



City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 24-4067, **Agenda Item #:** 23.

3/21/2024

Posting Language

Approve an ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Austin Fire Department Operating Budget Special Revenue Fund (Ordinance No. 20230816-008) to accept and appropriate \$232,500 in U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service grant funds from the Texas A&M Forest Service to update the Austin-Travis County Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Lead Department

Austin Fire Department

Fiscal Note

\$232,500 is available to the Austin Fire Department as a subrecipient of grant awarded to the Texas A&M Forest Service by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service. No local match is required from the City as any matching funds will be paid by the Texas A&M Forest Service. A fiscal note is attached.

Prior Council Action:

November 2, 2023 - Council approved Ordinance No. 20231102-006 amending the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 General Fund Operating Budget (Ordinance No. 20230816-008) to, among other actions, increase appropriations to the Austin Fire Department Operating Budget to provide additional funds to cover sworn personnel expenditures related to wages and benefits on consent on a 10-0 vote.

For More Information:

Carrie Stewart, Division Fire Chief, 512-974-0181;
Justice Jones, Wildfire Mitigation Officer, 512-974-0199.

Additional Backup Information:

Funding is available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service grant program in the amount of \$232,500 as part of the Southern Area State Fire Capacity Hazard Mitigation Grant project. The Texas A&M Forest Service is the grant recipient, and the Austin Fire Department is a sub-recipient of the grant award. The purpose of this award is to update the current Austin/Travis County community wildfire protection plan (CWPP). The matching funds will be paid by the Texas A&M Forest Service. The grant period is from September 2023 to September 2026.

The project area is Travis County and the City, including the City's area in Caldwell, Hays, and Williamson Counties. The purpose of the updated Austin/Travis County CWPP is to provide the information needed to reduce risks, loss of life, and loss of property from wildfire. The plan will address community needs for wildfire prevention, suppression, mitigation, and recovery in the project area.

Austin Fire Department will use the funding to hire a consultant under a consulting contract(vendor). The consultant shall be required to conduct a county-wide risk assessment, identify appropriate strategies and practices for mitigating wildfire in Central Texas ecosystems, and prepare a CWPP in consultation with the Austin/Travis County Wildfire Coalition. The CWPP shall provide data for neighborhoods, cities, emergency services districts, and Travis County to prepare local community wildfire protection plans in addition to the overall plan. The Austin Fire Department will engage the services of a program manager to work directly with

the vendor and coordinate with Austin Wildfire Coalition.

The General Fund will not be required to contribute additional funds beyond those currently budgeted to this grant. When the grant funds expire, the department's need for continuing funding will be evaluated and may be denied.