

## City of Alexandria, Virginia

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## MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 18, 2003

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (FEMA) FOR THE ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT PROGRAM

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**ISSUE:** City Council consideration of a grant application, in the amount of \$463,944, to the Department of Homeland Security (FEMA) for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (Fire Act Grant Program).

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council:

- (1) Approve the submission of an electronic grant application for \$463,944 to the Department of Homeland Security (FEMA); and
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to submit this application for Federal assistance.

**DISCUSSION:** The Fire Act Grant Program, administered by the Department of Homeland Security (FEMA) through the United States Fire Administration, will provide \$750 million this year in direct assistance to support the nation's firefighters and the services they deliver. To improve security of the homeland, all of America's 32,000 paid, volunteer, and part-paid departments are eligible for this grant, which funds categories for fire operations and firefighter safety, fire prevention, emergency medical services, and firefighting vehicle acquisition. These grants will be awarded on a competitive basis to fire departments that can demonstrate financial need for assistance and prove these grant monies will benefit firefighters or the public.

The Fire Department proposes that the City apply for this grant to modify all of the City's eight fire stations with hardwired smoke detectors and to retrofit six fire stations with suppression sprinkler systems. Two stations, Fire Station 201 (Prince Street) and Fire Station 204 (Powhatan Street), have been renovated in recent years and are fully protected with fire sprinkler suppression systems. Alexandria's fire stations have an average age of 54 years, and the design of these facilities did not require sprinkler systems at the time of construction. The Fire Department believes, in light of current security concerns, that a fire notification and suppression system is imperative for the safety of its personnel and the City's facilities.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The total cost to modify the City's fire stations is \$463,944. The Fire Act Grant would cover 70% of the cost, or \$324,761, while the City would provide the 30% applicant share, or \$139,183. The 30% applicant share is already budgeted in the C.I.P. for the upcoming budget year.

The Fire Department has submitted this grant application to the United States Fire Administration in order to meet the deadline, with the understanding the subsequent City Council authorization would be required to accept this grant award.

**ATTACHMENT:** None. The grant application, which was submitted electronically by the Fire Department to FEMA, may be reviewed in the Office of Management and Budget, Room 3600, City Hall, during normal business hours.

**STAFF:**

Gary Mesaris, Fire Chief

Virginia Lester, Fiscal Officer, Alexandria Fire Department

Christopher Leischner, Battalion Chief, Alexandria Fire Department