



# ***Agenda Report***

## ***Fullerton City Council***

**MEETING DATE:** JULY 15, 2025

**TO:** CITY COUNCIL / SUCCESSOR AGENCY

**SUBMITTED BY:** ADAM LOESER, FIRE CHIEF

**PREPARED BY:** ANDREW YANG, ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST II

**SUBJECT:** FISCAL YEAR 2024 SAFER GRANT PROGRAM  
APPLICATION RATIFICATION

---

### **SUMMARY**

The Fire Department requests City Council ratify the Fiscal Year 2024 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program to fund 12 additional Firefighters and redeploy Fire Engine 6 as an Advanced Life Support (ALS) unit.

### **PROPOSED MOTION**

Ratify Fire Department application for the Fiscal Year 2024 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and authorize City Manager, or designee, to execute grant application-related documents.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- Approve the Proposed Motion
- Do not approve the Proposed Motion
- Other options brought by City Council.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the Proposed Motion.

### **CITY MANAGER REMARKS**

This item is to ratify an application for the SAFER Grant Program which would assist in providing for a 6<sup>th</sup> unit based on near term grant funds to fund the majority of personnel costs.

There will be risks to funding this in particular in the future if there are not revenues to make up for the lost grant funds.

The City Council can request that the City hold back on the application for one year if the City Council is concerned with the risks.

#### PRIORITY POLICY STATEMENT

This item matches the following Priority Policy Statements:

- Fiscal and Organizational Stability
- Public Safety.

#### FISCAL IMPACT

The Fire Department applied for a \$2.664 million grant to add 12 entry-level Firefighter positions over a three-year period. The grant has a weighted cost-sharing structure. The City would contribute approximately 25 percent of costs for the first two years of the grant period, with the federal share capped at 75 percent of a first-year Firefighter annual cost, up to a maximum of \$90,000 per position. In the third year, the federal award decreases to 35 percent of a first-year Firefighter annual cost, with a maximum \$42,000 contribution per position.

Staff estimates the total grant award at approximately \$2.66 million over three years, based on current labor costs, making the average annual City cost share during the grant period approximately \$945,000 for the 12 Firefighter positions, firefighter gear and equipment and marginal costs to promote personnel to Fire Engineer and Fire Captain ranks required to fully staff an engine company. Concurrent EMS revenue increases, in addition to significant cost savings from implementing the new City-operated ambulance program, would largely offset net expenditures.

The City would pay the full salary and benefit costs, as well as equipment and other support costs required to retain the 12 positions, once the three-year grant period concludes in Fiscal Year 2028-29, estimated at an additional \$1.9 million annual, with actual amount subject to future labor agreements.

#### BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

The FEMA SAFER Grant Program helps local fire departments increase staffing and deployment capabilities to more effectively respond to emergencies. The grant application process is highly competitive, with an expected \$324 million allocated for approximately 300 awards nationwide for FY 2024. Securing this grant would accelerate Fire Department rebuilding efforts and provide necessary staffing to enhance service delivery, as described in the Fire Chief's 2022 strategic roadmap presented to City Council.

Specifically, the 12 additional firefighters would achieve a critical operational goal by correcting two major service deficiencies that existed since 2018. The plan involves restructuring Fullerton Fire Station No. 6 as a four-person ALS engine company and relocating the aerial ladder truck to Fire Station No. 1 in the downtown corridor. This

realignment would provide dedicated Advanced Life Support (ALS) capabilities to every city district and resolve ineffective aerial ladder response times to the downtown corridor.

The enhanced deployment would improve Department capacity to handle multi-unit responses (such as a mass casualty incident or structure fire). Staff expects deployment to positively affect the City Insurance Services Office (ISO) public protection rating which recently downgraded from a long-held Class 2 rating to a Class 3, a change directly attributed to the 2018 loss of the engine company. This grant provides a clear path to restoring the Class 2 rating, which can lead to lower insurance premiums for residents and businesses. The department participates in Verisk's retrogression program to ensure official recognition of these improvements .

The application period for this grant closed on July 3, 2025. The Fire Department submitted the application prior to the deadline with the understanding that any award depends on City Council acceptance. FEMA anticipates making award notifications between mid-August and September 30, 2025. Staff would return to City Council with a full fiscal and operational analysis and request formal acceptance, if granted the award Staff would then adhere to all grant terms, including a 180-day Firefighter recruitment period followed by a 36-month performance period with regular compliance reporting.

cc: City Manager Eric J. Levitt