



**Contra  
Costa  
County**

To: Contra Costa County Fire Protection District Board of Directors  
 From: Jeff Carman, Chief, Contra Costa County Fire Protection District  
 Date: January 17, 2017

Subject: FY 2016 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant

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**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

APPROVE and AUTHORIZE the Fire Chief, or designee, to apply for a FY 2016 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), in an amount not to exceed \$2,900,000 over a three year period.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

As indicated in the Background section, the cost share requirement for FY 2016 SAFER grant awards is significant. The Period of Performance has been extended from two to three years. No extensions beyond three years will be allowed. During that three year period, the District will be responsible for providing a 25% cost share in the first and second years and a 65% cost share in the third year. Additionally, FY 2016 awards limit position costs to the usual annual cost of a first-year firefighter at the time of the grant application. Therefore, the District will also be responsible for funding 100% of merit increments and negotiated wage increases over three years and the salary and benefits cost difference between a first-year firefighter and top step engineers and captains for six out of the nine positions.

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☒ APPROVE

☐ OTHER

☒ RECOMMENDATION OF CNTY  
ADMINISTRATOR

☐ RECOMMENDATION OF BOARD  
COMMITTEE

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Action of Board On: **01/17/2017** ☒ APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED ☐ OTHER

Clerks Notes:

**VOTE OF SUPERVISORS**

AYE: John Gioia, Director  
 Candace Andersen, Director  
 Diane Burgis, Director  
 Karen Mitchoff, Director  
 Federal D. Glover, Director

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: January 17, 2017

David Twa, County Administrator and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

Contact: Jackie Lorrekovich, Chief  
 Admin Svcs (925) 941-3312

By: June McHuen, Deputy

cc:

## BACKGROUND:

This authorizes the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (District) to apply for a fiscal year (FY) 2016 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant. If awarded the grant, the District will return to the Board with specific funding award details and a deployment plan. The Board will then have the opportunity to authorize acceptance of the grant award.

The purpose of SAFER grants is to provide funding directly to fire departments to assist them in increasing the number of firefighters to help communities meet industry minimum standards and attain 24-hour staffing to provide adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards. The District has been successful in obtaining two prior SAFER awards (FY 2010 and FY 2013).

FEMA is implementing significant changes for the FY 2016 awards. A summary of those changes follow:

- **Period of Performance:** The period of performance has been increased from two to three years. Extensions to the period of performance are not available.
- **Position Cost Limit:** SAFER grant funds may not exceed a certain percentage of the usual annual cost of a first-year firefighter in that department at the time of the grant application. There is no waiver available for this requirement.
- **Cost Share:** SAFER grant recipients are now required to contribute a Cost Share toward the actual cost of hiring firefighters under this program.
- **No Supplanting Allowed:** SAFER grant funds may only be used to hire new, additional firefighters and may not be used to supplant funds that would otherwise be available from State or local sources.
- **Minimum Budget Requirement:** At the time of application, SAFER grant applicants are required to certify that their annual budget for fire-related programs and emergency response has not been reduced below 80% of the average funding level in the three years prior to November 24, 2003.

In prior years SAFER grants did not require cost sharing and position costs were not limited. FY 2016 awards have position cost limits. The amount of Federal funding provided to a recipient for hiring a firefighter in any fiscal year may not exceed:

- in the first year of the grant, **75%** of the usual annual cost of a **first-year firefighter** in the District at the time the grant application is submitted;
- in the second year of the grant, **75%** of the usual annual cost of a **first-year firefighter** in the District at the time the grant application was submitted; and
- in the third year of the grant, **35%** of the usual annual cost of a **first-year firefighter** in the District at the time the grant application was submitted.

“Usual annual costs” includes the base salary and standard benefits package (including the average health, dental, and vision costs, FICA, life insurance, retirement/pension, etc.)

offered by the District to first-year firefighters.

This request would be for nine (9) firefighter positions. The District's intent would be to reopen a previously closed station. However, a fire company is typically staffed with a captain, an engineer, and a firefighter, at least one of which is a paramedic. If awarded, the grant would only cover a portion of salary and benefits costs to staff a fire station. The District would be responsible for funding the cost share indicated above plus the additional costs of merit increments and negotiated wage increases over three years and the costs of promoting three captain and three engineers to staff the reopened fire station.

Throughout the performance period of the grant, the District will need to maintain the total number of authorized and funded firefighter positions at the time of award plus the total number of SAFER-funded firefighter positions. The District cannot lay off firefighters during the period of performance, and vacancies that arise through attrition – such as openings created by retirements – must be filled within a reasonable time period.

CONSEQUENCE OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District will not pursue this grant opportunity.

CHILDREN'S IMPACT STATEMENT:

No impact.