



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Darryl Von Raesfeld

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: May 7, 2009

Approved

Date

5/7/09

COUNCIL DISTRICT: City-Wide

SUBJECT: 2009 ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT APPLICATION

RECOMMENDATION

Adoption of a Resolution authorizing the City Manager and Fire Chief to apply for grant funds through Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) 2009 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program for the purchase of Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus and other equipment and related training.

OUTCOME

This action will allow the City Manager and Fire Chief, as required in the grant specifications, to apply for grant funds to replace outdated Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) thereby ensuring firefighter safety and National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) compliance.

BACKGROUND

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program is a program of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The primary goal of AFG funding is to provide grants to help firefighters and other first responders obtain critically needed equipment, training, and other resources. The Fire Department proposes to apply for AFG funding to replace its Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) inventory which is critical to firefighter safety. The monies would fund the purchase of an estimated 400 SCBA systems and provide training of the new equipment. The estimated cost to replace the SCBA inventory and provide training on equipment use and care is \$3,394,000. The final grant application amount is still being finalized and will be determined before grant submittal. If awarded at this estimated level, the grant would fund 80% (\$2,715,000) of the cost and the City would be responsible for a 20% (\$679,000) funding match.

ANALYSIS

The 2009 AFG grant guidelines were released on April 13, 2009, the grant opened on April 15, 2009, and the application is due on May 20, 2009. With public safety high on the list of priorities, the City should take every opportunity to find alternative funding for critical employee safety equipment.

The Fire Department has examined its personal protective equipment inventory and conducted a needs assessment relating to firefighter safety; based upon these actions, the Department has identified the replacement of SCBA inventory as being the most critical need relating to safety and determined that it meets the eligibility requirements of the AFG.

The Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA), an integral part of firefighter safety gear, is mandatory anytime a firefighter is subjected to an environment that is an immediate danger to life or health. The Fire Department has approximately 370 breathing apparatus in its system. With the exception of the Hazardous Incident Team (HIT) and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) responders who currently use Inspiro SCBAs, the Department uses the SCOTT Air Pak with the Pak Alert 1000, which meets the 1997 edition of the 1981 National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard. The 1981 NFPA standard relating to SCBAs has been revised twice since 1997. The 2002 edition introduced the heads up display regulator. The heads up display regulator has LED lights, which constantly alerts the firefighter to the quantity of the air supply in the system. In 2007, the 1981 NFPA Standard introduced additional safety features such as the CBRN regulator with heads up display, the integrated pass device, the AV3000 face piece with nose cup and other options including the improved voice amplifier and the EBBS (emergency buddy breathing system). The buddy breathing system will allow the firefighter to quickly connect their air system to a down firefighter, or utilize an air supply from a remote location.

The Fire Department's SCBA inventory is approximately 12 years old. Due to the age of the equipment and the frequent use, the breathing apparatus is in constant need of repair. Because of the age of the system, it is no longer under warranty, replacement parts are expensive and difficult to acquire. Since August 2007, the Department's current vendor no longer sells the 1997 NFPA certified Air Pak used by the Department. Replacement of its entire SCBA inventory will enable the Department to meet the 2007 edition of the 1981 and 1982 NFPA Standard and create uniformity of its inventory and reduce costs associated with the replacement and repair of outdated equipment.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

If awarded the grant, the appropriation of the AFG funds would be brought forward for City Council consideration and approval during 2009-2010.

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PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST

- Criterion 1:** Requires Council action on the use of public funds equal to \$1 million or greater. **(Required: Website Posting)**
- Criterion 2:** Adoption of a new or revised policy that may have implications for public health, safety, quality of life, or financial/economic vitality of the City. **(Required: E-mail and Website Posting)**
- Criterion 3:** Consideration of proposed changes to service delivery, programs, staffing that may have impacts to community services and have been identified by staff, Council or a Community group that requires special outreach. **(Required: E-mail, Website Posting, Community Meetings, Notice in appropriate newspapers)**

This memorandum will be posted on the City's website for the May 19, 2009 City Council Agenda. This memorandum addresses the submission of this grant application only. This action meets the grant exemption to the Sunshine Reform requirements. If the City is successful at securing a grant award, the appropriation, grant acceptance, and procurement will be brought forward to the City Council for review and approval and go through additional public outreach at that time.

COORDINATION

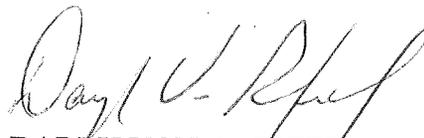
This memorandum has been coordinated with the City Manager's Office, the City Attorney's Office, the Budget Office, and Finance Purchasing.

COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS

If awarded federal funding for SCBA inventory replacement and training, the City of San José would be responsible for a 20% funding match towards the total replacement and training costs (preliminarily estimated as \$679,000). The final matching funding source mix is still being developed and would need to be determined before submitting the grant application. This investment is consistent with the commitment to find ways to fund the Fire Department and reduce total City costs.

CEQA

Not a project.


DARRY VON RAESFELD
Fire Chief

For questions please contact Geoffrey Cady, Acting Deputy Director, at 277-8783.