
Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative FireSmart Planning Grant Program

2017 Program & Application Guide

1. Introduction

The [Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative](#) (SWPI) is a suite of funding programs managed through the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Working Group – including the First Nations' Emergency Services Society (FNESS), Ministry of Forests, Lands & Natural Resource Operations (MFLNRO) and the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM). Funding is provided by the Province of BC and is administered by UBCM.

The initiative supports communities to mitigate risk from wildfire in the wildland urban interface.

The wildland urban interface (WUI) is any area where combustible wildland fuels (vegetation) are found adjacent to homes, farm structures, other outbuildings or infrastructure. For the purpose of the SWPI, the WUI is the area within 2 kilometres of a community with a minimum density of 6 structures per square kilometre.

The Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative includes the following funding streams:

- Development or update of Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP)
- Development of fuel management prescriptions
- Operational fuel treatments, including maintenance treatments
- Fuel management demonstration projects
- SWPI FireSmart Planning grants

2017 SWPI FireSmart Planning Grant Program

The [FireSmart Communities Program](#), provided by [Partners in Protection](#), is designed to encourage self-organized groups of residents to take the lead in implementing solutions for wildfire safety on their own properties. First Nations and individual neighbourhoods or subdivisions within local governments that are in areas prone to wildfire can earn FireSmart Community Recognition status by meeting the criteria set by Partners in Protection.

The 2017 SWPI FireSmart Planning grant program provides funding to local governments and First Nations in BC to support residents to undertake FireSmart planning activities for private lands, as identified by Partners in Protection through the FireSmart Communities Program, and/or to develop or advance local planning efforts to mitigate risk from wildfire on private lands in the wildland urban interface.

The program can also support residents or community groups within a local government or First Nation to take the required actions in order to achieve and/or maintain FireSmart Community Recognition status from Partners in Protection.

2. Eligible Applicants

All local governments (municipalities and regional districts) and First Nations in BC are eligible to apply.

3. Eligible Projects

In order to qualify for funding:

- There must be credible evidence of an apparent threat to the community from interface fires
- Proposed activities must be new (retroactive funding is not available) and capable of completion by the applicant within one year from the date of grant approval
- The applicant must have a current CWPP¹ as defined by the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Working Group

Please note: Applicants that received funding through SWPI from 2004-2014 are required to submit any outstanding reporting prior to 2017 applications being considered.

4. Eligible & Ineligible Costs & Activities

Eligible Costs & Activities

Eligible costs are direct costs that are approved by the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Working Group, properly and reasonably incurred, and paid by the applicant to carry out eligible activities. Eligible costs can only be incurred from the date of application submission until the final report is submitted.

The 2017 SWPI FireSmart Planning grant program is intended support FireSmart planning activities for private lands, and/or to develop or advance local planning efforts to mitigate risk from wildfire on private lands in the wildland urban interface.

Eligible activities must be cost-effective and may include only the following activities:

- Hiring a Local FireSmart Representative(s) and/or training costs for a Local FireSmart Representative(s)
- Establishing a FireSmart Board(s)
- Conducting site visits and assessments and/or developing FireSmart Community Plans for specific areas
- Organizing and holding a FireSmart day(s), including off-site debris disposal activities such as collection and/or chipping of debris from private landowners who have undertaken their own treatments
- Implementing a communications strategy and/or public information directly related to FireSmart activities
- Presenting the FireSmart Community Plan to a local government Council, Bboard or First Nation Band Council
- Amendments to Official Community Plans, Comprehensive Community Plans and/or land use, engineering and public works bylaws and policies that are specific to FireSmart activities
- Staff and contractor costs directly related to FireSmart activities
- Applicant administration costs directly related to FireSmart activities
- Applying for FireSmart Community Recognition status

¹ Generally speaking, CWPPs should be reviewed every five years to ensure the plan is in alignment with the current PSTA, development, completed fuel treatments and FireSmart activities

Ineligible Costs & Activities

Any activity that is not outlined above or is not directly connected to activities approved in the application by the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Working Group is not eligible for grant funding. This includes:

- Operational fuel treatment activities (e.g. pruning and thinning, tree cutting, brush removal, etc.)

5. Grant Maximum

The 2017 SWPI FireSmart Planning grant program can contribute up to 100% of the cost of eligible activities to a maximum of \$10,000.

In order to ensure transparency and accountability in the expenditure of public funds, all other grant contributions for eligible portions of the project must be declared and, depending on the total value, may decrease the value of the grant.

6. Application Requirements & Process

Application Deadline

The application deadline for the 2017 SWPI FireSmart Planning program is January 27, 2017.

Required Application Contents

- Completed Application Form
- Detailed budget
- Local government Council or Board resolution, or First Nation Band Council resolution, indicating support for the current proposed activities and willingness to provide overall grant management

Submission of Applications

Applications should be submitted as Word or PDF files. If you choose to submit your application by e-mail, hard copies do not need to follow.

Submit applications to Local Government Program Services, Union of BC Municipalities

E-mail: swpi@ubcm.ca Mail: 525 Government Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 0A8

Review of Applications

The Evaluation Committee will assess and score all eligible applications and consider the location of each proposed project in order to ensure a balanced representation of projects across the province. Higher application review scores will be given to applications that:

- Clearly advance wildfire mitigation planning activities for private lands
- Demonstrate highest wildfire risk
- Advance a recommended FireSmart activity for a priority area as outlined in the local CWPP
- Indicate that a local government or First Nation staff person or elected official, or a community member involved in the proposed activities, attended a Local FireSmart Representative workshop
- Are from eligible applicants that have not yet received a SWPI FireSmart Planning grant
- Are from eligible applicants that have not yet received FireSmart Community Recognition status from Partners in Protection
- Include collaboration with one or more partners (e.g. community or resident organization, First Nation or Aboriginal organization or other local government)
- Demonstrate cost-effectiveness

Please note the following important points when preparing your application:

- The maximum grant is \$10,000 and matching funds and/or cost sharing are not required
- Only one application per municipality or First Nation will be accepted per intake. Up to three applications per regional district per intake can be submitted.
- Funds are for new activities that support achieving/maintaining FireSmart Community Recognition status and are not for on-going operations or regular planning activities
- All funded activities are to take place within the 2017 calendar year and the final report will be due within 30 days of project completion and no later than January 31, 2018
- The detailed budget must indicate proposed expenditures and align with the proposed activities outlined in the application form
- All application information and final reports will be shared with the Province of BC, Strategic Wildfire Prevention Working Group and Partners in Protection

7. Grant Management & Applicant Responsibilities

Please note that grants are awarded to eligible applicants only. When collaborative projects are undertaken with community partners, the eligible applicant remains the primary organization responsible for completion of the project as approved and for meeting reporting requirements.

Applicants are also responsible for proper fiscal management, including maintaining acceptable accounting records for the project. The Strategic Wildfire Prevention Working Group reserves the right to audit these records.

Notice of Funding Decision

All applicants will receive written notice of funding decisions, which will include the terms and conditions of any grant that is awarded.

Changes to Approved Projects

Approved grants are specific to the project as identified in the application, and grant funds are not transferable to other projects. Approval from SWPI Evaluation Committee will be required for any significant variation from the approved project.

To propose changes to an approved project, approved applicants are required to submit:

- Revised application package, including updated, signed application form and budget. An updated Council, Board or Band Council resolution may be required.
- Written rationale for proposed changes to activities and/or expenditures

The revised application package will then be reviewed by the SWPI Evaluation Committee.

Applicants are responsible for any costs above the approved grant unless a revised application is submitted and approved prior to work being undertaken.

Extensions to Project End Date

All approved activities are required to be completed within the 2017 calendar year and all extensions beyond this date must be requested in writing and be approved by the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Working Group.

8. Final Report Requirements

Required Final Report Contents

Applicants are required to submit an electronic copy of the complete final report, including the following:

- Completed Final Report Form
- Financial summary
- Copies of any community assessments, FireSmart Community Plans or any other plan that was developed or updated as part of the 2017 SWPI FireSmart planning grant.

Submission of Final Reports

Final reports should be submitted as Word or PDF files. If you choose to submit your final report by e-mail, hard copies do not need to follow.

Submit final reports to Local Government Program Services, Union of BC Municipalities

E-mail: swpi@ubcm.ca

Mail: 525 Government Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 0A8