

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL **Date:** February 3, 2003
THROUGH: PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
FROM: CITY MANAGER
SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE PARTICIPATION IN THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT AGENCY'S ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS
GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACCEPTING
FUNDS FOR A FIREFIGHTER WELLNESS/FITNESS PROGRAM.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that City Council authorize the City Manager to accept grant funds through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program for the purpose of obtaining financing for a Fire Department Wellness Program.

BACKGROUND

Since its 2001 appropriation, Congress has given FEMA the authority to carry out an initiative to provide assistance to firefighters and fire departments. This assistance is awarded directly to local fire departments on a competitive basis. The evaluation of the applications is based upon departments' demonstrated financial need in the specified area and the benefit to be derived from the grant funds. There are four programmatic areas of eligibility for funds: Fire Operations and Firefighter Safety, Fire Prevention, Emergency Medical Services, and Firefighting Vehicles Acquisition. Proposals are evaluated on clarity of the proposed project, financial need in the area of the proposal and benefits that would result if awarded the grant.

FEMA has stated in its grant guidelines that they believe great benefit is derived from comprehensive wellness programs for firefighters that include entry-level physical examinations, immunizations, annual physicals, health screens and formal fitness and injury prevention programs. Pasadena is presently providing each of the stated high priority opportunities except a formal fitness and injury prevention program. The purpose of the grant is to complete the missing priority elements of a formal fitness and

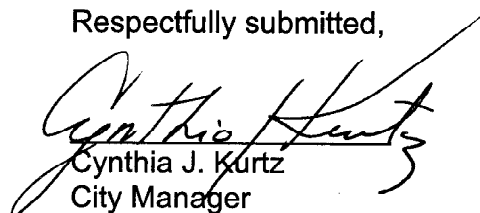
injury prevention program, thereby expanding the existing program to better meet the recommendations identified by FEMA and to address the Fire Department's goal to enhance firefighter safety, reduce injuries and reduce worker's compensation costs.

The Memorandum of Understanding between the City and the Firefighters Association set forth a condition to establish a Departmental wellness program. The Department formed a Wellness/Fitness Committee that embraced a mission to provide access and opportunity for all personnel to resources that will develop and maintain firefighter physical abilities, prevent firefighter related injuries and facilitate rehabilitation from those injuries that do occur. The Committee identified target areas related to firefighter injuries that are not currently being addressed. Specifically, these programs do not adequately address aerobic fitness, strength conditioning, and flexibility. These three target areas have a significant influence on the occurrence of firefighter related injuries. Though it was felt the chance to receive a grant was not optimal, the Department applied and has been notified of the pending award. The Grant would assist in establishing the financial resources to provide instruction, training and apparatus necessary to address the aerobic, strength and flexibility needs that assist in preventing injuries and rehabilitating from them.

FISCAL IMPACT

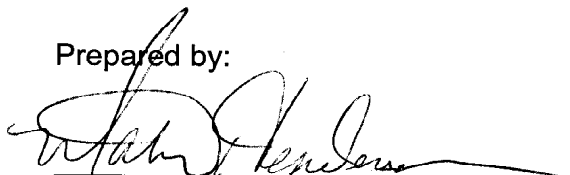
A primary objective of this grant is to prevent injuries and subsequently reduce worker's compensation claims. It's anticipated that a comprehensive wellness program will lead to future claim and cost reduction for the City similar to results reported in industry studies identified during grant research. Staff discovered studies, by some of the largest companies in the United States, typically reported savings of 100% to 400% on money invested in wellness programs. The Fire Department will use Account Number 366100 to absorb a matching fund cost in the amount of \$45,314. The amount the City would receive under the grant is \$105,734.

Respectfully submitted,



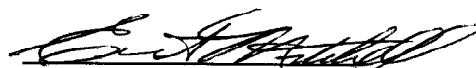
Cynthia J. Kurtz
City Manager

Prepared by:



Mattie Henderson
Management Analyst

Approved by:



Ernie Mitchell
Fire Chief