



AGENDA REPORT


TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: Damon Covington
Interim Fire Chief

SUBJECT: SAFER Grant Agreement

DATE: June 21, 2023

City Administrator Approval


Jestin Johnson (Jun 29, 2023 23:26 PDT)

Date: Jun 29, 2023

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution Authorizing The City Administrator To: 1) Enter Into A Grant Agreement With The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) To Accept Fiscal Year 2021 Staffing For Adequate Fire Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Funds In The Amount Of Twenty-Seven Million, Three Hundred Ninety-Two Thousand And One Hundred Fifty-Five Dollars (\$27,392,155.00); 2) Accept, Appropriate, And Administer Said SAFER Funds; And 3) Expend Funds To Hire Up To Thirty Five (35) Firefighters And/Or Firefighter Paramedics For The Grant Performance Period Of October 23, 2023 To October 22, 2026, In Accordance With The City's Hiring Policies

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Oakland Fire Department (OFD) applied for and was awarded on April 26, 2023 the SAFER grant in the amount of Twenty-Seven Million, Three Hundred Ninety-Two Thousand And One Hundred Fifty-Five Dollars (\$27,392,155.00). The grant is intended to fund the salary and benefits for up to thirty-five (35) currently vacant Firefighter and/or Firefighter Paramedic positions for three (3) years. OFD requests City Council approval to accept, appropriate, and administer these grant funds.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The SAFER grant was created to provide funding directly to fire departments and volunteer firefighter interest organizations to help them increase the number of trained, "front line" firefighters available in their communities.

The goal of SAFER is to enhance the local fire departments' abilities to comply with staffing, response, and operational standards established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The SAFER program provides funding for the salary and benefits of firefighters in eligible agencies with staffing needs.

The City of Oakland first received a SAFER grant award in 2009 (Resolution #83026). Since that time, there have been five (5) grant awards to the Fire Department for hiring firefighters.

Public Safety Committee
July 11, 2023

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Adequate staffing in the OFD Field Operations Bureau is both essential and necessary to the City's ability to provide quality emergency response services to the residents of Oakland. Acceptance of this grant will provide funding for up to thirty-five (35) full-time firefighters and/or firefighter paramedics, thereby enhancing the ability of the Department to provide public safety services, without additional cost to the General-Purpose Fund during the three (3) year performance period.

Two (2) types of grants are authorized by the SAFER Act: hiring grants and recruitment and retention grants. The City of Oakland has received a hiring grant. Hiring grants cover a three-year term. In contrast to previous SAFER grant awards, there is no local cost match required to accept this award.

Acceptance of this grant is in alignment with the citywide priority to provide holistic community safety. Acceptance of this grant will also allow the department do offset the impact of the current budget crisis that the City is facing and prevent the temporary closure of firehouses.

Approval of this resolution will authorize the acceptance and appropriation of SAFER funds.

FISCAL IMPACT

The grant funding dollar amount allocated includes salary and fringe benefits for thirty-five (35) prospective OFD candidates for three (3) years which includes but is not limited to: The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), holiday pay, retirement, and uniform allowance.

The grant award covers all the following projected costs for 35 firefighters for the three (3)-year period ending October 22, 2026.

Year 1:

Annual Salary (\$116,747.00), Annual Benefits (\$131,394.00) Total Per Firefighter (\$248,141.00)

Year 2:

Annual Salary (\$129,282.00), Annual Benefits (\$134,031.00) Total Per Firefighter (\$263,313.00)

Year 3:

Annual Salary (\$133,160.00), Annual Benefits (\$138,019.00) Total Per Firefighter (\$271,179.00)

Total : \$27,392,155.00

As a condition of this agreement, there is no cost match requirement for the City of Oakland.

These SAFER funds shall be deposited into the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Fund (2124), Field Operations Bureau, Organization (20411), Fire Suppression Program (PS 17) various accounts according to the grant award agreement (all personnel).

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

No outreach was deemed necessary for the proposed policy action beyond the standard City Council agenda noticing procedures.

COORDINATION

The Office of the City Attorney and Budget Officer were consulted in the preparation of this report.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: Acceptance of this grant will also allow the Fire Department do offset the impact of the current budget crisis that the City is facing and prevent the temporary closure of firehouses. The SAFER federal grant is designed to improve or restore local fire departments' staffing and deployment capabilities so we may more effectively respond to emergencies. Considering the current budgetary challenges Oakland is grappling with, this award will give us much-needed fiscal relief over the next three (3) years as we continue working to get our staffing capacity to appropriate levels.

Environmental: There are no environmental impacts associated with the acceptance of this grant funding.

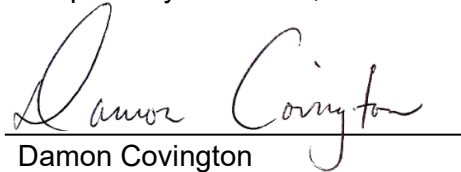
Race and Equity: There are no race and equity impacts associated with the acceptance of this grant.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution Authorizing The City Administrator To: 1) Enter Into A Grant Agreement With The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) To Accept Fiscal Year 2021 Staffing For Adequate Fire Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Funds In The Amount Of Twenty-Seven Million, Three Hundred Ninety-Two Thousand And One Hundred Fifty-Five Dollars (\$27,392,155.00); 2) Accept, Appropriate, And Administer Said SAFER Funds; And 3) Expend Funds To Hire Up To Thirty-Five (35) Firefighters And/Or Firefighter Paramedics For The Grant Performance Period Of October 23, 2023 To October 22, 2026, In Accordance With The City's Hiring Policies

For questions regarding this report, please contact Michael Hunt at mhunt@oaklandca.gov

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Damon Covington". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Damon Covington
Interim Fire Chief