



# Corporate Report

NO: R207

COUNCIL DATE: October 16, 2006

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## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: October 16, 2006  
FROM: Fire Chief FILE: 2240-20  
SUBJECT: HAZMAT Service Agreement with Capital Regional District

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## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council authorize the Fire Chief to enter into an agreement on behalf of the City of Surrey, generally in accordance with the conditions documented in this report and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor, to provide hazardous material response (HAZMAT) services to the Capital Regional District for a 5 year term.

## BACKGROUND

The City of Surrey began discussions in late 2004 with the Capital Regional District (CRD) about the potential for a partnership regarding hazardous materials response services. The CRD, which has jurisdiction in the Greater Victoria area, has been considering options for improving its HAZMAT response capacity for several years. The significant costs associated with implementing these specialized services, combined with Surrey's HAZMAT capability and recognition as a HAZMAT leader in B.C., served as the basis for the discussions.

The CRD Board on May 11, 2005 directed CRD staff to prepare a draft agreement with Surrey that would form the basis for Surrey to provide HAZMAT response services to the CRD's municipalities and electoral areas on a contract basis. Since then each municipality within the CRD was required to approve the CRD providing HAZMAT as a regional service. These approvals have now been achieved and the Province has also approved the approach. The CRD is now in a position to enter into an agreement with the City of Surrey.

## DISCUSSION

A draft agreement has been prepared. The agreement is based on the following general principles:

- Surrey will provide 24/7 HAZMAT services for CRD incidents of a pre-determined severity, using on-duty crews. This could include in-person responses or technical advice by phone or e-mail. All equipment is to be provided by the CRD.
- Surrey will conduct an annual training exercise with the CRD's lead firefighters, funded by the CRD.
- Surrey will receive start-up costs of \$20,000 and an annual retainer fee of \$50,000. Surrey will be reimbursed for all costs incurred in responding to CRD incidents, including overtime for back-filled positions at home.
- The CRD would cover all equipment, transportation, insurance and other costs for the program.
- The agreement will have a term of 5 years.

The City of Surrey's specialized and well-equipped HAZMAT unit has 60 trained members. An agreement to provide the CRD with HAZMAT response services will bring several benefits for Surrey, including:

- Maximizing use of existing resources – It makes best use of Surrey's existing specialized HAZMAT infrastructure and skill base.
- Maintaining the resource – By providing more response opportunities, the HAZMAT team's skills will be maintained and enhanced, ensuring peak efficiency in both Surrey and the CRD.
- Cost savings: The annual retainer guaranteed by the CRD agreement will help defray the costs of maintaining Surrey's specialized HAZMAT team.

This agreement also demonstrates the potential opportunities created by intergovernmental cooperation. It is also an example of fiscal responsibility, in that it helps make the most of a taxpayer-funded public resource.

## CONCLUSION

With this agreement, the City of Surrey has an opportunity to realize considerable benefits for the City's taxpayers while partnering in an innovative solution to satisfy a service need for other B.C. residents.

This agreement is in keeping with the culture of leadership, creative problem-solving and fiscal prudence that marks Surrey's approach to government.



Len Garis  
Fire Chief