



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number: 15-6084

Agenda Item Number: 16.

Agenda Date: 12/17/2015

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Fire

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Charles N. Hood

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City-Wide

SUBJECT:

Community Wildfire Protection Program

SUMMARY:

A. An Ordinance ratifying the submission of a grant application in an amount up to \$10,000.00 to the Texas Forest Service for funds to be used in the development of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan; and authorizing the acceptance of the funds, upon award.

B. A Resolution supporting the development of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

C. An Ordinance authorizing an interlocal agreement with the Texas Forest Service to provide for mutual aid assistance during prescribed fire, wildfire, and other all-risk incidents.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Wildfire threats are increasing in urban areas, often repeatedly, putting more homes, lives, infrastructure, and other resources at risk. More than 15,000 wildfires burned in the continental United States from 2000 to 2014. During these years, 127 urban areas (cities with more than 75,000 residents) were threatened by major wildfires (fires greater than 5 square miles in area) that burned within 10 miles of the city limits. San Antonio is particularly vulnerable to wildfire because of its extensive undeveloped land within city boundaries and frequent drought conditions.

Cities with an approved Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and an interlocal agreement with Texas

Forest Service (TFS) have access to grant funding and state resources to assist in protecting these communities from the danger of Wildfires. Upon approval of this ordinance, TFS will coordinate with San Antonio Office of Emergency Management (SAOEM) to develop a list of fuel reduction projects to protect city parks and neighborhoods throughout the City.

Wildfires increasingly are expensive and dangerous, burning homes, and consuming agency budgets. Attempts to mitigate wildfire risk, such as voluntary landowner education and fuels reduction, while important, alone are insufficient for the magnitude of the growing wildfire danger, which is exacerbated by a warming climate and continued home building. This interlocal agreement will help offset the City's cost in preparing for and responding to a wildfire. In addition, area firefighters will have the opportunity to train with TFS while working on a fuel reduction project.

ISSUE:

The City of San Antonio does not have a mutual aid agreement with TFS for wildfire support and therefore has limited or no access to state grant funding or resources to assist with wildfire prevention, training, response, or recovery. The Special Category Grant Opportunity Submission Authorization Request was required and fully executed because of the short deadline of November 6, 2015.

ALTERNATIVES:

The alternative is to increase the number of City firefighters who are trained to fight wildfires.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact to the General Fund. The award of \$10,000 is to develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan and does not require a cash or in-kind match from the City.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of these ordinances.