



City of Arts & Innovation

# City Council Memorandum

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL                      DATE: OCTOBER 3, 2023**

**FROM: FIRE DEPARTMENT    WARDS: ALL**

**SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE OF 2023 NATIONAL URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE  
RESPONSE SYSTEM READINESS FUNDING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,438,456  
FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY - FEDERAL  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY – SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION**

**ISSUE:**

Approve the acceptance of the 2023 Urban Search and Rescue Response System Readiness funding in the amount of \$1,438,456 from the Department of Homeland Security – Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and authorize the City Manager or designee to sign related funding documents.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the City Council:

1. Accept a grant awarded from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) under an existing 2023 National Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Response System Readiness Cooperative Agreement in the amount of \$1,438,456;
2. With five affirmative votes, and upon receipt of the grant award, authorize the Chief Financial Officer, or designee, to record an increase in revenue in the amount of \$1,438,456, or the actual award amount, and appropriate expenditures in the same amount in the Grants & Restricted Programs Fund, 2023 Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) revenue and expenditure accounts; and
3. Authorize the City Manager, or designee, to sign all related Urban Search and Rescue Response System funding documents from FEMA, USAR 2023, including making minor and non-substantive changes.

**BACKGROUND:**

Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) is a “multi-hazard” discipline trained to respond to a variety of natural, technological, and man-made emergencies or disasters. The City of Riverside Fire Department’s USAR team is the sponsoring agency for California Task Force 6 (CA-TF6) which is one of 28 National, and one of eight California USAR Task Force teams. These teams respond as either a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) or California Mutual Aid resource

during emergencies requiring highly skilled search and rescue personnel. Teams have previously been deployed to the 1994 Northridge Earthquake, 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, Hurricane Katrina, Super Storm Sandy, Hurricane Harvey, Irma, Maria, Florence, Michael, Lane, Hurricane Fiona, and most recently to Hawaii for the Maui Wildfires.

### **DISCUSSION:**

FEMA provides support and funding for maintenance and readiness through the National Urban Search & Rescue Response System Readiness Cooperative Agreement. For Fiscal Year 2023, the award acceptance will be \$1,438,456 with a period of performance from 9/1/2023 through 8/31/2026. These funds are being awarded under an existing contract between the City and FEMA.

Grant funds will be utilized for training, administration, equipment acquisition and maintenance of existing equipment. In addition, a portion of the grant can be used to fund 1.0 FTE Fire Captain, 1.0 FTE Battalion Chief, 1.0 FTE Inventory Control Specialist and 1.0 FTE Management Analyst. Due to overlapping cooperative agreement periods, the National Urban Search & Rescue Response System Readiness Cooperative Agreements can fund the salaries and benefits of the positions for the entire Fiscal Year of 2023/2024.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

This item contributes to Strategic Priority No. 2 *Community Well-Being* and Goal No. 2.6 – Strengthen community preparedness for emergencies to ensure effective response and recovery.

This item aligns with each of the five Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – The DHS/FEMA National USAR Program is an established gold standard for emergency preparedness which has helped produce over two decades worth of highly qualified technical rescue fire fighters within the City of Riverside Fire Department increasing community trust in emergency response efforts.
2. **Equity** – Task forces funded by the USAR Program bring a diverse group of professional services to all residents of Riverside and the surrounding communities including emergency room physicians, structural engineers, canine handlers, geospatial engineers, accounting techs, inventory control specialists and fire fighters.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – Through the use of the Department of Homeland Security – FEMA Urban Search and Rescue grant funding, the Fire Department subsidizes costs associated with staff training, department administration, and equipment acquisition.
4. **Innovation** – The City’s USAR Division Chief is the Western Division Representative for the USAR National Program. This unique position allows for enhanced leadership capability where the Division Chief puts a primary focus on the benefit of the city and its residents by engaging directly with DHS/FEMA USAR branch leadership early and often on local, state, and national program matters.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – Equipment recapitalization, fully electronic administrative management/reporting capabilities, new/renewed or revised Memorandums of Understanding with participating agencies and telecommute/virtual trainings have enhanced the program with a wide range of capability, personnel, and equipment which in turn has lessened the overall impact of the Sponsoring Agency.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The total fiscal impact of this action is \$1,438,456. No matching City funds are required for the USAR grant. Upon Council approval, an increase in revenue will be recorded and equal amount appropriated in expenditures in the amount of \$1,438,456, or the actual award amount, in the Grants & Restricted Programs Fund, USAR 2023 revenue account 9179100-331100 and expenditure account 9179100-440110.

Prepared by: Michael Moore, Fire Chief  
Certified as to  
availability of funds: Kristie Thomas, Assistant Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer  
Approved by: Mike Futrell, City Manager  
Approved as to form: Phaedra A. Norton, City Attorney