

**Council Meeting: May 12, 2009**

SUBJECT: Notice of Intent to Accept and Appropriate Funding from the Department of Homeland Security – Assistance to Fire Fighter Grant in the Amount of \$211,871 for the Purchase, Installation and Operation of Fire Apparatus Mobile Data Terminals and Approval of Budget Modification No. 36

REPORT IN BRIEF

The Department of Homeland Security annually provides grant funding opportunities to support the efforts to improve firefighter and community safety, through the Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG). The Department of Public Safety (DPS) recently applied and was selected to receive grant funding in the amount of \$211,871 to purchase and install 15 Mobile Data Terminals (MDT) in fire apparatus. These computers will be equipped with state-of-the-art software and Automated Vehicle Locators (AVL). This technology will reduce response times by ensuring closest unit is dispatched to each emergency, and will provide in-field response mapping and data collection.

Department of Homeland Security – Assistance to Firefighter Grant funding will provide 80% of the purchase, installation and supporting infrastructure for the Mobile Data Terminals. The grant requires a 20% funding match of \$52,967. Staff has identified funds within the Department of Public Safety's existing equipment replacement budget that will be utilized to complete the purchase. Ongoing maintenance, support, and equipment replacement is expected to cost approximately \$35,500 annually.

Staff recommends Council authorize the acceptance of the grant and appropriates the matching funds for the purchase of the equipment/software/licensing, and Budget Modification No. 36.

BACKGROUND

Each year, the Department of Homeland Security – Assistance to Firefighter Grant provides funding for the purpose of enhancing firefighter and community safety by improving response capabilities and personnel/community-member safety through equipment, training and technology. Public Safety has submitted this technology grant request twice before, but has not been selected as a grant recipient. During this grant application period, Public Safety was able to strengthen the grant application by arguing for regional compatibility, since Public Safety was the few Fire Agencies in Santa Clara County without MDT technology. This technology will allow interagency "closest vehicle"

dispatch through Automated Vehicle Locator (AVL), a significant enhancement to current Auto-Aid and Mutual –Aid systems.

EXISTING POLICY

4.2 Fire Services Sub-Element

Goal 4.2A: Provide Fire Response System that will control the spread of fire in buildings and other properties and maintain minimal casualties and property loss from fire and other related emergencies.

Policy 4.2A.1: Assure that equipment and facilities are provided and maintained to meet reasonable standards of safety, dependability, and compatibility with fire service operations.

Action Statement 4.2A.1b: Research new equipment and replacement needs and recommend purchases with specifications that meet industry standards, local needs, and Public Safety requirements.

Policy 4.2A.3: Respond to requests for services.

Action Statement 4.2A.3c: Seek improvement of dispatch and response policies, provide resources, and implement changes that may favorably affect response times.

Policy 4.2A.4: Conduct Field Operations and emergency scene management in a safe, effective, and efficient manner.

Action Statement 4.2A.4b: Maintain a system of pre-fire surveys for selected buildings and provide critical information that is immediately available to responding personnel should an incident occur. Consider electronic technology to provide survey information “on-line” at emergency scenes.

Action Statement 4.2A.4d: Identify and adopt methods and policies which provide safety, improve communications, and enhance command and control of emergency incidents.

Action Statement 4.2A.4g: Participate in regional efforts to create utilities geo-base with on-scene access to digital mapping.

DISCUSSION

The funding of this project and its completion will provide Public Safety enhancements to the current response capabilities to allow for faster dispatch and response with the information being provided to the fire apparatus in the field. This project will also provide GPS locating capability of our apparatus for closest unit dispatch, eliminating any unnecessary delay in response time or excess fuel consumption. The hardware will also come with a Platinum 5-year

warranty which will cover all risks and ensure that the City will not have any additional equipment or repair costs associated with the MDTs for the expected life of the hardware.

The importance of these capabilities in the apparatus can not be overstated. Sunnyvale makes great use of its firefighting personnel by assigning them many tasks in addition to emergency response, keeping the apparatus in the field. Employing the AVL technology in dispatching fire based personnel will ensure the closest apparatus is dispatched based on its actual location, as opposed to its station assignment. This logically will lead to reduced response times, reduced fuel consumption and better deployment within the region.

The MDTs also function to allow for in field report writing, data collection, and records access, improving resources available during emergencies, including mapping, directions, and location of businesses. Current Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) standards require dispatchers to provide lifesaving direction to reporting parties while remaining on the phone. This can delay updated information from getting to responding personnel. The use of MDTs will allow the dispatcher to update information to response personnel, without have to break communication with the caller.

With the capability of Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs), Incident Commanders and responding Officers have a significant improvement in the ability to communicate and obtain critical fire ground/emergency information that was previously limited to dispatch centers. The MDTs will allow DPS to respond more quickly and with more detailed information, enhancing safety, accountability, confidentiality, and data collection. Additionally, the MDTs will provide a vital communications link even while apparatus are deployed out of the area during Mutual Aid and Wildland firefighting deployments.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Department of Homeland Security has awarded grant funds in the amount of \$211,871. Acceptance of the grant requires a 20% funding match from the City of \$52,967, which would be appropriated from the DPS Equipment Replacement Account No. 020900. Ongoing maintenance, support, and equipment replacement related to this purchase is estimated to be \$35,500 annually. In order to proceed with this project and not impact the General Fund, the Department of Public Safety will identify a corresponding amount of savings in their operating programs and equipment replacement schedules. These savings will be incorporated into the department's FY 2010/2011 operating budget.

Budget Modification No. 36 has been prepared to accept and appropriate \$211,871 in grant funds from the Department of Homeland Security, as well as appropriate \$52,967 in matching funds from the General Services Fund –

Public Safety Equipment Sub-fund, to a new project for the purchase of the MDTs.

**Budget Modification No. 36
Fiscal Year 2008/09**

General Fund	<u>Current</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>Revised</u>
<u>Revenues:</u>			
Assistance to Firefighter Grant	\$0	\$211,871	\$211,871
<u>Transfer In:</u>			
(New Project) – MDT Purchase	\$0	\$52,967	\$52,967
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
(New Project) MDT Purchase	\$0	\$264,838	\$264,838
General Services Fund – Public Safety Equipment Sub-fund			
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
020900 – Public Safety Equipment	\$510,035	(\$52,967)	\$457,068
<u>Transfers Out:</u>			
020900 – Public Safety Equipment	\$0	\$52,967	\$52,967

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, at the Sunnyvale Senior Center, Community Center and Department of Public Safety; and by making the agenda and report available at the Sunnyvale Public Library, the Office of the City Clerk and on the City's Web site.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative #1 – Council accept and appropriate \$211,871 in Assistance to Firefighter Grant funds, appropriate \$52,967 in matching funds, authorize the purchase of the Mobile Data Terminals, and approve Budget Modification No. 36.

Alternative #2 – Council reject \$211,871 in Assistance to Firefighter Grant funds, does not appropriate \$52,967 in matching funds, prohibit the purchase of the Mobile Data Terminals, and deny Budget Modification No. 36.

Alternative #3 - Other action as recommended by Council.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the approval of Alternative #1. The grant will provide the City of Sunnyvale the equipment necessary to more efficiently and effectively respond to calls for assistance.

Reviewed by:

Don Johnson, Director, Public Safety

Prepared by: Lieutenant Jeffrey Hunter, Administration

Reviewed by:

Mary Bradley, Director, Finance

Approved by:

Gary M. Luebbers
City Manager