

Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
March 25, 2014

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: ( Christine Daniel, City Manager

Submitted by: Gil Dong, Fire Chief

Subject: Grant Application: Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant (AFG) Fire Prevention

Program

# RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for and accept a grant, and any amendments, from the Federal Emergency Management Agency Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant (AFG) Fire Prevention Grant Program in the amount of \$50,000 to fund arson investigation and comprehensive fire education training, as well as a smoke alarm distribution program.

# FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The total cost of both programs is estimated at \$50,000. The grant request is for \$47,500 or 95% of the total cost. Revenue from the grant will be deposited into the FEMA fund (Fund 618). Conditions require a matching contribution from non-federal funds of 5% or \$2,500 of the total cost. The match for this grant will be provided from the department's General Fund budget in the form of existing staff time and non-personnel line items for the purchase of smoke alarms and fire prevention training materials. Based on the grant award timeline, it is anticipated that appropriation for this funding would occur in FY 2015, should the City be awarded this grant.

#### CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Fire Department is seeking approval to apply for and receive grant funding in the category of Fire Preventioin Education through the AFG program. The grant would fund training for Berkeley Fire and Police personnel assigned to conduct arson investigations and smoke alarm installation. The arson investigation training and smoke alarm distribution program are considered priority projects for 2013 AFG Fire Prevention Grant.

The Fire Department needs additional personnel trained to conduct arson investigations. The department has only one certified arson investigator. Arson investigations also require support from the Berkeley Police Department to collect evidence, investigate arson cases, and make criminal arrests. If funded, the grant will

provide \$20,000 for eight fire and police personnel to attend specialized arson and evidence collection seminars.

In the 2013 calendar year, the City had two structure fires that resulted in two fire fatalities. Those fire fatalities may have been prevented if there were working smoke alarms present in the homes.

Additionally, the California State Fire Marshal has adopted a new smoke alarm requirement that requires smoke alarms to have sealed ten-year batteries installed by July 1, 2015.

If funded, the grant will provide \$30,000 to purchase smoke alarms that meet the new state fire code requirement and update the department's fire education materials.

# **BACKGROUND**

The Fire Department has been successful with AFG grant applications in the past. The department received grants in 2004 for fire risk assessment of the hazardous hill areas and search and rescue training; 2005 for the replacement of self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBAs); and in 2011 for the acquisition of a Type III Wildland engine.

The total amount of grants received through the AFG program is \$1,190,564. Through the AFG grant program, the City has replaced and updated critical response vehicles, equipment, and funded specialized training.

# **ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

There are no identifiable environmental impacts or opportunities associated with the action requested in this report.

## RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The AFG grant is a welcomed funding opportunity given the City's fiscal constraints and if awarded the funding will improve operational effectiveness in arson investigations and advance compliance with new State Fire Code requirements.

# ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None

# CONTACT PERSON

Aaron Lee, Deputy Fire Chief, 981-5502

## Attachments:

1: Resolution

## RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

# GRANT APPLICATION: ASSISTANCE TO FIRE FIGHTERS GRANT (AFG) FIRE PREVENTION PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Fire and Police Department need specialized training to investigate, collect evidence, and make arrests with arson cases; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley experienced two fire fatalities that may have been prevented with the presence of working smoke alarms; and

WHEREAS, arson investigation and evidence collection training will enable the Berkeley Fire and Police Departments to work with greater effectiveness with arson investigations; and

WHEREAS, the Fire Department has received awards from the Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant program; and

WHEREAS, the Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant provides an opportunity to improve the City's arson investigation and fire prevention programs, and

WHEREAS, the total cost of the arson investigation, comprehensive fire education training, and smoke alarm distribution program for \$50,000 and the grant request is for \$47,500 (95% of the total cost) with a matching contribution from non-federal funds of \$2,500 or 5% of the total cost) to be provided from the FY 2015 General Fund budget.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager or her designee is authorized to: 1) submit a grant application totaling \$47,500 to the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Fire Prevention program; 2) accept any grants; 3) execute any resulting grant agreements and any amendments; 4) authorize use of \$2,500 in local match funds from the FY 2015 General Fund for the training, smoke alarms, and education material purchase.