



*Minister of State, Local Governments and Rural Communities
Honourable Brittny Anderson
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Vancouver Convention Centre – East Building, Level 2*

Briefing package: Fire Hall Replacement

The City of Greenwood has taken a comprehensive review of its fire protection services and associated infrastructure in response to significant findings identified through two independent assessments: the ISL Structural Review Memorandum (2020) and the Greenwood Fire Service Review and Fire Department Master Plan (2025). Together, these documents provide a clear and authoritative picture of the challenges facing Greenwood's fire department, including critical structural deficiencies in the existing fire hall, operational limitations that hinder the delivery of effective fire suppression services, and gaps in compliance with provincial training and safety standards.



As the smallest incorporated city in Canada, Greenwood relies heavily on its volunteer fire department to safeguard residents, heritage assets, and neighbouring rural areas. The assessments demonstrate that the current fire hall cannot support the demands placed upon it, nor can it meet the requirements of a post-disaster building essential for emergency response. This briefing package presents the key findings from both reports and outlines the City's position as it seeks provincial support to address these longstanding and increasingly urgent infrastructure challenges.

Executive Summary

The City of Greenwood's fire hall is no longer capable of supporting the operational, structural, and regulatory requirements of a modern fire department. Two independent assessments, the ISL Structural Review Memorandum completed in 2020 and the Greenwood Fire Service Review and Fire Department Master Plan completed in 2025, both conclude that the facility is structurally compromised, operationally inadequate, and fundamentally misaligned with the standards expected of a post-disaster emergency response building. The fire hall's deficiencies affect every aspect of Greenwood's fire protection service, including structural fire suppression, exterior operations, firefighter training, apparatus housing, and administrative capacity. The Master Plan identifies replacement of the fire hall as one of the City's highest priorities.



History

The Greenwood fire hall is a multi-storey heritage building that has been modified repeatedly over its lifetime without documentation or engineered oversight. ISL's structural review found evidence of cut structural members, including a roof truss and a ceiling beam, as well as un-engineered shoring installed to compensate for removed bearing walls. Floors on the second level were observed to be uneven, with visible deflection in ceiling tiles below. The building's foundation system consists of pointed stone walls and a retaining wall that now bears the live load of the fire truck. The ambulance is parked on a suspended timber floor that was never designed to support heavy vehicle loading. ISL concluded that the building does not meet the requirements of a post-disaster facility and recommended that vehicles be removed and occupancy limited to essential staff only.

The Fire Master Plan notes that the fire hall has not kept pace with changes in British Columbia's fire service environment. Over the past two decades, fire departments across the province have adapted to new training standards, WorkSafeBC requirements, and operational expectations. Greenwood's facility, however, has remained largely unchanged, leaving the Department without the infrastructure needed to support modern fire suppression, firefighter development, or administrative functions. The building's age, layout, and structural condition now limit the Department's ability to meet the City's adopted Exterior Operations service level.

Issues

The structural integrity of the fire hall is a primary concern. ISL's review identified multiple critical deficiencies, including cut structural members, un-engineered shoring, uneven floors, inadequate lateral load paths, and foundation conditions inconsistent with modern building standards. The building's stone retaining wall is currently supporting the live load of the fire truck, and the suspended timber floor beneath the ambulance shows signs of water staining and uncertain load capacity. These conditions present significant risks to firefighter safety and building stability.

The fire hall also fails to meet the National Building Code's requirements for post-disaster buildings. As ISL notes, fire halls are classified as post-disaster facilities due to their essential role in emergency response. Greenwood's fire hall lacks designed lateral load systems, adequate structural redundancy, and the engineered components necessary to remain operational during a disaster. This limitation affects not only the City's ability to respond to emergencies but also its capacity to support regional mutual aid and interface fire operations.

Operational limitations further constrain the Department. The Fire Master Plan identifies that the apparatus bays are too small for modern fire trucks and tenders, ventilation is inadequate for diesel exhaust, and the building lacks proper separation between clean and contaminated zones. There is no dedicated training space, no suitable meeting or administrative area, and insufficient room to store or maintain essential equipment. These constraints directly affect the Department's ability to meet the BC Structure Firefighter Minimum Training Standards, particularly at the Exterior Operations level adopted by the City.

The Department's apparatus and equipment needs are also shaped by the facility's limitations. The Master Plan notes that Greenwood's apparatus fleet includes aging vehicles and that the Department requires a new tender to meet operational needs. However, the current fire hall cannot



safely house or support modern apparatus due to its structural limitations and inadequate bay dimensions. This creates a barrier to operational readiness and long-term planning.

Jurisdictional Positions

The ISL Structural Review Memorandum recommends immediate removal of vehicles from the building and limiting occupancy to essential staff. ISL further advises that a detailed structural analysis would be required if the City wished to consider continued use of the building, noting that the current condition presents significant unknowns and risks.

The Fire Master Plan recommends that the City begin planning for replacement of the fire hall. The Plan emphasizes that the facility must support modern fire service operations, including exterior fire suppression, firefighter training, apparatus housing, administrative functions, and compliance with WorkSafeBC and provincial standards. Replacement of the fire hall is identified as one of the three highest priorities for the Department's future development.

Conclusion

The implications of not replacing Greenwood's fire hall are significant for both the City of Greenwood and the Greenwood Rural fire protection area administered by the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary. The ISL Structural Review makes clear that the existing building does not meet the structural requirements of a post-disaster facility and contains multiple deficiencies that compromise its ability to safely house emergency apparatus or support essential operations. Continued reliance on a structurally compromised building places firefighters, staff, and equipment at risk and leaves both the City and rural area without a resilient emergency response facility capable of functioning during a major incident. The Fire Master Plan further emphasizes that the hall's limitations prevent the Department from meeting the BC Structure Firefighter Minimum Training Standards, WorkSafeBC occupational health and safety requirements, and modern operational expectations for exterior fire suppression. Without a compliant facility, Greenwood cannot sustain an accredited training program, cannot support safe apparatus maintenance, and cannot provide the clean-dirty separation required for firefighter health and safety.

For Greenwood Rural, the consequences are equally serious. The City's fire department provides fire protection to the rural area under contract, and the Master Plan identifies that rural service requires apparatus such as tenders, large-diameter hose, and modern exterior operations equipment. The current fire hall cannot safely accommodate these vehicles or support the operational readiness required for rural fire suppression. This limitation directly affects the rural area's ability to meet Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) expectations for water supply, apparatus deployment, and staffing. A non-compliant fire hall contributes to diminished Dwelling Protection Grades and Public Fire Protection Classification scores, which in turn affect insurance costs and fire risk ratings for rural residents. Without a new hall, Greenwood Rural will continue to rely on a facility that cannot support the apparatus, training, or operational systems needed to provide effective fire protection.

Failure to replace the fire hall also places both jurisdictions at risk of falling out of alignment with emerging provincial legislation, including the *Fire Safety Act* and the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*. These frameworks require local governments to maintain safe, functional emergency response infrastructure and ensure that fire departments operate within defined service levels supported by adequate facilities. The current hall cannot meet these obligations. As a result,



both Greenwood and the rural area face increased liability exposure, reduced operational capability, and heightened vulnerability during structural fires, interface events, and other emergencies. Without a new fire hall, neither jurisdiction will be able to meet the standards, training requirements, and legislative expectations that define modern fire protection in British Columbia.

Key Messages

Greenwood's fire hall is structurally compromised and unsafe for continued emergency operations. Independent engineering and fire service assessments confirm that the facility cannot meet post-disaster building requirements and lacks the structural and operational capacity needed for modern fire protection. The building's limitations prevent the Department from meeting provincial training standards, supporting exterior operations, and maintaining essential apparatus. Replacement of the fire hall is a top strategic priority identified in the City's Fire Master Plan and is essential to ensuring safe, effective fire protection for Greenwood and surrounding areas.

City of Greenwood – Summary of Actions (2024-present) and Conclusion

Over the past two years, the City of Greenwood has undertaken a comprehensive and deliberate series of actions to modernize and strengthen the Greenwood Fire Department. These steps reflect Council's commitment to responsible governance, compliance with provincial legislation, and the long-term sustainability of fire protection services for both Greenwood and the Greenwood Rural fire protection area. The City's efforts have been guided by professional assessments, legislative requirements, and strategic asset-management principles, resulting in a coordinated modernization initiative that addresses apparatus, service levels, training, governance, and long-term planning.

Modernizing Fire Department Fleet – New Tender/Pumper

The modernization process began with the recognition that Greenwood's fire apparatus fleet was no longer adequate to meet Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) requirements or ensure reliable emergency response. In September 2024, Council received a staff report identifying that the City possessed only one FUS-qualified engine, already entering its 20–25-year extension period. The report outlined the risks associated with relying on a single aging pumper, including vulnerability during mechanical downtime, inability to support mutual aid, and negative impacts on the City's Public Fire Protection Classification (PFPC). Council directed staff to pursue the acquisition of a second reliable fire engine, initiating a multi-stage procurement process. By May 2025, Council formally authorized staff to engage Canoe Procurement (or other procurement options) to identify suitable used fire trucks, supported by surplus funds earmarked for fire protection improvements. This marked the City's first major step toward stabilizing its apparatus fleet and improving PFPC scoring for both Greenwood and the rural service area. The new fire truck was secure in late 2024 and put into service by early 2025. This was a **three-quarter of a million-dollar investment** by the City.



To ensure the newly procured fire engine could fully support Greenwood's declared Exterior Operations service level, the City undertook a comprehensive outfitting process that equipped the unit with modern, high-volume water delivery and supply capabilities. The apparatus was fitted with a complete suite of large-diameter hose (LDH) and high-flow hardware, including 100mm (4") Storz supply line, custom pony lengths, Mercedes Ultra-Lite Supreme 44mm attack hose, and Mercedes ForestGuard II 38mm forestry hose. Critical flow-control components were added, such as TFT Thunderfog selectable-flow nozzles capable of delivering up to 200 gpm at 100 psi, hydrant gate valves, Storz adapters, jumbo ball intake valves with integrated pressure-relief systems, and multiple gated wyes for rapid deployment of multi-line operations. The engine was further enhanced with a BlitzFire portable monitor package, enabling stable, high-volume water application during defensive operations—an essential capability for Exterior Operations departments where large-flow, ground-based suppression is the primary tactic. Hydrant tools, hose stranglers, wildland valves, and associated accessories completed the outfitting, ensuring the engine met contemporary operational standards and could deliver sustained water flow during structural, interface, and mutual-aid incidents. This investment transformed the unit into a fully capable front-line engine aligned with provincial training standards, FUS expectations, and Greenwood's long-term fire protection strategy. This was a **\$60,000.00 investment** by the City.

Operation Level of Service and Training

In parallel with apparatus planning, the City advanced its compliance with provincial legislation governing fire service levels and training. In October 2025, Council considered a detailed staff report recommending adoption of the Exterior Operations service level, in accordance with the *Fire Safety Act* (2024) and the BC Structure Firefighter Minimum Training Standards (2022). The report emphasized that Greenwood's volunteer department was already functioning at the **Exterior Operations** level and that formal adoption was necessary to secure UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) training grants. Council approved the recommendation, establishing a clear, legislatively compliant service level that aligns with Greenwood's capacity, supports sustainable asset management, and provides a foundation for future training and operational development.

A critical component of Greenwood's fire department modernization has been the implementation of an accelerated and highly structured firefighter training program. Early assessments completed through the Fire Master Plan process confirmed that the department's existing personnel did not meet the competency requirements for the City's declared Exterior Operations service level under the BC Structure Firefighter Minimum Training Standards (2022). In response, the City launched an aggressive training schedule in the first quarter of 2026, supported by Council-approved funding and alignment with the *Fire Safety Act* (2024). This program has focused on elevating all firefighters to Exterior



Operations competency by the end of 2026, while simultaneously advancing a cohort of seven members to Interior Operations certification. The City has established a clear objective to have the entire department trained to the Interior Operations level by the end of 2027, positioning Greenwood to formally increase its declared service level once all legislative benchmarks are achieved. In addition to operational training, senior personnel will soon begin Team Leader development to strengthen command capacity and ensure compliance with WorkSafeBC expectations for supervisory competency. This training initiative represents one of the most intensive and costly commitments undertaken by the City in recent years, reflecting Greenwood's determination to build a safe, compliant, and professionally capable fire service that meets both municipal and regional obligations. This has been a **\$25,000.00 - \$35,000.00 investment**.

Addition of Wildland Operations

Building on this foundation, the City continued to strengthen its apparatus and operational readiness. In April 2026, Council approved the acquisition of the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary's Wildland Type III fire truck. This strategically selected vehicle, equipped with a durable 7.3L Power Stroke engine and a high-quality aluminum service box, offered exceptional value due to its low mileage and long remaining service life. Council authorized funding for a replacement pump and GVFD decal package, enabling the unit to serve as a modernized First Responder vehicle while also supporting wildland and interface operations. The existing First Responder truck was repurposed into a dedicated Fire Chief's vehicle, improving command readiness and on-scene coordination. This acquisition not only enhanced emergency response capability but also created a platform for future Initial Attack (IA) training, positioning Greenwood to develop IA capacity in a phased, fiscally responsible manner. This was a **\$50,000.00 investment**.

In addition to acquiring the Wildland Type III fire truck, the City undertook the necessary steps to fully outfit the unit for active wildland and interface service. Shortly after Council approved the purchase, the Greenwood Volunteer Fire Department procured a suite of specialized wildland tools and equipment, including a McLeod tool, forestry patrol hose, forestry check valve, fire swatter, DELTA bush backpack, and Bullard wildland helmet. This equipment package ensured that the Wildland III unit met operational readiness standards for bush, interface, and initial attack deployment, and aligned with the department's broader objective of strengthening wildfire response capability. The impact of this investment was immediate. Within three weeks of being placed into service, the Wildland III truck was deployed in support of initial attack efforts on a lightning-caused fire located directly above Greenwood in the Motherlode area. Eleven members responded to the incident, demonstrating the department's enhanced readiness, improved equipment capability, and strengthened operational confidence. The rapid deployment of the newly equipped unit validated Council's decision to invest in wildland-specific apparatus and



tools and underscored the importance of maintaining a fleet capable of responding effectively to emerging wildfire threats in and around the community. This was a **\$15,000.00 investment**.

Professional Supported Working Group

Recognizing the need for structured leadership and coordinated implementation of fire service improvements, the City entered into a Professional Services Agreement with Tim Pley & Associates Ltd. in February 2026. This agreement established a Fire Department Guidance Working Group, led by an experienced coordinator responsible for managing discussions, setting agendas, documenting action items, and supporting the development of a Fire Department Implementation Plan. The Working Group provides professional oversight and ensures that modernization efforts, including apparatus procurement, service-level compliance, training development, governance updates, and operational planning, are aligned with best practices and executed in a coordinated manner. The agreement also provides administrative support, senior staff engagement, and scheduled Council presentations to maintain transparency and accountability throughout the modernization process. This has been a **\$15,000.00 - \$20,000.00 investment**.

Conclusion

The City of Greenwood has dedicated a significant amount of time, effort, and financial resources toward modernizing its fire department, undertaking nearly **\$1 million in strategic investments** across apparatus, equipment, training, governance, and operational readiness. These investments have allowed the department to stabilize its fleet, implement an aggressive and legislatively compliant training program, strengthen command capacity, and equip its firefighters with the tools and competencies required to meet contemporary Exterior Operations standards. Despite these substantial achievements, the City now faces a critical infrastructure barrier: the existing fire hall is structurally unsafe, non-compliant with WorkSafeBC and provincial legislation, and incapable of supporting the modernized department. Although Greenwood has some surplus funds available to contribute to a replacement facility, the scale of the project (**estimated at \$3.5 to \$4.5 million**) far exceeds the financial capacity of Canada's smallest city. Due to Greenwood's limited tax base, modest average household income, and demographic realities, even a long-term borrowing strategy would render property taxes unaffordable for a significant portion of the population. For this reason, the City is requesting that the Province provide full funding for the new fire hall through existing or newly established grant programs, with Greenwood contributing only what is feasible without depleting reserves or compromising municipal stability. Together, these actions demonstrate that the City of Greenwood has taken a proactive, structured, and multi-layered approach to updating its fire department. Council has addressed apparatus deficiencies, established a compliant service level, secured training



opportunities, strengthened command and response capability, and engaged professional guidance to oversee long-term implementation. Each step reflects a commitment to public safety, legislative compliance, fiscal responsibility, and sustainable asset management. Collectively, they position the Greenwood Fire Department to meet contemporary fire protection standards, support rural service obligations, and advance toward a more resilient and modern emergency response system, provided the Province partners with the City to complete the final and most critical component of this modernization effort: construction of a new, compliant, post-disaster-rated fire hall.

Anticipated Questions and Answers

Q: What did the structural review conclude? A: ISL found cut structural members, un-engineered shoring, uneven floors, inadequate load paths, and foundation concerns. They recommended removing vehicles and limiting occupancy.

Q: Why can't the current hall be upgraded? A: Both ISL and the Fire Master Plan identify fundamental structural and operational limitations that cannot be addressed through minor renovations.

Q: What service level does Greenwood operate at? A: The City has adopted the **Exterior Operations** level under the BC Structure Firefighter Minimum Training Standards, however by the end of 2027 the department will qualify as an **Interior Operation**. In addition, the department also operates a Wildland 3 bush truck to support wildland fire operations of the BCWS.

Q: Why is a new fire hall needed for Exterior Operations? A: Exterior Operations still requires modern apparatus, safe storage, compliant facilities, and adequate training space - all of which the current hall cannot provide.

Q: What is the City's plan? A: Begin planning for a new fire hall that meets post-disaster requirements, supports modern fire service operations, and aligns with recommendations from both ISL and the Fire Master Plan.