



# City of Woodland

## REPORT TO MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR  
AND CITY COUNCIL

DATE: July 7, 2009

SUBJECT: Authorization to Pursue American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Grant Funds through the Assistance to Firefighters Fire Station Construction Grant Application (FSC) process

### **Report in Brief**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) was signed into law by President Obama on February 17, 2009. Among its provisions, ARRA provided the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) \$210 million to fund the construction and modification of fire stations. The program will be administered through the Assistance to Firefighters Program Office under the Assistance to Firefighters Fire Station Construction Grant (FSC) program. Given the need to construct a fire station in the Spring Lake Specific Plan area, staff believes this program represents an opportunity to expedite the delivery of the facility and relieve the City of a significant financial burden.

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt Resolution No. \_\_\_\_ authorizing the submittal of an application for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Grant funds through the Assistance to Firefighters Fire Station Construction Grant (FSC) program in the amount of \$2,400,283 and authorize the City Manager to execute all necessary forms on behalf of the City of Woodland.

### **Background**

The Assistance to Firefighters Fire Station Construction Grant (FSC) program will provide financial assistance directly to fire departments on a competitive basis to build new or modify existing fire stations. The purpose of this program is to enhance fire department's response capabilities and to enhance their ability to protect the community they serve from fire and fire-related hazards. The application period for FSC funds opened on June 11 and will close July 10, 2009.

The purpose of the FSC program is to provide economic stimulus in the form of jobs and increase the safety of the firefighters and the community they serve. As such, all program priorities focus on the timeliness of the implementation of the construction project, the effect the new facility will have on the health and safety of the firefighters as well as the benefit the new facility will have on the protection of the community. Additional consideration will be given to communities with higher joblessness rates. Yolo County has had an increase of 4.2% over the last year from May 2008 6.3%

to May 2009 to 10.5% based on the California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, Current Economic Statistics Group. Finally, the competitiveness of the application is improved by the local government's ability to contribute financially to a portion or percentage of the project.

DHS will use peer review panelists to evaluate each application on a competitive, cost-benefit basis, awarding up to \$5 million per project. DHS anticipates receiving between 5,000 and 10,000 applications for up to \$30.0 billion in requests. From these numbers they also anticipate only awarding approximately 100 grants with the \$210 million in available funding.

DHS will commence the panel review process within 60 days of the application deadline, and award decisions will be completed on or before September 30, 2010. The period of performance for FSC Grants is 36 months; therefore, the project would need to be completed by September 2013.

In order to improve the community fire protection, the next fire station scheduled (CIP 2013/14) and needed to be built for the City of Woodland is the Spring Lake Fire Station located at the corner of Heritage Parkway and Parkland Avenue. Seeking outside funding to accelerate the construction of this station is the reason for the recommended action.

### **Discussion**

On April 6, 2004 the Woodland City Council received and accepted a report prepared by Citygate Associates, LLC, recommending that the City "plan the opening of the Spring Lake fire station upon reaching the trigger point of 1,010 occupied single family dwelling units" in that development. While the pace of the development has not kept up with the expectations set in 2004, there are 750 to 800 residential units completed and occupied to date representing a customer-base that is outside of the Fire Department's "response time" capability as defined in the Fire Service Master Plan and General Plan. The nearest existing fire station to serve this area is Fire Station 3 located on Spring Lake Court off of Pioneer Avenue. Units responding to the southern-most areas of the Spring Lake development from Fire Station 3 must take I-5 eastbound to CR102, and then travel south to the appropriate access street into the development creating some "response times" between 9-10 minutes.

To the fire service, "response time" is a critical performance measure. Fire stations are strategically located in communities based on "response times" to medical emergencies (67-70% of WFD's call volume) because irreversible brain death can occur in 6-8 minutes following cardiac arrest, and to structure fires where synthetic furnishings and materials burn faster today than ever before and fires grow exponentially with each passing minute. According to the City General Plan, adopted December 17, 2002, the City shall establish and maintain a performance standard of four (4) minutes "response time" for the first arriving unit capable of providing service (i.e., medical emergency) and eight (8) minutes for arrival of the complete first alarm assignment (i.e., structure fire). While it is true that all new residential construction in Woodland is required to be protected by an automatic sprinkler system, these systems are not intended to completely extinguish the fire but rather to stop the spread of the fire so that the occupants have time to escape. Rapid response from the fire

department is still required to completely extinguish the fire, ensure evacuation, and stop further damage from the smoke and water.

In the past four years the calls for service to the Spring Lake development have steadily increased and the “response times” from Fire Station 3 have averaged about 8 minutes each year:

- 2005 - 102 calls for service with an average “response time” of 8:03
- 2006 – 109 calls for service with an average “response time” of 8:20
- 2007 - 169 calls for service with an average “response time” of 8:48
- 2008 - 145 calls for service with an average “response time” of 7:12

“Response time” only refers to the actual time it takes for a fire engine to drive to the scene. In addition to fire engine response time, an additional 3 minutes (3:00) must be added for the processing of the call by the call center, the Fire Department receiving the “dispatch” and the firefighters putting on appropriate safety gear and beginning their response. Therefore, the actual time that an engine may respond to an emergency call within Spring Lake could range as high as nearly 12 minutes after a citizen dials 911.

The 2004 Citygate Associates, LLC recommendation accepted by City Council also called for the purchase and staffing of a 5<sup>th</sup> engine company when Fire Station 5 is built and occupied. Staff agrees that this is ideal, and should continue to be pursued; however, that this is not financially feasible at this time. Fire Station 5, the designation in the Fire Service Master Plan for Spring Lake, will be staffed and equipped with existing fire personnel and fire apparatus by moving one of the two engine companies presently assigned to Fire Station 3.

The most recent construction costs for this project as shown in the 2013/14 CIP is \$3,000,354 which does not include the purchase price of the land, and the costs for a security system, furniture, moving costs, design costs, testing and inspections which are all coincidentally items “not eligible” for funding by this program. A separate project within the Spring Lake Infrastructure Fees is available to fund the cost of the land purchase which is currently in progress. There is no cost-share requirement for this grant, however, the willingness or ability of a community to contribute to a portion or percentage of the eligible costs of the project is a desirable attribute. A community contribution demonstrates commitment, enhances the award and provides a greater cost-benefit to the project. As such, applicants who contribute toward the project receive higher consideration than applicants who rely entirely on the grant funding for the project. The higher the percentage of contribution, the higher the consideration the grantee receives for funding. Because the recently approved 10-year CIP includes the entire project amount as described above, staff recommends that the City contribution be 20% or \$600,071. If the grant is successful, the City will be able to use part of the remaining amount to complete the furnishings and equipment for the fire station.

Staff also believes that the timing of the project and grant requirements favorably match. With the grant award projected in September 2010 and the performance period at 36 months, construction would be close to the time already scheduled in the CIP. However, it is possible that projects may need to be rescheduled based on CIP cash flow issues. Staff will need to reevaluate this issue should the grant application be favorably received by DHS.

In addition to the Spring Lake development, the Fire Department also provides contract fire protection to the Spring Lake Fire Protection District which is that area outside of the City limits within the boundaries of Cache Creek to the north, CR-29 to the south, CR-98 to the west, and CR-104 to the east. Response times to all of these areas are also high; however, the highest concern is “response times” to the Spring Lake development due to the density of housing, demand for services and the projected future development there. Staff believes the City should pursue outside funding in order to begin the construction of the Spring Lake Fire Station as soon as possible and favorably impact the 10-year CIP.

**Fiscal Impact**

If the grant is successful, the project cost to the City based on the 10-year CIP will be \$600,071, thereby relieving the program of \$2,400,283. The City’s share becomes a voluntary contribution to “eligible” costs of the project. In addition, the City will also be responsible to fund project costs not eligible for grant funding and not already expended for this project such as permits, security system, furniture, moving costs, landscaping costs, testing and inspections. Annual operating expenses of this station are estimated at \$35,000 with existing personnel and fire apparatus. The operating costs are not currently funded within the 10-year Financial Plan.

If the City is awarded funding from this program, most of the award amount will represent the capital fund savings to the CIP.

**Public Contact**

Posting of the City Council agenda.

**Alternative Courses of Action**

1. Adopt Resolution No. \_\_\_\_ authorizing the submittal of an application for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Grant funds through the Assistance to Firefighters Fire Station Construction Grant (FSC) program in the amount of \$2,400,283 and authorize the City Manager to execute all necessary forms on behalf of the City of Woodland.
2. Cease further consideration of providing the grant application as described herein.

**Recommendation for Action**

Staff recommends that the City Council approve Alternative No. 1.

Prepared by: Shannon Collins  
Management Analyst

Reviewed by: Tod Reddish  
Fire Chief

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Mark G. Deven  
City Manager

CITY OF WOODLAND

RESOLUTION \_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS, the City of Woodland has the authority to construct, operate, and maintain a fire station in the Spring Lake development area; and

WHEREAS, the City of Woodland desires to enhance the fire protection to the residents in the Spring Lake development and the City of Woodland

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Woodland that, pursuant and subject to all of the terms and provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act's (ARRA) Assistance to Firefighters Fire Station Construction Grant (FSC) program and amendments thereto, application be made to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighters Program Office for funding; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager of said City of Woodland is hereby authorized and directed to cause the necessary data to be prepared and application to be signed and filed with the Assistance to Firefighters Program Office for an Assistance to Firefighters Fire Station Construction Grant (FSC).

Passed and adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Woodland in regard to improving fire protection in the City on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2009, by the following vote:

Ayes:  
Noes:  
Abstain:  
Absent:

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mark G. Deven, City Manager  
City of Woodland

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Susan L. Vannucci, Director of  
Administrative Services/City Clerk  
City of Woodland