



*City of Arts & Innovation*

# City Council Memorandum

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL**      **DATE: FEBRUARY 25, 2025**

**FROM: OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER**      **WARDS: ALL**

**SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE OF A \$20,000 PRIZE AWARD FROM THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION'S NATIONAL INTEGRATED HEAT HEALTH INFORMATION SYSTEM TO FUND A HEAT TABLETOP EXERCISE CHALLENGE – SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION**

## **ISSUE:**

Accept a \$20,000 award from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Integrated Heat Health Information Systems (NIHHIS) to fund a Heat Tabletop Exercise.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the City Council:

1. Accept a \$20,000 grant award from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to support extreme heat planning; and
2. With at least five affirmative votes, and upon receipt of the award, authorize the Chief Financial Officer, or designee, to record an increase in revenues and appropriate expenditures in the amount of \$20,000, or the actual award amount, in General Fund, City Manager's Office, Office of Sustainability revenue and expenditure accounts.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Due to its proximity to the Mojave and Sonoran Deserts, the Inland Southern California region is familiar to extreme heat. The City of Riverside is experiencing a higher number of extremely hot days in recent years. This past year, the City of Riverside reached 79 days above 95°F, 39 days above 100°F, 3 days above 110°F and the hottest day reached 115°F (Source: Extremeheatwatch.com).

Table. Comparison of Extremely Hot Days in Riverside – 2005 vs. 2024

Year	95°F or above	100°F or above	110°F or above	Hottest Day
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2005	58	12	0	103°F
2024	79	39	3	115°F

In 2100, according to CalAdapt, it is expected that the City will experience 60-90 days above 102°F a year.

As global temperatures increase, extreme heat poses significant impacts to human health, e.g., increased hospitalizations for heat-related illness, cardiovascular and respiratory disorders, and heat stress conditions, such as head stroke, daily activities, agriculture and food systems, and infrastructure and transportation systems. Extreme heat is now the no. 1 weather-related cause of death in the United States and California, according to the U.S. National Weather Service.

In 2022, the City began and updated its Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) which is a planning process that helps to reduce or remove long-term risk and protect people and property from the effects of events like earthquakes, fires, and floods. The LHMP ranked Severe Weather: Extreme Heat as the sixth concerning hazard, increasing in one position of importance from the 2018 LHMP (Source: Table 3.3.1, LHMP 2023). The City is actively preparing for a future where increased temperatures and prolonged waves of extreme heat create tangible disruptions to quality of life.

A partnership with the City of Riverside’s Office of Sustainability and Office of Emergency Management and the American Red Cross of Riverside County, will collaborate to develop a heat tabletop exercise to pre-plan for future extreme heat scenarios and mitigate potential health impacts so that Riverside residents can plan to accommodate a warming planet while living healthy lives.

**DISCUSSION:**

As a recipient of the one (1) of the ten (10) Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) awards, the City of Riverside and American Red Cross of Riverside County will collaborate to develop a heat tabletop exercise based on their winning submission from November 2024. The tabletop exercise will serve to pre-plan for future extreme heat emergency events and will be planned and executed within FY 2024/25 and FY 2025/26, respectively.

EXERCISE OVERVIEW	
<b>Objectives</b>	1. Review available options for extreme heat exposure reduction for the most at-risk groups in the Riverside area. 2. Identify critical gaps in the response to extreme heat, with an emphasis on improving outcomes for the most at-risk groups. 3. Analyze and prioritize both short-term (1-2 years) and long-term (10-15 years) exposure reduction solutions that can occur at various social levels (individual, community, municipality, etc.) for the most at-risk groups in the Riverside area.
<b>Threat or Hazard</b>	Extreme and prolonged heat events; concurrently with electric outages caused by heat and resulting wildfires; leading to worsening air quality.

<b>Scenario</b>	An extended heat event in the City of Riverside threatens residents, especially those living with energy and housing insecurity, as well as visitors. This event stresses the area's infrastructure, causes many heat-related illnesses, and creates favorable wildfire conditions.
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<b>EXERCISE STRUCTURE</b>	
The following modules will be conducted in two days between the City of Riverside and other participating organizations representing community partners, county, health/medical, education, tribal entities, labor, and seniors.	
<b>Module 1</b>	Context and Preparedness: This module introduces the participants to the heat tabletop scenario and seeks to identify current emergency response protocols while assessing the city's readiness for extreme heat events.
<b>Module 2</b>	Heat Response Analysis and Identifying Gaps: This module evaluates the city's heat emergency management system, identifying critical gaps and limitations as it faces compound challenges: a historic heat wave coinciding with surrounding wildfires and deteriorating air quality throughout the week.
<b>Module 3</b>	Improving the City's Response and Managing Risk in the Short Term: This module focuses on developing immediate, actionable strategies to enhance emergency response capabilities and implement rapid interventions for heat-related emergencies.
<b>Module 4</b>	Managing Risk in the Long Term: The final module addresses sustainable, long-term solutions for building community resilience against extreme heat, including infrastructure improvements and policy recommendations for lasting climate adaptation.

Activities for the Heat Tabletop Exercise will conclude in the second quarter of FY 2025-26.

The City of Riverside is also planning to host an Extreme Heat Summit for the Fall of 2025 to build on this Heat Tabletop Exercise.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

Funding for the Heat Tabletop Exercise aligns with the Community Well-Being Strategic Priority and contributes to the achievement of the following Goals:

Goal 2.5. Foster relationships between community members, partner organizations, and public safety professionals to define, prioritize, and address community safety and social service needs.

Goal 2.6. Strengthen community preparedness for emergencies to ensure effective response and recovery.

Goal 4.3. Implement local and support regional proactive policies and inclusive decision-making processes to deliver environmental justice and ensure that all residents breathe healthy and clean air with the goal of having zero days of unhealthy air quality per the South Coast Air Quality

## District's Air Quality Index (AQI).

The Heat Tabletop Exercise also aligns with each of the Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – The City of Riverside has identified the need for extreme heat planning as a priority need in the community. The Heat Tabletop Exercise gather information from specific city departments and other state and local public organizations to better prepare for extreme heat emergency scenarios.
2. **Equity** –The Heat Tabletop Exercise ensures that extreme heat scenario planning benefits all residents but takes into consideration the barriers that would prevent residents from being readily prepared. Such considerations include mobility, health, lack of resources, or linguistic isolation.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – There is no fiscal impact to the City General Fund associated with this item. This item allows the City to utilize a Federal budget appropriation award to fund innovative projects that benefit City residents.
4. **Innovation** – This item will allow the City to capitalize on new and changing funding sources in partnership with federal programs to meet ongoing and changing needs of members of the community.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** –The Heat Tabletop Exercise promotes a sustainable community and encourages collaboration amongst many organizations to ensure the city's residents can adapt and become resilient to extreme heat whether events.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The total fiscal impact is an increase in revenues and expenditures of \$20,000. Upon council approval and prize award, an increase in revenue and appropriation of expenditures will be recorded in the funds and accounts as listed in the table below.

Fund	Program	Account	Amount
General Fund	NOAA Heat Tabletop Exercise Challenge	<i>Revenue</i>	
		1180000-374200	\$20,000
		<i>Expenditures</i>	
		1180000-421000	\$20,000

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Certified as to

availability of funds: Kristie Thomas, Assistant Chief Financial Officer and Finance Director

Approved by: Rafael Guzman, Assistant City Manager

Approved as to form: Jack Liu, Acting City Attorney