



Office of the City Manager

ACTION CALENDAR
April 2, 2013

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From:  Christine Daniel, City Manager
Submitted by: Gil Dong, Interim Fire Chief
Subject: FY 2014 and FY 2015 Measure GG Budget

RECOMMENDATION

Provide direction on which new positions and program elements to include in the FY 2014 and FY 2015 Measure GG budget.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Estimated costs range from \$446,405 - \$645,405 per year, depending on the City Council's direction. The funding source would be Measure GG.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Due to vacancies and unplanned extended leaves of fire suppression and EMS personnel, the Fire Department experienced an increase of backfill hours in FY 2012 and is now experiencing a similar situation in FY 2013. These hours are filled on an overtime basis and rely on both General Fund and Measure GG funds.

In FY 2012, the department operated with the equivalent of 22% less personnel and required 43,000 of backfill hours to keep fire stations fully staffed. During this period there were 12 vacancies and 13 extended leaves. Staff had anticipated a reduction in backfill hours with the graduation of eleven recruits in September 2012. However, vacancies resulting from retirements, off-duty injuries and illnesses, work related injuries, military leaves, and parental leaves has caused the effective vacancy rate in FY 2013 to remain high at 19%.

As a consequence, the expenditure of funds to cover overtime in FY 2013 is greater than originally projected. The adopted budget included a total of \$2,000,000 for overtime (combined General Fund and Measure GG funding); the adjusted budget for overtime costs in FY 2013 is now \$2,600,000 (combined General Fund and Measure GG funding). At the conclusion of FY 2013, Measure GG is projected to have a total fund balance of \$987,215 and an unallocated fund balance of \$670,015 after the set aside of funds for radio and FRALS equipment replacement.

On February 27, 2013, the DFSC received updated information about Measure GG expenditures. The DFSC then passed the following motion making recommendations for the FY 2014-2015 Measure GG budget:

Given a projection of possible insufficiency of funds to immediately establish all of the programs recommended by the DFSC, the Commission recommends that priority be given to those programs in the following order:

- 1 Full-time Health Services Program Specialist
- 2 Full-time Emergency Services Coordinator
- 3 Establish Fund Balance of \$150,000 a year for 2 years
- 4 Disaster Readiness Classes
- 5 Community Outreach Efforts
- 6 Disaster Cache Allocation Increase
- 7 Roll-Off Dumpster Program
- 8 Automatic Gas Shutoff Valve Program

: M. Mitchell

Second: R. Sharpe

Vote: (6 Ayes, 0 Noes, 2 Absent: Gage, Henry, 0 Abstain, 1 Vacancy)

Based on the Commission’s action, staff projected the funding available from the Measure GG parcel tax and evaluated three options for the Council to consider regarding funding additional staffing and programs. The costs of all the elements considered are set forth in the table below; the three options are summarized briefly and the program elements are then described in further detail thereafter.

Estimated Implementation Costs of all Measures

	FY14	FY15
1. Health Services Program Specialist	\$141,189	\$141,189
2. Emergency Services Coordinator	\$155,216	\$155,216
3. Establish Reserve Fund	\$150,000	\$150,000
4. Disaster Readiness Class	\$70,000	\$70,000
5. Community Outreach Efforts	\$64,000	\$64,000
6. Disaster Cache Increase	\$15,000	\$15,000
7. Roll-Off Dumpster Program	\$25,000	\$25,000
8. Automatic Gas Shutoff Valve	\$25,000	\$25,000

Option One – Fund All Eight Items

Funding for all items, 1-8, identified by the Commission is not sustainable and causes the Measure GG fund to go into deficit in FY 2014. The cost to add two new positions and implement all of the additional disaster preparedness elements would total \$645,405 per year.

Option Two – Fund Items 1-3

Option two provides funding for the top three items of the DFSC's recommended priority list (2 full time staff positions and a reserve fund). Funding these three items would not provide any program funding for additional community outreach, disaster preparedness classes, or additional disaster cache equipment, but is fiscally sustainable. The cost to fund the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission's (DFSC) first 3 items is \$446,405 per year.

Option Three – Fund Items 2-6

Option three provides funding for an Emergency Services Coordinator, establishes a reserve fund, adds disaster readiness classes, implements a community engagement program, and increases funding for disaster cache equipment. In order to carry out the expanded program element responsibilities, the Emergency Services Coordinator recruitment would need to require the candidate to have a community organizing background. This option is also fiscally sustainable. The cost to fund items 2- 6 from the Commission's recommendations is \$454,216 per year.

Analysis of Program Elements

Additional Staff: Public Health Division

The Disaster and Fire Safety Commission recommends that Measure GG be used to fund one full-time equivalent (FTE) position in the Public Health Division. The DFSC recommends this position be dedicated solely to disaster preparedness in vulnerable and underserved populations of the City, with emphasis on South and West Berkeley.

Staff consulted with the Human Resources and Health, Housing and Community Services Departments regarding the Commission's recommendation. Based on the scope of duties and necessary supervisory capacity for the position, such a position should be classified as a Health Services Program Specialist, at a cost of \$141,189 per year, including benefits.

This position would be expected to leverage existing Public Health networks and community groups, in order to expand on the Fire Department's established networks, to increase disaster preparedness. This position's primary focus would include engaging

and training community leaders whose organizations and networks have existing relationships with the targeted populations. This position would also be responsible for developing and delivering disaster readiness information and education tailored to these populations, in collaboration with the community groups. This position could be funded under Measure GG and represents the highest priority of the DFSC.

Additional Staff: Office of Emergency Services

The Disaster and Fire Safety Commission recommends that Measure GG be used to fund one FTE position in the Office of Emergency Services (OES). The DFSC recommends this position focus on developing and implementing workable options to increase disaster preparedness for the target populations.

Staff consulted with the Human Resources Department regarding the Commission's request. A position could be established within the Office of Emergency Services to manage existing and develop additional community readiness programs, and provide additional staffing for the CERT program. While these programs are not exclusively focused on vulnerable and underserved populations, all programs managed by this position could benefit these groups. There is a need for additional OES staff to update City response plans and provide Emergency Operations Center (EOC) training. Based on the scope of duties for the position, such a position should be classified as an Emergency Services Coordinator, at an estimated cost of \$155,216 per year, including benefits.

The recruitment and selection for an Emergency Services Coordinator would be based on experience with community organizing and coalition building.

Maintain and Build a Reserve Fund

Council recommended that a reserve fund of \$300,000 be established over a period of 24 months for unplanned Measure GG expenditures or events. Setting aside \$150,000 in reserve in both FY 2014 and FY 2015 would create the recommended reserve fund.

The recommended reserve amount represents an approximately eight percent (8%) reserve, which is consistent with the Council's policy for the General Fund.

Disaster Readiness Classes

The Disaster and Fire Safety Commission recommended that a specific amount of funding be set aside from Measure GG to cover the costs of emergency preparedness classes, both those already in existence and those associated with new programs.

Expenditures supporting future disaster readiness classes would include classroom rentals, instructor costs, class materials, and advertisement. Existing materials will need to be updated and reproduced as they are distributed. New programs will require the Fire Department to produce additional educational materials. An allocation of \$70,000

per year could cover disaster readiness class expenditures associated with the Community Emergency Response Team program, additional community readiness programs, City disaster drills or disaster training for city employees.

It is the DFSC's recommendation that \$70,000 be allocated annually towards disaster readiness training, classes, CERT materials, and citywide disaster drills. With additional staff to do outreach and community engagement, there will be an increase in demand for disaster readiness training, classroom rentals, instructor costs, and need for additional education and marketing materials.

Community Outreach Efforts

Council recommended that staff report back on the feasibility and cost to further engage community members in disaster readiness education and activities.

Such a program would be managed by the Health Services Program Specialist position described above. If the Health Services Program Specialist is not considered, an alternative is to hire an Emergency Services Coordinator with community organizing experience. This approach could potentially utilize a framework to provide participants with experiences and educational opportunities that promote both disaster readiness and community organizing skills. The position could ensure that this program interfaces with community groups, who have established relationships and trust with vulnerable and underserved populations, to deliver disaster readiness information and education. Staff estimates that, in addition to the personnel costs, approximately \$64,000 will be necessary on a recurring basis to implement this program.

Disaster Cache Equipment

A \$15,000 increase in funding for the disaster equipment caches and distribution would bring program expenditures to \$50,000 per year, and would provide an additional four (4) caches for distribution each fiscal year. This \$15,000 funding allocation increase would be recurring in future fiscal years. The current funding provides eight (8) disaster caches per year. The Disaster Cache program was started as an incentive based program to encourage neighborhood groups and community organizations to increase disaster preparedness.

Funding for this program as a continued incentive for neighborhood and community groups would enable these groups continue to engage in disaster preparedness activities.

Roll-Off Dumpster "Debris Box" Program

Council recommended that staff report back on the feasibility of Fire Department reinstatement of the "Debris Box" program, originally run by the Police Department, assuming a \$25,000 allocation. To be a permissible expenditure under Measure GG, this program would incentivize training by limiting free debris boxes to neighborhoods that come together and receive training from a City representative.

Staff consulted with the Police Department regarding how the Debris Box program operated, and with the Forestry Division regarding costs associated with roll-off dumpsters. If managed by the proposed Emergency Services Coordinator, the Fire Department could establish a program similar to the former Police Department model, but with an emphasis on disaster readiness. With a \$25,000 investment, the program could provide up to 38 roll-off dumpsters to neighborhoods each year. Costs for each dumpster are \$644, calculated as follows:

- 12 Yard Roll-Off dumpster: \$473
- Permit: \$153
- Flasher (required if the dumpster is on the street): \$18

If this program is established within the Fire Department, staff would use criteria similar to those used for disaster caches to identify neighborhoods that have earned the debris box reward, namely, attendance at trainings and other documented steps toward community readiness. The Roll-Off Dumpster program could provide an incentive for neighborhoods that are on the path to cache eligibility, but are not yet fully qualified.

Automatic Gas Shutoff Valve Program

Council recommended that staff report back on the feasibility of establishing a program to provide free automatic gas shutoff valves, including subsidized permit fee waivers for low-income homeowners. Council recommended that \$25,000 be allocated for this program. To be a permissible expenditure under Measure GG, eligibility for free automatic gas shutoff valves and fee waivers would be conditioned on participants attending disaster readiness training.

Staff consulted with the Planning Department's Permit Services Center Manager and Building Official regarding the program concept. An automatic gas shutoff valve program would address fires, caused by natural gas leak, due to earthquake damage. Because most homes have several potential exits for escape from a fire, the primary benefit of such a program would be property protection rather than life safety. Earthquake actuated valves automatically shut off gas when they sense shaking in a building that is above the building's design level. Valves can actuate even if damage and hazards do not exist, and aftershocks can cause the device to actuate after service has been restored.

According to the California Seismic Safety Commission, valves cost between \$100 and \$300. The proposed Emergency Services Coordinator position could lead associated trainings. The disaster readiness class allocation described above could cover training materials and other costs. Staff estimates that a \$25,000 program investment could provide 61 valves to community members (conservative estimate) or 181 (maximally).

Valves must be installed by a licensed professional, and require a City plumbing permit. Installation fees alone can cost \$300 - \$600, depending on required plumbing modifications and to attach the valve to the building. City permit fees range from \$50 per residence for group installations (two or more neighboring residences coordinate

permits and inspections), to \$127 per residence for individual installation. Even if Council authorizes waiver of permit fees for low-income residents (estimated at 20 percent of participants for the program investment estimates above), those homeowners will still be responsible for installation fees absent another funding source for those costs.

BACKGROUND

In November 2008, Measure GG was passed to enhance emergency response and preparedness by eliminating rotating fire station closures; providing advanced life support on every fire company and a training officer for emergency medical services; hiring staff to provide CERT training and other preparedness efforts; funding neighborhood emergency equipment caches; acquiring and maintaining equipment to enhance emergency preparedness, including equipment necessary to allow compatible radio communications throughout the City and with outside public safety agencies, and reserving tax proceeds as necessary to fund such acquisition

The DFSC makes recommendations to the City Manager and Council regarding how Measure GG proceeds should be spent. The Fire Department provides budget presentations to the DFSC on a semi-annual basis in September and February to keep the Commission informed of the Measure GG expenditures. On September 11, 2012 and October 2, 2012, the DFSC made a recommendation to Council for funding additional disaster preparedness programs.

Council gave direction on October 2, 2012 regarding additional expenditures for Measure GG, and instructed staff to report back in January 2013. A report was submitted for the January 22, 2013 Council meeting, but was subsequently removed from the Agenda by the City Manager in order to allow for a more updated analysis of overtime costs in the current fiscal year. That analysis was provided to the DFSC at their February 27, 2013 meeting, as described above.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Funding for all eight (8) items recommended by the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission is not sustainable. Consideration for adding additional disaster preparedness programs requires additional staff to support. If the Council desires to implement additional disaster preparedness programs with Measure GG funding, then direction is required to include those in the FY 2014 and FY 2015 Measure GG budget.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

The Council could direct that no funding for any new programs or positions be included in the FY 2014 and FY 2015 Budgets.

CONTACT PERSONS

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