



**CITY OF SALINAS
COUNCIL STAFF REPORT**

DATE: JUNE 16, 2026

DEPARTMENT: FIRE DEPARTMENT

FROM: SAMUEL KLEMEK, FIRE CHIEF

TITLE: AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT FY 2025 STAFFING FOR ADEQUATE FIRE AND EMERGENCY PERSONNEL (SAFER)

SAFER GRANT APPLICATION FOR 9 FIREFIGHTER POSITIONS

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

A motion to approve a Resolution authorizing the Salinas Fire Department to submit a FY 2025 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant application for nine firefighter positions.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Fire Department seeks authorization to apply for FEMA SAFER Hiring Activity funding for nine firefighter positions. The current SAFER grant supporting these positions expires in March 2027. Without new grant funding and Council-approved funding after the grant, the City will not fund the nine positions, and they will be eliminated. The estimated three-year personnel cost is \$5,066,550, with an estimated federal share of \$3,103,672.50 and an estimated City cost share of \$1,962,877.50 based on SAFER's 75 percent federal share in years one and two and 35 percent federal share in year three.

BACKGROUND:

The FY 2025 SAFER Program provides funding directly to fire departments and volunteer firefighter organizations to increase the number of firefighters. The Hiring Activity supports fire departments in hiring new firefighters or converting part-time or paid-on-call firefighters to full-time positions. The current SAFER grant supporting nine firefighter positions will expire in March 2027. The City does not have funding identified to continue these positions without additional grant assistance. Elimination of the positions would create an operational capacity deficit and would require elimination of Engine 7 operations, reducing unit hour availability and increasing firefighter fatigue and mandatory overtime. The Department is already staffed below comparable and national benchmarks. Salinas has approximately 0.58 firefighters per 1,000 population, regional partners are approximately 0.92 firefighters per 1,000 population, and the national standard referenced by the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) is 1 firefighter per 1,000 population. At that standard, Salinas should have approximately 160 firefighters. Response standards and service demands are also higher than national standards, increasing the need to

preserve current staffing capacity. Maintaining the positions through SAFER would provide a structured three-year bridge while the City evaluates long-term funding strategies for sustaining operational staffing after the grant period.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

Not a Project. The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378).

CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE §84308 APPLIES:

No.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

This action supports the City Council strategic goals of public safety.

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

The Fire Department will coordinate with the City Manager’s Office, Finance Department, City Attorney’s Office, Human Resources Department, and Purchasing staff as applicable.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

Approval of the resolution authorizes submission of the grant application and identifies the anticipated local cost share or future fiscal obligation. If awarded, staff will return to the City Council as necessary to accept the award, appropriate revenues and expenditures, identify budget, and required local match or ongoing personnel costs.

Fund	General Ledger Number (Operating/CIP)	General Ledger Account Name	Remaining Budget Appropriation	Amount Requested
NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution
Notice of Funding Opportunity