



**DATE:** December 18, 2018

**TO:** Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Fire Chief

**SUBJECT:** Authorization for the City Manager to Negotiate and Execute an Agreement with the City of Oakland Fire Department to Formalize Participation in the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council approves the attached resolution authorizing the City Manager to negotiate and execute an agreement with the City of Oakland Fire Department to formalize participation in the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System.

### **SUMMARY**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) established the National Urban Search and Rescue Response (USAR) System in 1989. FEMA has certified 28 USAR taskforces in the nation with eight in California. California Task Force 4 (CA-TF4) is sponsored by the City of Oakland Fire Department. The City of Hayward Fire Department has been providing personnel to participate as part of the CA-TF4 training roster since 2015. The purpose of this staff report is to formalize Hayward's participation in CA-TF4 through a Memorandum of Agreement with the City of Oakland Fire Department. Hayward benefits from being a participating agency because its firefighters receive additional technical training at no cost to the City. In addition, the Hayward community benefits by having a FEMA-supported USAR taskforce nearby.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) established the National Urban Search and Rescue Response (USAR) System in 1989. The USAR System is a framework for organizing federal, state and local partners to respond as integrated federal disaster response taskforces. FEMA can deploy the taskforces to assist state and local governments in rescuing survivors of structural collapse incidents or to assist in other search and rescue missions. FEMA provides funding to each taskforce, so it can acquire necessary tools, equipment, skills and techniques.

Each taskforce consists of two 31-person teams, four canines, and a comprehensive equipment cache. Taskforce members work in four areas of specialization: (1) search - to find victims trapped after a disaster; (2) rescue - which includes safely extricating victims out of collapsed structures; (3) technical - made up of structural specialists who make rescue operations safe for the rescue personnel; and (4) medical - which cares for the victims before and after a rescue. A FEMA fact sheet on the National USAR System is included with the report as Attachment IV.

FEMA has certified 28 Urban Search and Rescue taskforces in the nation with eight in California. FEMA certified taskforces have additional training and must be able to deploy within six hours and sustain themselves for 72 hours. To receive the FEMA certification, the team must include 62 trained individuals (two people for each of the 31 positions) and be approved by a USAR oversight board that includes leaders in the field and FEMA officials.

California Task Force 4 (CA-TF4) is sponsored by the City of Oakland Fire Department and consists of participating agencies from the following jurisdictions: Alameda, Alameda County, Berkeley, Camp Parks, Contra Costa County, Fremont, Hayward, Livermore-Pleasanton, Marin County, Monterey County, Novato, Oakland, San Ramon Valley, Santa Rosa, Salinas, Seaside and Moraga-Orinda.

In the past, CA-TF4 has been deployed to many major domestic and international incidents, including: Northridge earthquake in Los Angeles in 1994; Oklahoma City bombing in 1995; earthquakes in Turkey and Greece in 1999; 9/11 bombings in 2001; and Hurricane Katrina in 2005. In addition, taskforce members are occasionally requested to deploy specific experts.

## **DISCUSSION**

The City of Hayward Fire Department has been providing personnel to participate as part of the CA-TF4 training roster since 2015. The first deployment with Hayward personnel was to Hurricane Harvey in 2017. Hayward benefits from being a participating agency because its firefighters receive additional technical training at no cost to the City. In addition, the Hayward community benefits by having a FEMA-supported USAR taskforce nearby.

The purpose of this staff report is to seek Council approval to formalize Hayward's participation in CA-TF4 by executing a Memorandum of Agreement with the City of Oakland Fire Department. The proposed MOA (Attachment III) documents the mutual understanding between the City of Oakland Fire Department, as a Sponsoring Agency, and the City of Hayward Fire Department, as a Participating Agency. According to the Agreement, the Sponsoring Agency is responsible for recruiting and organizing the Task Force consisting of individuals occupying certain specified positions plus additional support personnel. The Participating Agency, in turn, agrees to provide personnel to serve in certain designated positions on the Task Force as determined by the Sponsoring Agency

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This agreement is cost-neutral. Staff does not anticipate any impact to the City's General Fund. FEMA provides funding to the Sponsoring Agency (the City of Oakland Fire Department) for the operational activities of the Task Force. The Sponsoring Agency then reimburses each Participating Agency for any costs it incurs in providing the services and personnel for the Task Force.

## **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**

This agenda item is a routine operational item and does not directly relate to one of the Council's Strategic Initiatives.

*Prepared by:* Mary Thomas, Management Analyst

*Recommended by:* Garrett Contreras, Fire Chief

Approved by:



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Kelly McAdoo, City Manager