



## CITY OF MILPITAS AGENDA REPORT (AR)

<b>Item Title:</b>	<b>Adopt a Resolution Accepting a Department of Homeland Security (FEMA) SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) Grant of \$2,336,284 to Cover Personnel Costs Including Salary and Benefits Associated with Hiring Six New Milpitas Firefighters, Adopt a Resolution Amending the Classification Plan to Add Six Firefighter Paramedic Positions to the City's Authorized Positions List, and Approve Related Budget Amendment (Staff Contact: Rick Frawley, 408-586-2824)</b>
<b>Category:</b>	Consent Calendar-Public Safety
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	10/1/2019
<b>Staff Contact:</b>	<b>Rick Frawley, Deputy Fire Chief, 408-586-2824</b>
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Adopt a Resolution accepting the Department of Homeland Security (FEMA) SAFER grant of \$2,336,284 awarded to City of Milpitas, and direct staff to proceed with hiring of six new firefighters no later than the start of the period of performance for the grant which is March 11, 2020.</li><li>2. Adopt a Resolution amending the Classification Plan to authorize adding six (6) Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Firefighter Paramedic positions to the City's Authorized Positions List.</li><li>3. Approve related budget amendment to transfer \$161,127 from the Non-departmental Operating Budget to the Fire Department Operating Budget to cover the City's cost for FY 2019-20.</li></ol>

### **Background:**

The City of Milpitas submitted a grant proposal to the United States Department of Homeland Security requesting funding to assist with hiring six new firefighters. The grant application was approved by Council on March 19, 2019.

The Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant application was approved by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and awarded to Milpitas on September 18, 2019. The three-year grant will fund 75% of the salary and benefits for each of the six newly-hired firefighters for the first two years and 35% in the final year of the grant. The total project cost is \$3,788,568. The federal grant funding totals \$2,336,284 and the local cost match for the City totals \$1,452,284. Additionally, there will also be a cost to the City of approximately \$0.4 million for salary and benefit increases over the three-year term.

The additional firefighters will be added to each shift to increase existing daily staffing. The current staffing levels would increase to support increased fire suppression personnel and deployment of the transport capable ambulance. The ambulance will be placed in service in early 2020.

In support of these additional personnel, the City's Classification Plan will need to be amended to reflect the addition of the six (6) Firefighter Paramedic positions.

### **Analysis:**

The Fire Department conducted an assessment of service delivery for the organization in 2019. This assessment known as the Standards of Coverage (SOC) supported the addition of personnel for both overall emergency response as well as increasing services with the deployment of a transport capable ambulance.

One of the benchmarks utilized in an SOC for the analysis of the delivery of emergency services is the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). The NFPA standard for fire service staffing is NFPA 1710 "Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments". The SAFER grant program was created to provide funding directly to fire departments to help increase or maintain the number of trained, "front line" firefighters available in the community. The goal of SAFER is to enhance the local fire departments' ability to comply with staffing, response and operational standards established by the NFPA 1710. As such, the acceptance of these grant monies from the SAFER program will support industry best practices to improve firefighter safety and health and enhance service in the Milpitas community.

In support of accepting SAFER grant funds and hiring six additional personnel, the City's Classification Plan will need to be amended to reflect the addition of the six (6) Firefighter Paramedic positions. Additionally, the budget will be amended in the Fire Department's FY 2019-20 General Fund Operating Budget to reflect City costs associated with the personnel costs for six (6) new Firefighter Paramedics for approximately six months of the current fiscal year.

### **Policy Alternative:**

#### **Alternative 1:**

Council may choose to not adopt a resolution accepting the SAFER grant funds. This would result in grant funding not being available to support future staffing in the Fire Department.

The Fire Department goals of deploying a transport capable ambulance in 2020 are a key factor in increasing staffing within the Fire Department. With current staffing levels, ambulance deployment would place additional needs on our personnel resulting in the increased deployment of personnel on overtime and the potential for Firefighter fatigue and the drawdown of personnel resources.

The Milpitas Fire Department has previously been successful in increasing the numbers of line personnel through SAFER grant funding. In 2018, the City of Milpitas was successful in applying for and securing funding through the SAFER grant process for four (4) Firefighters. The Department hired and trained six (6) Firefighters in 2019. Four of these positions were grant funded. These personnel successfully completed the fire academy and are currently deployed on fire apparatus. The addition of these personnel has improved service to the community by increasing daily staffing levels with an additional Firefighter on the Milpitas Truck Company.

Pros: If Council chooses to not adopt a resolution to approve the acceptance of SAFER grant funding, the City would not be impacted by the fiscal challenges of maintaining the cost of personnel at the completion of the grant cycle. The SAFER grant is a three-year grant with restrictions and requirements. The grant will pay for the salary and benefits for newly hired firefighter at a rate of 75% of actual costs the first two years and 35% of actual costs in the third year. The City is responsible for 100% of the costs after the third year. As part of the grant agreement, the City is bound to grant program rules requiring the maintenance of staffing levels at the level that existed at the time of the award and must retain all SAFER funded positions throughout the grant's full three-year period of performance unless FEMA affords the grant recipient a waiver. Additionally, the Fire Department would not be required to support regulatory compliance for grant program that require quarterly reporting to FEMA.

Cons: If Council chooses to not adopt a resolution to approve the acceptance of SAFER grant funding, ambulance deployment would face challenges in the drawdown of personnel resources. This would potentially limit the service timelines for the ambulance. The grant will fund \$2,336,284 of personnel costs that will support increased line staffing and support Firefighter health and safety for the three year period of the grant. Acceptance of these grant funds would benefit service delivery by providing additional personnel to enhance emergency operations in the community.

Reason not recommended: The Fire Department sees no reason to not recommend adopting the resolution to accept the grant funds. The addition of more line personnel will be a benefit to the community and support recommendations outlined in the previously completed SOC report.

**Fiscal Impact:** The SAFER grant is a three-year grant with restrictions and requirements. The grant will pay for the salary and benefits for newly hired firefighter at a rate of 75% of actual costs the first two years and 35% of actual costs in the third year.

The City is responsible for 100% of the costs after the third year, but is not required to maintain the positions after the third year as a condition of receiving SAFER grant funding. Costs associated with salary and benefit increases per the MOU with the International Association of Fire Fighters, Local 1699 and salary increases as assumed in the Five-Year General Fund Forecast estimated at \$ 0.4 million over the grant period will be paid by the City. The estimated costs during the three-year grant period is \$1.9 million.

The projected cost to maintain six (6) firefighter paramedics in year four, after the three-year grant term ends, is approximately \$1.7 million for salary and benefits. These costs have been incorporated into the City's FY 2020-25 General Fund Five-Year Forecast, with the City picking up \$0.16 million of costs starting in year one (FY 2019-20), and increasing to \$1.7 million in year four (FY 2022-23) for the full cost of the (6) firefighters, and continuing through the last year (FY 2024-25) of the Forecast. There are currently funds set aside for the first year costs in the FY 2019-20 Operating Budget. A budget amendment to transfer \$161,127 from the Non-departmental Operating Budget to the Fire Department Operating Budget is recommended to cover the City's share of the first year's (FY 2019-20) cost.

**California Environmental Quality Act:**

Not applicable.

**Recommendations:**

1. Adopt a Resolution accepting the Department of Homeland Security (FEMA) SAFER grant of \$2,336,284 awarded to the City of Milpitas, and direct staff to proceed with hiring of the six new firefighters paramedics no later than the start of the period of performance for the grant, which is March 11, 2020.
2. Adopt a Resolution amending the Classification Plan to authorize adding six (6) additional Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Firefighter Paramedic positions to the City's Authorized Positions List.
3. Approve related budget amendment to transfer \$161,127 from the Non-departmental Operating Budget to the Fire Department Operating Budget to cover the City's cost for FY 2019-20.

**Attachment(s):**

- a) Award Package
- b) SAFER Grant Application
- c) Council Minutes 3-19-19 Approving Application
- d) Budget Change Form
- e) Resolution Accepting SAFER Grant 2018
- f) Resolution Amending Classification Plan to add 6 FTE FF