



*City of Arts & Innovation*

# City Council Memorandum

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL** **DATE: FEBRUARY 20, 2018**

**FROM: FIRE DEPARTMENT** **WARDS: ALL**

**SUBJECT: GRANT APPLICATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FOR THE 2017 ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT REQUESTING PORTABLE RADIOS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,962,805, WITH A REQUIRED CITY MATCH OF \$196,280 – SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION**

## **ISSUE:**

Approve the submission of a grant application for the amount of \$1,962,805, \$1,766,524 in grant funds plus a 10% \$196,280 required cash match, to the Department of Homeland Security, 2017 Assistance to Firefighters Grant for the purchase of portable radios.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the City Council:

1. Approve the submittal of an application to the Department of Homeland Security, 2017 Assistance to Firefighters Grant, for the purchase of new portable radios, in the amount of \$1,962,805, with a required City match of 10% (\$196,280);
2. If awarded, authorize staff to identify Measure Z funds or return to the City Council with a request for a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$196,280 from the unappropriated General Fund balance; and
3. Upon grant award, authorize an increase in estimated revenues in the amount of the grant, and appropriate expenditures in the same amount to account 9162300781-44011000 Federal, and 9162310203 for City Match.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Through the Department of Homeland Security, the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program provides one-year awards to fire departments for mission-critical training and equipment to improve fire emergency response times and increase firefighter safety. As the premier grant funding source for the fire service, AFG awards are highly competitive, with applications receiving a detailed, multi-level review and evaluated for completeness, adherence to programmatic guidelines, technical feasibility and anticipated effectiveness of the proposed project. Only the highest scoring applications result in an award.

## **DISCUSSION:**

The recommended service life for handheld portable radios is from 5 to 7 years, per National Fire Protection Association guidelines. However, the Fire Department's current cache of portable radios is over 10 years old, and in need of immediate replacement. If awarded an AFG grant, the Fire Department will purchase 190 new portable radios, enough to outfit all seated operational positions, all command staff, all Fire Prevention staff, and Emergency Operations Center cache. The new portable radios will meet current Federal Communications Commission and industry standards for public safety communications, and provide important technological and efficiency improvements. Benefits include increased usability with ergonomic design and noise cancelling software, ability to track a downed firefighter in the event of an emergency, improved battery life leading to long talk times, and warranty coverage that will reduce radio maintenance costs and allow staff currently tasked with radio maintenance to focus on other projects.

On average, the Fire Department responds to over 38,502 calls for service annually, with the Department's portable radios in continuous use, under the most extreme conditions. Radios have become as important to firefighter safety as personal protective equipment and self-contained breathing apparatus. New radios will help to ensure effective radio communication, which will result in better managed incidents and enhanced firefighter safety.

Grant award notification is anticipated within 12 months.

## **FISCAL IMPACT:**

If awarded, the AFG grant will fund 90% of the total cost, or \$1,766,524. Additional funding in the amount of \$196,280 would be required for the 10% matching funds. If awarded, staff will work with Finance to identify funds (e.g. Measure Z) or return to City Council with a request for a supplemental appropriation from the General Fund Reserve.

Prepared by: Michael D. Moore, Fire Chief  
Certified as to  
availability of funds: Adam Raymond, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer  
Approved by: Alexander T. Nguyen, Assistant City Manager  
Approved as to form: Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney