

Service 265 Comox Valley Ground Search And Rescue

PURPOSE

Comox Valley Ground Search and Rescue (CVGSAR) seeks a permanent new location for its operations.

- Lease at 3001 Moray Avenue expires on July 31, 2026
- Risk landlord not renewing and/or asking for further lease rate increases
- Existing building too small for apparatus and has limited parking available

The CVGSAR Team requires good access to highways, airpark (ambulance transfers), and wilderness terrain to provide effective response times to save lives.

BACKGROUND

- In support of the board strategic initiative staff have been working with CVGSAR to determine suitable sites of at least 1.2 acres in size.
- CVGSAR was offered an option to explore co-location at the water treatment plant however that was outside CVGSAR ideal geographic location.
- An annual contribution of \$100,000 has been made to Service 265 for the purpose of building reserves to support new building and/or buying land with a five-year commitment for a total contribution of \$500,000 (contribution ends 2027).
- CVGSAR has fundraised \$927,874 as of October 2024.
- CVGSAR has evaluated multiple properties both publicly and privately held.
- The construction cost of building a suitable facility is estimated at \$2 million.
- The purchase costs for a suitable lot range from \$800,000 to \$1.3 million.

KEY POINTS

- No suitable public property site has been identified based on analysis with CVRD, Comox Valley Schools, and adjacent municipalities.
- CVGSAR does not have adequate finances to purchase a site and erect a building on its own.
- The board should be mindful of opportunities for co-location however current property options are minimal at best in the long-term.

OPTIONS

1. Status quo: CVRD continues to provide operational funding annually of \$50,000 and continues with the existing support commitment of \$100,000 over five

The Comox Valley Regional District respectfully acknowledges the land on which it operates is on the unceded traditional territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, the traditional keepers of this land.

years (2023-2027) towards a new facility. As well, continued in-kind staff support is offered.

2. CVRD invests to a greater degree in CVGSAR facility: this could take multiple forms including CVRD owned lands, leasing arrangements, partnerships, etc.

The Board could:

- increase funding for \$100,000 to reserves to help finance a new building beyond the current five-year commitment;
- increase funding for \$100,000 to reserves to help future purchase of land.
- direct staff to explore acquisition of a suitable property for leasing back to the CVGSAR.

Staff recommend the board approve an additional \$100,000 contribution to reserve per year for three years (2025, 2026, 2027) to further support CVGSAR's facility need.

This will bring the total overall support to \$800,000.