



Department: Fire
Cost Center: 8502
For Agenda of: 4/2/2024
Placement: Consent
Estimated Time: N/A

FROM: Todd Tuggle, Fire Chief
Prepared By: Nicole Vert, Business Analyst

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE THE FIRE DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR REGIONAL CRASH RESPONSE AND EXTRICATION IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM THROUGH CALIFORNIA'S OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY GRANT PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATION

1. Authorize the Fire Department to apply for funding under California's Office of Traffic Safety grant program to purchase modern extrication equipment; and
2. Authorize the City Manager, or Fire Chief as their designee, to execute the grant documents and approve the budget changes necessary to appropriate the grant amount upon notification that the grant has been awarded.

POLICY CONTEXT

The recommended actions are consistent with the City of San Luis Obispo's Financial Management Manual, Section 740 - Grant Management Policy. The policy states that Council will approve all grant applications in excess of \$5,000 and delegate receipt and contract execution to the City Manager.

The work conducted under the grant is in line with the City's Major City Goal of Climate Action, Open Space, and Sustainable Transportation by proactively addressing the climate crisis through replacing diesel powered equipment with clean running electric extrication tools (e-draulic).

DISCUSSION

State, federal, and non-profit grants are occasionally offered to assist local governments with the financial impacts associated with daily operations and/or mandated programs. The Fire Department actively seeks out these opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of the Department while increasing fiscal sustainability for the city. A recent grant opportunity was identified, which is in line with these goals and addresses a current need for the city: the Regional Crash Response and Extrication Improvement Grant Program through the California Office of Traffic Safety.

Staff recommends seeking \$169,354.00 in grant funding to purchase four sets of e-draulic extrication tools for the department, allowing for each front-line apparatus to have an updated modern set.

The e-draulic equipment is more powerful in all aspects, including cutting and spreading forces. Newer vehicles are becoming increasingly more difficult to cut through as new technology is being integrated and the stronger tools can reach victims quickly. The new tools are smaller and lighter with fewer pieces than the conventional internal combustion powered hydraulic tools currently in use. The new e-draulic extrication tool allows for quicker response to crash victims, especially those that are far off the roadway, such as on Cuesta Grade, where firefighters must rappel down to victims with the equipment. The requested equipment also aligns with the City's Major City Goal of carbon neutrality by 2035 through reduction of the use of internal combustion engines (for the hydraulic power heads) in favor of the electric powered e-draulic extrication equipment.

Background

The California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) grants program is funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The OTS awards more that \$100 million annually in innovative, evidence-based education and enforcement programs and technologies designed to improve road safety. The OTS evaluates all potential programs to make sure California addresses current and future traffic safety needs.

The OTS has identified ten priority areas of concentration for grant funding, one being Emergency Medical Services program. Providing timely care to crash victims is critical to reducing deaths and the severity of injuries. The program's goals include decreasing the average extrication time, from the time of arrival at the crash site to transport. Funded activities include replacing extrication tools for fire departments to meet the above goal.

Public Engagement

This item is on the agenda for the April 2, 2024, City Council meeting and will follow all required postings and notifications. The public will have an opportunity to comment on this item at or before the meeting.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The California Environmental Quality Act does not apply to the recommended action in this report, because the action does not constitute a "Project" under CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15378. If the work associated with the grant funding requires environmental review, staff will not proceed with the project until a review has been completed.

FISCAL IMPACT

Budgeted: No
Funding Identified: Yes

Budget Year: 2023-24

Fiscal Analysis:

Funding Sources	Total Budget Available	Current Funding Request	Remaining Balance	Annual Ongoing Cost
General Fund	\$	\$ 169,354.00	\$	\$0
State				
Federal				
Fees				
Other:				
Total	\$	\$169,354.00	\$	\$0

The Office of Traffic Safety grant program does not require a match. The department currently owns extrication tools that range in age from 13 to 20 years old and already require ongoing maintenance that is budgeted. The replacement tools will not increase the departments ongoing budget.

ALTERNATIVES

The Council could decide not to pursue the grant funding. This is not recommended as fire service grant opportunities are limited and the grant funds would only serve to enhance the City's safety and resilience while increasing fiscal sustainability for the City.