.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Feb 20, 2025

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



Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services - Feb 20, 2025 - 12:37 PM



Kate Giurissevich, Director, Corporate Services - Feb 20, 2025 - 12:37 PM



Doug Sweet, Chief Administrative Officer - Feb 20, 2025 - 1:18 PM