



**News Release** - for immediate release – May 21, 2024 at 11:15 am

### **Mayor Wood's Message**

Today, May 21, 2024, I, Mayor Ed Wood have issued a State of Local Emergency (SOLE) pursuant to Section 95(1) of the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* due to the significant threat of an interface fire and imminent threat to the loss of life and property.

On Friday, May 17, 2024, myself and other Mayors across the province attended a virtual meeting with the Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness. During that meeting, it was reported that there are currently 4850 people evacuated in the province due to wildfires. This is a challenging, uncertain and stressful time for our province. We are experiencing an increased risk of interface fire due to rainfall levels being at half the usual average, drier than normal conditions, low snowpack levels and a forecast of above seasonal temperatures.

Bureaucracy and inaction of Council has hindered the Village's efforts to clear the East Sector area of fuel. The Village is located in a valley that is heavily treed on both sides. Threatening wildfires appear to be starting earlier and earlier each year in the province, and it is time to change the way we approach emergency management. There have been seven local fires this year. With no secondary evacuation route in place and no fuel management having taken place to date, there is a need for emergency coordination in order to manage this risk.

Therefore, I have entered into two emergency contracts. The first is with Sensenet in the amount of \$174,500 for the installation of 100 sensors, 5 gateways and 3 cameras within the Village. It is expected that the materials will be delivered in 3-4 weeks and installation can begin immediately upon delivery. The second contract is with a Registered Professional Forester to complete fuel mitigation for 50 metres along McCombs Drive/Eagle Street from McPherson Road to Naismith Avenue.

Currently, there are no evacuation orders or air quality concerns, and no action from members of the public is required at this time. This declaration is made proactively to protect residents and visitors. I am taking all necessary steps to remediate this situation and ensure that there is no impact to the community. The Village is in contact with the Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness, the Fire Chief, the Emergency Program Coordinator and Sts'ailes.

I understand that there may be some questions or concerns from the public. The Village is committed to keeping the public informed of any developments. Please watch for updates on our website, bulletin boards and Facebook page.

Ed Wood, Mayor