



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Robert Sapien, Jr.

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: March 22, 2023

Approved

Date

3/24/23

SUBJECT: RETROACTIVE AUTHORIZATION FOR THE 2022 STAFFING FOR ADEQUATE FIRE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE GRANT APPLICATION

REASON FOR ADDENDUM

The application period for the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant application was open from February 13, 2023 through March 17, 2023. Due to the short timeline, the Fire Department is seeking retroactive approval for the grant application.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution retroactively authorizing the City Manager to apply for a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency/Department of Homeland Security (FEMA/DHS) for funding to add 14.0 Firefighter positions to the Fire Department.

SUMMARY AND OUTCOME

This action will allow the City Manager to apply for and accept reimbursements to fully fund the salaries and benefits for 14.0 Firefighter positions for a three-year period.

BACKGROUND

The Fire Department's (Department) mission is to protect lives, property and the environment through prevention and response. The Department deploys resources to provide timely and effective response to all community risks including fire, rescue, hazardous materials releases, and emergency medical services requests. The City has been working diligently to restore

resources eliminated in Fiscal Year 2010-2011¹ and Fiscal Year 2011-2012², utilizing previously awarded SAFER grant funds from 2010, 2011 and 2012 awards, and collaborative solutions to increase ongoing General Fund resources through City Council's budget approvals in recent years. However, while working to restore resources, emergency incident responses have increased 40.6% from Fiscal Year 2011-2012 to Fiscal Year 2021-2022 (from 73,327 incidents to 103,145 incidents). The reduction of resources combined with steadily increasing incident volume has made it challenging to meet the established City of San José Response Time Performance Standard requiring the arrival of the first response resource traveling lights and sirens in 8 minutes, 80% of the time, including call processing, turnout, and travel time segments.

In 2016, the Department completed its City Council directed Organizational Review³ that included a standards of cover assessment which involved response time analysis. The Organizational Review, conducted by Citygate Associates, LLC, included a community risk assessment and a Standards of Response Coverage assessment that analyzed Department fire crew deployment. The Standards of Response Coverage evaluated a variety of factors including response time performance, effective firefighting force (resources) assembly time, call volume, and others. The recommendations contained in Organizational Review have since guided the Department's Strategic Business Plan goals and objectives and recommendations to City Council.

ANALYSIS

The guidelines for the 2022 SAFER grant were recently released and the application period was open from February 13, 2023 through March 17, 2023. If grant funds are awarded to add 14.0 Firefighter positions, the Department will add a truck coverage to serve the downtown corridor and west San José. Guidelines of the 2022 SAFER grant entail funding for the requested positions over the course of three years (Fiscal Year 2023-2024 to Fiscal Year 2026-2027). At the end of the period of performance, funding will be required by the General Fund to continue the operation of the truck company by Fiscal Year 2026-2027.

A steady increase in emergency incident responses, coupled with the City's adoption of the Envision San José 2040 General Plan in 2011, which implemented land use policy shift to higher-density, mixed-use, urban districts, characterized by multi-story elevated living spaces, further exacerbated this challenge. Trucks are deployed more sparsely than engine companies and thus have larger first due response areas. When the first due truck is committed to another emergency or out-of-service for any reason, the response time for the next available truck is increased. Increased response times delay critical fire ground truck functions that provide safety for firefighters and the community, including search, rescue, patient extrication, utility hazard mitigation, forcible entry to facilitate rapid access and egress, ladder placement to upper floors, and ventilation coordinated with fire attack to remove smoke and heated gases. With incident

¹ <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/50625/637152074933900000>

² <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/50645/637152094524730000>

³ http://sanjose.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?meta_id=557153

volume continuing to trend upward and high-density growth increasing, a continuation of reduced truck coverage presents a significant risk to the community and current firefighters employed by the Department.

Measure T, passed by voters in November 2018, enabled construction of three new fire stations including Fire Station 32, Fire Station 36, and Fire Station 37. Fire Station 32, located near Story Road and McLaughlin Avenue will be constructed to support two fire companies including a truck company. Since Fire Station 32 is not expected to be operational until 2024-2025, the 2022 SAFER grant will fund a new truck company that will be initially deployed out of Fire Station 3, located near Martha Street and South Third Street, throughout the three-year grant period. During Fiscal Year 2026-2027, at the end of the grant period, the truck will be shifted to Fire Station 32. The deployment of a truck company at Fire Station 32 will enable repositioning of two other existing truck companies, resulting in improved response time reach for truck service, particularly in areas west of downtown, south of downtown, and east to Evergreen Valley.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

FEMA will commence the panel review process and anticipates award of 2022 SAFER funds to occur between June 2, 2023 through September 30, 2023. If awarded the grant, the acceptance and appropriation of the 2022 SAFER funds will be brought forward for City Council consideration at that time.

COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS

The 2022 SAFER-funded three-year value of 14.0 Firefighter positions is estimated at \$10.95 million. While the 2022 SAFER grant does not require a City match, additional funding for ineligible grant costs such as training (\$200,000), personal protective equipment (\$84,500) and vehicle operating costs (\$12,000) will be required and would need to be provided by the City, if awarded. Due to the current level of vacant positions, this cost (aside from the vehicle costs, which will be incorporated into future Base Budgets), would be absorbed within the Department's previously authorized budget levels. Based on the current personnel costs, the ongoing costs are approximately \$4.2 million beginning in Fiscal Year 2026-2027 after the three-year grant period expires.

COORDINATION

This report has been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office and the City Manager's Budget Office.

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

March 22, 2023

Subject: Retroactive Authorization for the 2022 SAFER Grant Application

Page 4

PUBLIC OUTREACH

This memorandum will be posted on the City's Council Agenda website for the March 28, 2023 City Council meeting.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION AND INPUT

No commission recommendation or input is associated with this action.

CEQA

Not a Project, File No. P17-006, Grant Application with no commitment or obligation to enter into an agreement at the time of application.

PUBLIC SUBSIDY REPORTING

This item does not include a public subsidy as defined in section 53083 or 53083.1 of the California Government Code or the City's Open Government Resolution.

/s/

ROBERT SAPIEN, JR.

Fire Chief, Fire Department

For questions, please contact Robert Sapien, Jr., Fire Chief, at robert.sapien@sanjoseca.gov or (408) 794-6952.