



City of Freeport
Meeting and/or Executive Session Agenda

This meeting will be live streamed via YouTube Live and may be accessed on the City of Freeport Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/freeporttexas> or by visiting <https://www.youtube.com/@cityoffreeporttx8375/streams>

Monday, October 6, 2025, 6:00 PM | Council Chamber | 430 North Brazosport Blvd. , Freeport, Texas 77541

In accordance with Section 551.043 of the Texas Government Code, this agenda has been posted at Freeport City Hall, and distributed to the appropriate news media within the required time frame. All meetings of the Freeport City Council are open to the public. Public participation and written comments are invited on all open session business items.

The Mayor and City Council request that cell phones be turned off or set to vibrate. Members of the audience are requested to step outside to conduct a phone conversation. The Council Chamber is wheelchair accessible and special parking is available outside the building. If special accommodation is required, please contact the City Secretary a minimum of 72 hours in advance at 979-233-3526.

1: Call to Order:

- 1A. Call to Order - Jerry Cain, Mayor
- 1B. Invocation - Councilman
- 1C. Pledges - Pledge of Allegiance to the United States; Pledge of Allegiance to the State of Texas.
- 1D. Audience Participation – Anyone who has registered to speak prior to the meeting being called to order and desires to address the City Council will be heard at this time, or during the discussion of an item listed on the agenda. These forms are located by the City Secretary. After completing the form, give it to the City Secretary. She will give it to the Mayor. The Mayor will call on you when that item is presented, once a motion has been made by Council then public participation will not be allowed. You will have four (4) minutes to make your comments regardless of the number of agenda items to be addressed.

2: Executive Session

The City Council may take action on any Executive Session item posted. 551.071. Texas Government Code. Consultation with Attorney. The City Council may convene in executive session to conduct a private consultation with its attorney on any legal posted agenda item, when the City Council seeks advice of its attorney about pending or contemplated litigation, a settlement offer, or on a matter in which the duty of the attorney to the governmental body under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with the provisions of Chapter 551, including the following items:

- 2A. Executive Session regarding: Texas Government Code, Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters) 1.) Interview of City Attorney Applicants. Texas Government Code, Section 551.072 (Deliberations about Real Property) 1.) Presentation by Bracewell regarding the Skinner Property.

3: Reconvene into Open Session:

- 3A. Take any action resulting from Executive Session.

4: Proclamations - Presentations and Updates

- 4A. Proclamation for R. O'Hara Lanier Day, October 18, 2025-Interim City Manager, Dan Pennington
- 4B. Presentation on the Launch of the City's New Website-IT Director, Toby Cohen
- 4C. Upcoming Events:
National Night Out with Freeport Police, Fire and EMS, Freeport Municipal Park, October 7th, 6:00P.M.-8:00P.M.
Fright Night 2025, Freeport Municipal Park, October 23rd, 6:00P.M.-9:00P.M.

5: Business

- 5A. Consideration and possible action approving meeting minutes from September 15, 2025.(Clarisa Fernandez)
- 5B. Second reading in consideration of approving Resolution No. 2025-2966 economic development projects to be enacted by the Freeport Economic Development Corporation.(Robert Johnson)
- 5C. Second reading and consideration of approving Resolution No. 2025-2967 an economic development agreement to be enacted by the Freeport Economic Development Corporation and Developer.(Robert Johnson)
- 5D. Consideration and possible action approving Ordinance No. 2025-2749 Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for City Employees.(Donna Fisher)
- 5E. Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2979 approving amendment to Certification Pay Policy.(Donna Fisher)
- 5F. Consideration and possible action regarding an application for rezoning submitted by Headway Estates, Ltd to rezone from R2 and MH to IN, a part of the Velasco Townsite North of Ave F, Southeast of Skinner Street & Northwest of Velasco Blvd.(Reggie Harris)
- 5G. Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2970 to approve a water bill credit for the winners of Code Division's "Yard of the Month".(Chief Jennifer Howell)
- 5H. Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2980 replacing Section 9.14 of the Employee Handbook and Establishing a Travel Authorization and Expense Policy.(Chief Jennifer Howell)

- 5I. Consideration and possible action authorizing the Chief of Police to sign MOU.(Chief Jennifer Howell)
- 5J. Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2969 on the nomination of candidates to be placed on the ballot for the Brazoria County Appraisal District's Board of Directors.(Dan Pennington)
- 5K. Consideration and possible action on TML Region 14 Director Ballot.(Dan Pennington)
- 5L. Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2981 approving a Facility Use and Rental Policy.(Rudy Ragle)
- 5M. Consideration and possible action approving FEMA American Firefighter Grant for Self-Contain Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) in the amount of \$108,900.00.(Christopher Motley)
- 5N. Consideration and possible action approving FEMA S.A.F.E.R. Program grant for personnel for the amount of \$964,434.95.(Christopher Motley)
- 5O. Discussion and possible action regarding the recent ruling by the 14th Court of Appeals against Port Freeport in its attempt to acquire property in Freeport's East End through eminent domain.(Councilman Pena)

6: Work Session

The City Council may deliberate and make inquiry into any item specifically listed as a Subsection under the itemized Sections A-F below, an item appearing on the City Council agenda for this meeting, on matters related to community events, or on matters that are not within the jurisdiction of the City for consideration by City Council. The City Council may not deliberate on any City matters not specifically disclosed under this Work Session or on this posted City Council Meeting agenda. City Council members and the Mayor always reserve the right to request that a matter be placed on a future agenda for consideration.

- A. Councilman Pena Ward A announcements and comments.
- B. Councilman Davis Ward B announcements and comments.
- C. Councilman Matamoros Ward C announcements and comments.
- D. Councilman Rossow Ward D announcements and comments.
- E. Mayor Jerry Cain announcements and comments.
- F. City Manager announcements and comments.

7: Executive Session:

The City Council may take action on any Executive Session item posted. 551.071. Texas Government Code. Consultation with Attorney. The City Council may convene in executive session to conduct a private consultation with its attorney on any legal posted agenda item, when the City Council seeks advice of its attorney about pending or contemplated litigation, a settlement offer, or on a matter in which the duty of the attorney to the governmental body under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with the provisions of Chapter 551, including the following items:

- 7A. Executive Session regarding: Texas Government Code, Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters) 1.) Interim City Manager Contract. Texas Government Code 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney) 1.) Discussion of Potential Eminent Domain Matters 2.) Ethics complaint brought by William Nelson against Nicole Mireles and Sam Reyna.

Personnel Matters (Gov't Code § 551.074)

Discussion and possible action regarding personnel matters related to Human Resources Director Donna Fisher, specifically in connection with:

- o Lance Petty's Unemployment Compensation Claim
- o Timesheet reporting violations
- o Other alleged work-related violations (Councilman Pena)

Consultation with Attorney (Gov't Code §§ 551.071) and Deliberation Regarding Real Property (Gov't Code §§ 551.072)

Discussion and possible action to consult with the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Director Robert Johnson and EDC's legal counsel, Olson & Olson, LLP, and deliberate legal and real property matters, related to:

- o Lawsuit between the Freeport EDC and Realty World, related to the failed Skinner Street Townhome Project
- o Lawsuit involving alleged development contract violations by Freeport EDC, as alleged by A&T LLC
- o Developer Agreement between the City of Freeport and Jim Maddux Properties concerning the vacant 19-acre tract located on Skinner Street (Councilman Pena)

8: Reconvene into Open Session:

- 8A. Take any action resulting from Executive Session.

9: Adjournment

9A. Adjournment – Jerry Cain, Mayor

Items not necessarily discussed in the order they appear on the agenda. The Council at its discretion may take action on any or all of the items as listed. This notice is posted pursuant to the Texas Open Meeting Act. (Chapter 551, Government Code).

The City Council reserves the right to adjourn into executive session at any time during the course of this meeting to discuss any of the matters listed above, as authorized by Texas Government Code Sections 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney), 551.072 (Deliberations about Real Property), 551.073 (Deliberations about Gifts and Donations), 551.074 (Personnel Matters), 551.076 (Deliberations about Security Devices) and 551.087 (Economic Development).

CERTIFICATE I certify the foregoing notice was posted in the official glass case at the front door of the City Hall, with 24 hours a day public access, 1201 North Avenue H., Freeport Texas, before 6:00 p.m. in accordance with Open Meetings Act.



Clarisa Hernandez,
City Secretary, City of Freeport, Texas

Proclamation

WHEREAS, the Lanier Alumni Association is honoring and remembering the R. O'Hara Lanier School, its students and faculty and its rich history in the City of Freeport and community of Velasco;

WHEREAS, the members of the student body, teachers, staff, and administrators are proud of Lanier's place in the history of Brazosport Independent School District (BISD);

WHEREAS, Lanier had its beginning from the combination of small African-American schools in Freeport, Jones Creek, Clute and Lake Jackson, along with an army barrack that was moved to the campus site in old Velasco;

WHEREAS, the goals of the new school were to offer quality instruction, kindergarten through high school and to upgrade supplies, equipment and facilities;

WHEREAS, the name R. O'Hara Lanier was suggested by BISD Superintendent, T. W. Ogg and was approved by the BISD Board in 1947. The name honored Dr. R. O'Hara Lanier, a well-known educator and the first President of Texas Southern University, formerly known as the Texas State University for Negroes;

WHEREAS, the first graduating class, the class of 1949, consisted of Lois Bates, Henrietta Perry, LoKathryn Lemons and Willie Emma Watson;

WHEREAS, R. O'Hara Lanier School was successful in developing excellent educational instruction and was also known for outstanding Band, Choir, Homemaking, Industrial Arts, Physical Education, Basketball, Football and Track activities. Many awards were received at the state Interscholastic League held at Prairie View A&M University;

WHEREAS, through the years, Lanier provided several programs that assisted the community. The Veteran's Training Program assisted African American Veterans in employment opportunities as they returned to the community after World War II and the Korean War. Lanier had an Achievement Club for Adult Education which helped the community adults with literacy;

WHEREAS, in 1960, after many successful and impressive seasons, The "Lanier Wildcats" football team won the State 1A Football Championship under the leadership of Coach C. B. McGowan;

WHEREAS, 60 years ago in 1965, after the Civil Rights Act passed, Lanier was closed. This marked the end of segregation and was the beginning of desegregation. Lanier served as a unifying source in the community from 1947-1965;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Jerry Cain, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of Freeport, and on behalf of all in city government and all our citizens, do hereby extend to the Lanier Alumni Association, its students, faculty and staff, our congratulations and best wishes on this important occasion, urging all citizens to join me in recognizing the significant achievements of R. O'Hara Lanier School;

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I proclaim this day, October 18, 2025 as "R. O'Hara Lanier Day" in Freeport, Texas.

Jerry Cain, Mayor

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Phone: (979) 233-3526 | Fax: (979) 233-8867 (fax)

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- 2025 Brazoria County Disaster Guide
- 6-10-25 Boys and Girls Club Summer Programming
- 12-30-24 Water Meter Replacement
- 12-12-24 Update on Arlan's
- Update on Village of Surfside 11-20-24
- Stephen F Austin Ribbon Cutting
- EPA Oversight
- Civil Rights Release

2025 Brazoria County Disaster Guide▼

The **2025 Brazoria County Disaster Guide** is now available.

Learn how to prepare for emergencies, review ZIP-based evacuation zones, find local shelter info, and more.

Tap the image or scan the QR code below to view or download the full guide.

FREEPORT

PARKS & RECREATION BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE

ABOUT

Are you passionate about improving Freeport's parks, green spaces, and community areas? The Parks and Recreation Beautification Committee is now accepting applications for new members! Work closely with the Director of Parks and Recreation to help enhance and beautify our city.

ELIGIBILITY

You must reside within the city limits of Freeport.

APPLY

Visit City Hall at 1201 N. Avenue H to pick up an application. Complete and return by email to citysecretary@freeporttx.gov no later than October 10! Help shape the future of Freeport! Get involved today.

The Official Brazoria County DISASTER GUIDE



Preparedness Saves Lives
Are You Prepared?

Presented by

Light

Sponsored by The Misfits

OCTOBER 23
6:00 PM TO 9:00 PM
Freeport Municipal Park & Riverplace

HAIR CONTEST, PUMPKIN PATCH, LETTING ZOO, DJ. & MORE!

Freeport

Community Clean Up

8 AM-12PM

TOBER 4

431 WEST 4 STREET, FREEPORT TX



TRAER UNA FACTURA DE AGUA VIGENTE Y LICENCIA DE CONDUCIR O CEDULA DE IDENTIFICACION

TRAIGA TODOS SUS ARTICULOS GRANDES Y RESIDUOS VEGETATIVOS

RESTRINGIDO PARA RESIDENTES DE FREEPORT SOLAMENTE

APLICAN RESTRICCIONES PARA MAS INFORMATION LLAMAR 979-239-1211

RESTRICTIONS APPLY FOR MORE INFO CALL 979-239-1211

La **Guía de Desastres del Condado de Brazoria 2025** ya está disponible. Infórmese sobre cómo prepararse para emergencias, consulte las zonas de evacuación por código postal, encuentre refugios locales y más.

Toque la imagen o escanee el código QR para ver o descargar la guía completa.

El condado oficial de Brazoria GUÍA DE DESASTRES



La preparación salva vidas
¿Está usted preparado?

REGISTRESE AHORA
portal.freeporttx.gov
Portal

- Seguimiento del uso diario del agua
- Configurar alertas peronalizadas
- Evite sorpresas en las facturas
- Tome el control total del uso de agua en su hogar

6-10-25 Boys and Girls Club Summer Programming▼



Date: June 10, 2025

Olin Corporation Adopts Ogg Boys & Girls Club Campus

Lake Jackson, TX — The Boys & Girls Club of Brazoria County is proud to announce a dynamic partnership with Olin Corporation, which has officially adopted our Ogg Campus location for the 2025 summer program. This vital collaboration

comes as the Club faces a significant funding shortfall due to the recent hold on its Out-of-School Time (OST) grant.

Olin Corporation’s generous \$15,000 sponsorship ensures that over 100 youth, ages 4–13, will continue to benefit from life-changing summer services at the Ogg Campus. These include academic enrichment, daily meals, STEM learning, physical activity, and social-emotional support.

The Boys & Girls Club of Brazoria County serves over 1,000 youth annually across five school districts, providing critical resources that foster academic success, healthy lifestyles, and good character and citizenship.

For more information or to get involved, please contact:

Amber Newman at anewman@bgcbrazoria.org or (979) 985-1908.

“This partnership with Olin couldn’t come at a more critical time,” said Amber Newman, CEO of the Boys & Girls Club of Brazoria County. “With the OST grant on pause, we were facing the heartbreaking possibility of reducing services just as children need us most. Olin stepped up to be the silver lining, ensuring that kids in our community continue to have access to safe, engaging, and empowering summer experiences.”

As part of the partnership, Olin employees will participate in an **Olin STEM Day**, providing hands-on science activities and mentorship to the children—demonstrating Olin’s commitment to both innovation and community engagement.

Brazoria County currently faces a shortage of affordable and safe summer care options for over 2,000 youth. Without intervention, many children risk academic regression and exposure to unsafe environments. The Boys & Girls Club’s summer program directly addresses these challenges, offering a nurturing and empowering environment across Lake Jackson, Clute, Sweeny, Freeport, Pearland, and Angleton.

“Olin’s adoption of the Ogg site is more than a donation—it’s an investment in the future of our youth,” said Newman. “Together, we are giving children a space to grow, learn, and become leaders in their own right.”

About the Boys & Girls Club of Brazoria County:

For over 50 years, the Boys & Girls Club of Brazoria County has been a trusted community partner, delivering safe spaces, caring mentors, and enriching programs to help young people reach their full potential.

About Olin Corporation:

Olin Corporation is a global manufacturer and distributor of chemical products and a leading North American producer of ammunition. Olin is committed to being a responsible corporate citizen and supporting the communities where its employees live and work.



Lance Petty

12-12-24 Update on Arlan's▼



Office of the City Manager

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Lance Petty
City Manager
City of Freeport

Update on Village of Surfside 11-20-24▼

THE CITY OF

1201 North Ave. H • Freeport, TX 77541

FREEPORT

979.233.3526 • Fax 979.233.8867

Jerry Cain

Mayor

Lance Petty

City Manager

City of Freeport
Office of the City Manager

Date: 11/20/2024
Subject: Update on Village of Surfside Water Agreement and Outstanding Payments

Dear Community/Residents,

I am writing to provide an update regarding the ongoing water service agreement between the City of Freeport and the Village of Surfside, as well as recent developments related to the Village's failure to meet its financial obligations for water service.

As many of you are aware, the City of Freeport has been supplying water to the Village of Surfside under an established agreement. This arrangement has been in place for a few years, ensuring a steady water supply to Surfside residents. However, the Village has recently fallen behind in making timely payments for these services, resulting in significant outstanding balances.

The City Management and Mayor have consistently worked to address this issue through discussions with the Village leadership. The Village of Surfside suffered severe damage to infrastructure from Hurricane Beryl as well as the City of Freeport. We will continue to work with the Village of Surfside to bring their account in full.

At this time, the City of Freeport is exploring all available options to address this matter. The City of Freeport has issued a 90-day notice for payment, and the Mayor of Surfside has acknowledged that they fully intend to be whole at that time with the City of Freeport. We are committed to working with Surfside to find a fair and equitable resolution, but we must also ensure that the interests of Freeport taxpayers and water customers are protected.

We will continue to keep the public informed as the situation evolves. In the meantime, residents of Freeport can rest assured that the City will take all necessary steps to protect the financial integrity of our water utility.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

Sincerely,

Lance Petty
City Manager
City of Freeport

Stephen F Austin Ribbon Cutting▼

Thank You, Phillips 66 and the FEDC! We are incredibly grateful for Phillips 66 and the Freeport Economic Development Corporation for their generous donations to fund our community park! Your support is making a lasting impact on our community, providing a beautiful space for families and friends to gather, play, and enjoy nature.



EPA Oversight▼

THE CITY OF



FREEPORT

1201 North Ave. H • Freeport, TX 77541

979.233.3526 • Fax 979.233.8867

Brooks Bass
Mayor

Lance Petty
City Manager

NEWS RELEASE

The City of Freeport is aware of the new criteria set forth for monitoring our industrial stakeholders. The City of Freeport welcomes the additional oversight provided under the new guidelines by the EPA. We will continue to monitor the safety of our citizens through the EPA's assistance, it is important to note that the EPA regulates and enforces all violations of noncompliance with state mandated regulations as is the same case with TCEQ monitoring and enforcing rules and regulations with the public water and wastewater system across Texas.

The safety of our residents is our main priority.

Civil Rights Release▼

THE CITY OF

FREEPORT

1201 North Ave. H • Freeport, TX 77541

979.233.3526 • Fax 979.233.8867

Brooks Bass
Mayor

Lance Petty
City Manager

The City of Freeport will comply with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and subsequent amendments thereto, and will not discriminate in its policies because of handicap, race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex or age. However, it must be recognized that in certain job classifications and performance of the duties of certain positions, qualifications must be set that may direct or restrict, in certain cases, the field of applicants to those who qualify for that particular position. Also some restrictions will be placed on positions that require certain educational and experience qualifications.

It is the policy of the City of Freeport to comply with the Equal Employment Opportunity legislation and be in compliance as an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.

The Human Resources Director is the designated Civil Rights Coordinator.

September 2025

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20

From Date

To Date



Employee of the Month - May 2025



Past Events

City Council Meeting

📍 430 North Brazosport Blvd. Council Chamber Freeport, Texas 77541

City Council



Wednesday Sep 17, 2025 at 5:30 PM CST

Charter Review Commission

📍 City Hall 1201 North Avenue H Freeport, Texas 77541

Charter Review Commission



Thursday Sep 18, 2025 at 5:00 PM CST

Historical And Main Street Advisory

📍 1201 North Avenue H Freeport City Hall Freeport, Texas 77541

Historical Commission And Main Street Advisory Board



Tuesday Sep 23, 2025 at 6:00 PM CST

Planning And Zoning

📍 Freeport Police Department, Municipal Court Room, 430 North Brazosport Blvd.

Planning and Zoning Commission



🔔 SUBSCRIPTIONS



City Ordinances



Meetings
Agendas &
Minutes



Public
Notices



Jobs
Center



Citizen
Serve



Online
Payments

- Freeport News

Freeport News▼

[Holiday Trash Schedule](#)
Tue, 26 Nov 2024
Holiday Trash Pickup Schedule Update Please note: There will be no trash pickup this Thursday due to Thanksgiving. (Ward A & B) Regular trash pickup w...[Read more...](#)

[Update on Village of Surfside Water Agreement](#)
Wed, 20 Nov 2024
City of Freeport Office of the City Manager Date: 11/20/2024 Subject: Update on Village of Surfside Water Agreement and Outstanding Payments Dear Comm...[Read more...](#)

[Update on Arlan's Grocery Store Remodel and Proposed Opening.](#)
Wed, 20 Nov 2024
City Manager s Update on Arlan s Grocery Store Remodel and Proposed Opening Date: 11/20/2024 Dear Community/Residents, I am pleased to share with you ...[Read more...](#)

[Boil Water Notice Rescinded- November 2, 2024](#)
Sat, 02 Nov 2024
Boil water notice has been rescinded, there is no need to boil water at this time.[Read more...](#)

[View All Articles](#)



[Meet the City Council](#)
[Election Information](#)
[90 - 2025 Tax Rate Calculation](#)

Freeport City Hall
1201 North Ave. H.
Freeport, TX 77541
(979) 233-3526
(979) 233-8867 (fax)

Freeport Historical Museum
311 Nat Hickey Lane (East Park Avenue)
Freeport, TX 77541
(979) 233-0066

Freeport Police Department
430 N. Brazosport Boulevard
Freeport, TX 77541
(979) 239-1211
(979) 239-3830 (fax)

Freeport Fire Department

131 E. 4th Street

Freeport, TX 77541

(979) 233-2111

(979) 233-4103 (fax)

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FREEPORT

News

September 16, 2025

2025 Brazoria County Disaster Guide

The 2025 Brazoria County Disaster Guide is now available. Learn how to prepare for emergencies, review ZIP-based evacuation zones, find local shelter info, and more. Tap the image or scan the QR code below to view or download the full guide.



November 20, 2024

Update on Village of
Surfside 11-20-24

September 19, 2025

Civil Rights Release

September 19, 2025

EPA Oversight

September 19, 2025

Stephen F Austin Ribbon
Cutting

I am writing to provide an update regarding the ongoing water service agreement between the City...

Read More →

The City of Freeport will comply with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and subsequent amendments...

Read More →

NEWS RELEASE The City of Freeport is aware of the new criteria set forth for monitoring...

Read More →

Thank You, Phillips 66 and the FEDC! We are incredibly grateful for Phillips 66 and the...

Read More →

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FREEPORT

Calendar

September 2025

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Welcome to Freeport's Events Calendar, Agenda & Meetings portal. To find an event or meeting please use either the calendar widget or scroll up on the event list below. Scrolling up on the event listing section will populate past events and

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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28	29	30				

Event Categories

Type or select an event category to filter...

▼

Search

Search all content...

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📅 VIEW TODAY

2025

Past Events

6:00 PM CST

Brazosport Blvd. Freeport, Texas 77541

Board of Adjustment

📺

📢

⬇️



Freeport Historical Museum

311 Nat Hickey Lane (East Park Avenue)
Freeport, TX 77541
(979) 233-0066

Freeport Police Department

430 N. Brazosport Boulevard
Freeport, TX 77541
(979) 239-1211
(979) 239-3830 (fax)

Freeport City Hall

1201 North Ave. H.
Freeport, TX 77541
(979) 233-3526
(979) 233-8867 (fax)

Freeport Fire Department

131 E. 4th Street
Freeport, TX 77541
(979) 233-2111
(979) 233-4103 (fax)

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Board of Adjustment Meeting 9-25-25



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Board of Adjustment 9-25-25

Board of Adjustment 9-25-25

State of Texas

County of Brazoria

City of Freeport

BE IT REMEMBERED, that the City Council of Freeport, Texas met on Monday, September 15, 2025 at 6:00 PM at the Freeport Council Chamber located at 430 North Brazosport Blvd. , Freeport Texas for the purpose of considering the following agenda items:

City Council: Mayor Jerry Cain
Councilman Jeff Pena
Councilman Jarvis Davis
Councilman George Matamoros
Councilman Winston Rossow

Staff: Dan Pennington, Interim City Manager
Chris Duncan, Interim City Attorney
Clarisa Fernandez, City Secretary
Ashlee Hurst, Finance Director
Toby Cohen, IT Director
Donna Fisher, Human Resource Director
Jennifer Howell, Police Chief
Lily Celedon, Staff Accountant
Rudy Ragle, Public Works Director
Nick Meeks, Public Works Department
Wade Dillon, Museum Manager
Brian Dybala, Golf Course Director
Robert Johnson, EDC Director

Visitors:	David McGinty	Melnaie Oldham
	Virginia Tippen	Ruth Rollerson
	Mike Fulton	Thomas Koole
	Bobby Edge	Margaret Bachman
	Sam Reyna	Ron Bachman

Call to Order:

Call to Order - Jerry Cain, Mayor

Mayor Cain called the regular scheduled meeting of the Freeport City Council to order at 6:00P.M. on September 15, 2025, declaring a quorum was present.

Invocation - Councilman

Councilman Rossow led the Invocation.

Pledges - Pledge of Allegiance to the United States; Pledge of Allegiance to the State of Texas.

Councilman Rossow led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States and the Pledge of Allegiance to the State of Texas.

Audience Participation – Anyone who has registered to speak prior to the meeting being called to order and desires to address the City Council will be heard at this time, or during the discussion of an item listed on the agenda. These forms are located by the City Secretary. After completing the form, give it to the City

Secretary. She will give it to the Mayor. The Mayor will call on you when that item is presented, once a motion has been made by Council then public participation will not be allowed. You will have four (4) minutes to make your comments regardless of the number of agenda items to be addressed.

Sam Reyna resides at 2002 North Avenue G. He addressed the Council regarding business item 5U on the agenda concerning discussion and possible action on a TIRZ Board appointment. He reminded Council that before TIRZ Project One was approved in 2019, he had spoken against it, warning of disadvantages, but the project was approved anyway. He stated that the most notable drawback of a TIRZ is that all property taxes above the base tax value go into the TIRZ fund rather than the City's general fund, with the base tax value from December 2019 locked in for the next 24 years. He estimated that approximately \$160,000 to \$175,000 per year is being diverted from the general fund into the TIRZ fund, which over time could total more than \$6 million. He noted that the termination date for the TIRZ project is 2049, at which time property tax values will likely have tripled. Mr. Reyna questioned which projects were under discussion and urged the Council to consider termination. He emphasized that the City pays for essential services such as police, fire, and infrastructure out of the general fund, and asked how these needs would be met if so much revenue is tied up in the TIRZ. He pointed out that of 1,225 municipalities in Texas, only about 150 have TIRZ projects, suggesting that the funds can be misused or abused. He recommended terminating the TIRZ project and transferring those funds to the general fund, which he said would have provided the City with more than a million dollars by now. With that money, he argued, the City might be able to give first responders a pay raise and better cover core services. Mr. Reyna concluded by stating that the TIRZ project is a waste of time and money, and that, in his view, nothing significant has been accomplished in the TIRZ area.

Bobby Edge introduced himself as the manager of the Freeport Branch Library. He addressed the Council in support of the Freeport Friends of the Library, an organization that directly supports library efforts in the community through funding programs and securing donations. He encouraged interested patrons to volunteer with the Friends group. Mr. Edge reminded the Council and public that September is Library Card Sign-Up Month and noted that the Brazoria County Library System's Fall Reading Challenge will take place from October 1 through October 31. He provided examples of how the Friends of the Library have supported the Freeport Branch Library over the past year, including donating a coffee urn for the Cocoa and Craft winter program, sponsoring teen Lock-In events by purchasing or securing donations of food, obtaining donations from local businesses for summer reading prizes, and providing material funding for new programs such as Lego-oriented STEM programs and black light art. He closed by expressing appreciation for the Freeport Friends of the Library and all they do for the branch, and he encouraged the community to join in supporting the organization as the library continues striving to serve residents.

Constable Mike Fulton introduced himself to the Council. He stated that although he was born and raised in Richwood, he spent almost every summer of his life on West Fifth Street with his great-grandparents, and Freeport holds special meaning for him because of those childhood memories. He expressed appreciation for the work the Council does for the City. He noted that he took office as Constable in January after serving in law enforcement since 1993, including running the crime scene division for the City of Houston and later serving as Chief Deputy in Precinct Two. He explained that his office is located on West First Street in Freeport. Constable Fulton shared that since taking office, he has initiated a countywide coastal cleanup program to combat illegal trash. He explained that illegal dumping has been a persistent issue in communities such as Freeport, Surfside, and Oyster Creek, and that many law enforcement agencies lack the manpower to fully investigate these cases. He said his office is now investigating all aspects of illegal trash and praised the Freeport Police Department for already working with his office on cases. He encouraged Council and citizens to report illegal dumping so that his office can determine which agency should handle each case. He noted that a task force has already been established, including the Houston Police Department, Precinct One Harris County, Constables, and other agencies. He emphasized that illegal dumping lowers

property values, invites more criminal activity, and diminishes the appearance of the community. He stressed that Freeport has natural resources unique in Brazoria County, and he wants to keep them beautiful both inside and outside of his jurisdiction. He pledged to work with the City and provide assistance whenever possible. On a separate note, Constable Fulton highlighted that his official patch, which says Brazoria County Constable Precinct One, was designed with the assistance of Freeport Museum Director Wade Dillon based on Texas history. He thanked Mr. Dillon for his help and praised the work being done at the museum, noting that he had donated his great-grandfather's World War I materials to be displayed there. He concluded by presenting Council with challenge coins and information about his coastal cleanup program, and he expressed appreciation for the Council's time and service.

Thomas Koole said he is a lifetime Freeport resident. He expressed concern about the stop sign at the intersection of Pecan Street and Fourth Street in Freeport. He stated that he had submitted public records requests and found that in the past seven years, 95 citations had been issued along the six-block stretch of Fourth Street from Yaupon Street to Velasco Boulevard. He emphasized that this is a short roadway and noted that the intersection in question is directly in the middle. Mr. Koole reported that in the last ten years there have been 23 crashes at the intersection, including three serious accidents he had personally witnessed where children were in the vehicles, all of which had to be towed. He expressed concern that despite frequent violations, only two citations for running the stop sign had been issued. He said he observes stop-sign violations almost daily and believes the intersection is a problem area. He added that he had previously raised this issue before school started and observed police patrols afterward, including an incident where Sergeant Torres was nearly struck by a vehicle running the stop sign. He emphasized that his primary concern is for the safety of children, pets, and residents, and he warned that someone could be seriously hurt if nothing is done. Mr. Koole urged Council to take action at this intersection, reiterating that 95 citations on such a short stretch of road indicates a serious problem. He asked for community support and emphasized that steps need to be taken before a major tragedy occurs.

Melanie Oldham resides at 531 West Brazos. She noted that she wished to speak on other agenda items but observed that with the length of the three-page agenda, the meeting may last until 1:00 a.m. before reaching the final item regarding the TIRZ Board. Ms. Oldham stated that she respectfully disagreed with Mr. Reyna's comments, explaining that a TIRZ can be very beneficial for getting projects accomplished in a City, such as development on EDC land, downtown improvements, or other projects. She concluded by stating that TIRZ projects could be good for a City.

Virginia Tippin resides at 1312 North Avenue Q. She stated that where there is a library, there is opportunity. She introduced herself as an executive member of the Freeport Friends of the Library and highlighted that September is Library Card Sign-Up Month. She reminded residents that library cards must be renewed every three years and encouraged everyone to check their cards. Ms. Tippin explained that the Friends of the Library support the library and its community activities, such as storytime and crafts for all ages. She said the Friends raise funds by selling books in the library and holding other fundraisers, and they are always seeking private and corporate sponsors for teen lock-ins, display furniture, and other items. She noted that the Friends recently provided a coffee urn for programs. She further mentioned that National Library Lovers Month is celebrated in February and National Library Week in April, adding that in a City that supports the library, there is opportunity.

Consent Agenda:

Action regarding Minutes, August 25, 2025 and September 2, 2025 - Clarisa Fernandez, City Secretary

Action approving Monthly Financials through August 31, 2025- Ashlee Hurst, Finance Director

Action approving BISD Homecoming Road Closure-Jennifer Howell, Police Chief

Action approving BISD Road Closure for the 2000 block of Second St. for varsity home games-Jennifer Howell, Police Chief

Action approving Resolution No. 2025-2952 for Rifle-Resistant Body Armor Grant-Jennifer Howell, Police Chief

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Councilman Rossow with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion.

Proclamations - Presentations and Updates

Employee Recognitions—Employee of the Month, Shana Burton, Animal Control Officer, Freeport Police Department and Charles Willard, Sergeant, Freeport Police Department-Dan Pennington, Interim City Manager

Police Chief Jennifer Howell presented the Employee of the Month to Shana Burton, Animal Control Office, Freeport Police Department and to Charles Willard, Sergeant, Freeport Police Department for the month of August 2025.

Proclamation to recognize the month of October as National Code Compliance Month-Jennifer Howell, Police Chief

Mayor Cain read the Proclamation proclaiming the month of October as National Code Compliance Month.

Upcoming Events:

Coffee with a Cop, Starbucks and McDonalds, October 1st, 8:00A.M.-10:00A.M.

Community Clean Up, October 4th 8:00 A.M - 12:00 P.M.

National Night Out with Freeport Police, Fire and EMS, Freeport Municipal Park, October 7th, 6:00P.M.-8:00P.M.

Fright Night 2025, Freeport Municipal Park, October 23rd, 6:00P.M.-9:00P.M.

Interim City Manager Dan Pennington gave updates on upcoming events.

Public Hearings

Public Hearing on the FY2025-2026 Annual Budget.

Mayor Cain opened the Public Hearing at 6:31P.M.

Melanie Oldham resides at 531 West Brazos. She expressed appreciation that the City Council has held several public budget meetings and hearings, but said that after listening to the last Council meeting on the budget—despite explanations from Ms. Ashlee, Mr. Pennington, and others—she and others still have questions they would like answered. She urged more discussion by the Mayor and Council, noting the budget's critical importance to the City. Ms. Oldham encouraged the Council to consider ways to increase City revenue, mentioning upcoming negotiations for industrial district contracts that could significantly affect revenue. She observed that legislative changes two sessions ago made negotiations more difficult, but noted subsequent legislation intended to level the negotiating field when City and industry representatives meet. She emphasized the need for the right negotiators and attorneys because, while industry deals may provide tax relief for ten years, they still represent a favorable arrangement for the companies and must be handled carefully. She recommended ensuring City-owned buildings are maintained and available for lease. She recalled the Pixie House and the possibility of repairing it, mentioning 350 K something reportedly available—and urged obtaining bids to make such properties usable and income-producing. She also urged full utilization of the current City Hall office space, recalling a statement attributed to Mr. Toby Davenport or Mr. Petty that he could guarantee the offices would be rented; she said the City should hold parties to their contractual promises and enforce lease provisions when appropriate. Ms. Oldham reminded the Council that the budget is very tight, and that difficult decisions will be necessary. She encouraged

Councilmembers to take their time reviewing the budget talking with constituents and going through the document carefully rather than rushing through it line by line, so the City can produce a sound budget for the coming fiscal year. She stressed the paramount need for infrastructure funding, noting Freeport's aging systems including clay water pipes and expressing concern about the wastewater treatment plant, which she had heard was shifting or partially sinking. She warned that a failure of the plant would have severe consequences for the City. In closing, Ms. Oldham thanked the Council for their willingness to spend the time required to review the budget and asked that they proceed carefully, so the public can understand the decisions being made.

James Wood, member of the Historic Board and Main Street Board. He stated that he came to speak in support of the museum as part of the budget discussion. He emphasized that without the museum, there would be very little activity along Historic Main Street, highlighting its importance to the community. Mr. Wood shared that when he and his wife moved to Freeport last year, the museum was the first place they visited, and he noted the remarkable upgrades the museum has undergone since that time. He commended the staff, including Mr. Wade and Ms. Loretta, for the incredible work they have done. He concluded by urging the Council to be as generous as possible in allocating the budget for the museum, while acknowledging the financial considerations the Council must weigh in preparing the City's budget.

Melanie Oldham stated that earlier in the day she had posted the City Council budget meeting to Freeport residents, asking them to identify the three priorities they would choose for City spending given the tight budget. She said she had not yet reviewed all replies. Ms. Oldham encouraged Councilmembers to engage with their constituents to understand community priorities. She acknowledged the work of staff, such as Mr. Brian, who has spent many hours improving the golf course, which attracts out-of-town visitors, but emphasized the importance of considering what citizens truly want and need. She posed questions for the Council's consideration, including whether funding should focus on the Rec Center, improvements to Freeport's Bryan Beach, or other critical needs, noting the difficulty in making these hard budget decisions.

Mayor Cain closed the Public Hearing at 6:40P.M.

There was extensive discussion among the Council regarding which agenda items should be tabled.

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to put 5H, 5Q, and 5R to the top and everything else be tabled for the 6th or a Special Meeting between now and then with discussion that followed.

Councilman Davis seconded the motion.

Councilman Pena amended his motion to include 5G, 5O, 5P, 5I, 5S, 5T.

Mayor Cain called the motion to a vote with all present and voting "Aye" 1-4. The Council did not approve the motion. Mayor Cain voted "Nay". Councilman Davis voted "Nay". Councilman Matamoros voted "Nay". Councilman Rossow voted "Nay".

Business

Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2953 to approve a water bill credit for the winners of Code Division's "Yard of the Month".

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to table 5A, seconded by Councilman Pena with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion to table this item.

Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2954 proposing an increase to Green Fees and Monthly Membership Fees – Freeport Municipal Golf Course.

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to table 5B. The motion failed due to a lack of a second.

Interim City Manager Dan Pennington said that in discussion over the last few items regarding golf, Golf Course Director Brian Dybala had gone over these in detail the fees, the rounds of golf, and everything like that. He explained that ultimately, based on the number of members and the number of rounds that were estimated. He stated that there were about 21,000 rounds by regular players and 15,000 by members. Mr. Dybala added that they were actually going to surpass that, possibly reaching 37,000 to 38,000 rounds. He noted that 21,000 of those rounds were public play with a green fee, and 15,000 rounds were for the membership, which was at 286 members. He said that when the Council was discussing the rates, it was considered that a \$10 increase would put them at 210,000. He added that \$10 would be 210,000, \$15 would be 315,000, and that they had already approved last year the membership fee at \$15 a month, which at 4290 times 12 months would be \$51,500. He explained that if the \$10 increase was applied, that would be 210,000 plus 51,500. He recalled that this year the discussion was to do the green fee again instead of skipping, and next year would normally have been the membership. He said that as far as projections, they were on track to come in at a little over 1.2 million. If the increases were applied, that would bring them very close to 1.5 million, which was the budget amount for this fiscal year. Mr. Dybala said that would put a break even if they could come up with a lot of that, based on the numbers. He explained that he tracked the numbers in the reports and believed the Council had carried all his numbers, which showed that it had been about four or five years since both fees were raised at the same time. He said they were raised together then to offset a little, and that historically the increases had been around the \$5 range. He said a \$5 increase had been the norm in the past, but whatever Council decided was the point. He explained that an additional \$5 for members would generate more revenue, and that starting October 1st, a \$10 increase based on 21,000 rounds at public play would bring in \$210,000, while a \$15 increase would bring in \$315,000 if the same number of rounds continued. Mr. Pennington asked whether Mr. Dybala had an idea of the impact of \$5, \$10, or \$15 increases, acknowledging it was uncharted territory. Mr. Dybala said the numbers could be checked after the first quarter to see if the change worked better or worse than expected, but admitted he did not know for sure. Mr. Dybala noted that since he had been there, the Council had raised fees anywhere from \$1 in his first year, then \$3, and later \$5 increments. He said this proposed change of \$15 for members and \$10 for regular players was actually on par with past actions. He added that the green fee increase of \$10 in October was what Mr. Pennington had calculated and what Council had suggested. Mr. Pennington stated that normally, the Council did \$5 increases every other year, and since they had already raised the green fee by \$5 last year, they would have typically skipped this year and raised it again on October 1st of the following year. He stated that this year they were not skipping based on what Council wanted to do, and the discussions were to try and see how this would impact the course as far as their net. He explained that they were going into uncharted territory with the rate increases but would see how it worked. Mr. Dybala added that residents still received a discounted rate, and that the proposed \$10 increase would apply to residents as well. He noted that a total of 4,886 rounds were played by residents and also mentioned that the Brazosport High School team used the facility and played their rounds of golf there.

Councilman Pena said he did not see any supporting documentation for the discussion showing any of the metrics other than the financial impact section, which was only one sentence. He said he was trying to keep up with all the numbers being discussed, but there were no handouts to follow, and it was confusing with membership fees of \$5 in one place, \$10 in another, and no clear documentation. He requested to see real handouts, explaining that it was difficult to follow while trying to do the budget without supporting documents. He asked the discussion to go more slowly, saying they were asking whether \$5 was important or \$10 was critical. He added that the last conversation had been that golf course fees were \$50 for a round of golf for regular players, or \$45, while Lake Jackson charged \$80, leaving about a \$35 difference. He recalled that there was also strong demand for the Freeport course and said he wanted to be able to talk about the issue intelligently while being as aggressive as necessary, but not more than necessary. He said he was not interested in hurting the course, but if they were passing a budget that would lose money on the golf course, he would rather push the envelope so that any loss would not be because they did not try. He said he

believed the City actually had a chance to gain more revenue by being more aggressive, noting that if Lake Jackson's fee was \$80 and Freeport's was \$45, he thought Freeport should be at least \$65. They said that at \$60 Freeport would be at 75% of the cost of Lake Jackson's course, and then questioned whether the Freeport course was 75% of the caliber of Lake Jackson's. He answered that in his opinion, Freeport's course was better. Mr. Dybala said if you take a stroll through the parking lot and look at the clubhouse and barn, those were different items already built into the price and the overall experience. Councilman Pena said he was not talking about those things at the moment and that they could be discussed after the budget. What he wanted to see was a spreadsheet that clearly showed the dollar amounts and the projected revenue at those dollar amounts for changes in green fees, as well as the dollar amounts and projected revenue for membership changes. He said that would make more sense and allow the Council to make an educated decision. He explained that if the City raised the fees by \$5, that would be one scenario, but if they raised them by \$10, \$15, or even \$25, they might actually have a real chance to make a profit rather than operating at a loss. Mr. Dybala said that if that was what the Council wanted, they could vote on it, and he would put it in play. Councilman Pena said he was looking at what was essential and what was not. He said, for anyone watching at home, in person, or reading about it later in the newspaper, it had been stated time and time again that the golf course was only used by 5% of residents. Mr. Dybala corrected that it was now 14%. Councilman Pena said 14% would equal about 1,400 people a year or about 100 residents per month, which was less than 1% of the City's 10,000 residents. He said that when considering essential services such as first responders, police salaries, bonuses, and incentives, and recognizing that the City was already running thin, it was necessary to ask where cuts should be made. He listed the golf course, the museum, and the recreation center as areas to consider. He noted that the golf course was unique because it had an opportunity to generate revenue, while the museum had eliminated entry fees, making it a complete loss. The recreation center brought in a little money through rentals, but he pointed out that no one was discussing the rental policy for City facilities. He questioned whether rental rates needed to be increased, who was renting them, and who was receiving free use, saying those were also important conversations the City needed to have. Councilman Pena discussed the golf course, stating that it was unique in that it had an opportunity to generate a profit. He said he was not interested in investing \$2 million just to make \$2.1 million, as there were better uses for that \$2 million for the City. He explained that if the problem could be solved by raising rates strategically, it could generate revenue without overpricing. He clarified that he was referring to generating approximately \$1.5 million, and if the City was able to generate an additional half million dollars through smart and strategic pricing, it would still be under 25% savings. He said those were the types of numbers and metrics he hoped would have been presented in the discussion. Mr. Dybala said the numbers he had calculated for the current year, noting that a \$15 increase could generate \$315,000. He explained that if the City brought in \$1.2 million this year, it might actually come in slightly higher, with upcoming events and Phillips 66 contributing to the total, potentially reaching \$1.3 million. With a \$15 increase and the additional \$51,000 from memberships, the total could reach \$1.6 to \$1.7 million. Councilman Pena then asked to walk through the membership part, including fees, what members were paying, and what it meant in terms of rounds and costs.

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to approve Resolution No. 2025-2954 proposing an increase to Green Fees and Monthly Membership Fees, seconded by Councilman Rossow with discussion that followed.

Councilman Pena explained that while the golf course loss had been reduced, funds had been reallocated, and he emphasized considering essential and non-essential items. He said despite the work done at the golf course, it was not considered an essential item. Councilman Pena asked if there was a way forward. He stated the good news was that, because staff was very skilled at what they do, the City might be able to draw a profit without committing as much money to the golf course. He said that when looking at the golf course, he wanted to understand what was generating revenue, noting that the green fees from guests and the fees from membership were the main sources. He acknowledged that there were no real concessions and that tournaments might add revenue, but he wanted to focus on the first two sources unless there were

particularly valuable insights on how other subtopics affected the bottom line. He emphasized interest in understanding the first two sources, noting that for green fees from non-members, there were 21,000 rounds last year. He asked whether the analysis should focus on rounds or revenue, stating that these were important questions to consider. He said he was trying to get his mind around the situation and hoped that the questions he was asking would help the public understand the rationale behind the discussion. He emphasized that if the plan was sound and there was unanimous agreement, that would be ideal. However, if the math or analysis was flawed, he wanted the public to know, stating he would make it known either that night or going forward. He said that he made no apologies for being critical of how the City spends or mismanages money. He noted that this discussion represented the first time the City was approaching the issue intelligently, fairly, openly, and transparently. Golf Course Director Brian Dybala stated that he appreciated the discussion and that both sides were aligned, noting that he just wanted to make money and be transparent about it. Councilman Pena asked for clarification, pointing out that there were 21,000 rounds projected for the coming year, that green fees were \$45 last year, and that the proposed increase was only \$5. He asked how much that would generate. He was informed that a \$5 increase would generate \$105,000; a \$10 increase, \$210,000; a \$15 increase, \$315,000; and that at \$20, the calculation would be 21,000 times \$20. He calculated that \$25 plus \$45 would come out to \$70 per round and noted that the rate would still be below Lake Jackson. He stated that, with demand, the revenue could be generated solely from green fees for 21,000 guest rounds. He added that if demand could be enhanced, he was already pushing to engage corporate sponsors like Banks Prime, Papas, Dow, or Freeport LNG to fund improvements to the clubhouse and possibly bring in a restaurant, similar to other cities, which would allow the City to capture a portion of those sales. He emphasized that the golf course's "black eye" was largely the clubhouse, not the greens, and that while not all problems needed to be solved immediately, the City could act on what it could control. He asked whether rates needed to be increased by \$40 to match Lake Jackson and answered his own question, saying that would not be smart but that the City should aim to reach at least 75–80% of Lake Jackson's rates. Mr. Dybala said that he thought when the Council goes through and votes, they would know what the right choice was. He said that once the vote is done, it would be posted and that is what they would go with. Councilman Pena expressed significant concerns regarding the proposed fee increases at the Freeport Municipal Golf Course.

Councilman Davis acknowledged that several good points had been made during the discussion. He stated that while some people may feel the City should not spend money on the golf course or even have one, he preferred to look at the big picture and the future growth of the City. He noted that with 500 new homes expected in Freeport, amenities such as the golf course, clubhouse, and other activities would be needed for residents. He said the golf course had come a long way and that he did not want to put excessive funds into it, but at the same time, he did not want to raise prices too high after so much progress had been made. Councilman Davis said then you have a what if, so what if you raise the price so much. He stated they could have sat there all night going back and forth with numbers, and a lot of that is estimates. He said when you know we are going to raise and raise the rate, everything is going up in today's time everything is going up. He stated he does not want to do a tariff thing to ask everything to go \$25, \$30, and then that may decline. He said is it ten and fifteen, is it ten on one and fifteen on the other, and he stated okay, he thinks that is good. He said he thinks people would not be bothered about ten because everything goes up, and another five dollars and he would not be opposed to that either. He said he knows the ten and the fifteen does not think that he would even very, just like everything is going up and that is going to be anyway. He said he just looks at the big picture down the line, especially since the numbers have already been called out. Councilman Davis said that five years ago the City was losing, and they were just providing that for the people. He said now they are at the break-even point, and with raising the rates, who is to say that the next year they will not have to come again with another ten dollars or so because everybody else is going to go up. He stated the City is going to catch up and keep the clients they have, and he thinks they are even going to grow more because he does hear good things about the golf course. He said once again he sees the big picture, and that the City is going to get the clubhouse, it is going to grow, and the City itself is going to grow. He said you need all types of things in the City to have a City that people want to come look at. Golf

Course Director Brian Dybala referenced the five-year plan, stating that with the increases they were looking at, he said his staff does a great job out there and they work together. He said in the five-year plan, as he sees it, the City with their plan and working together means more houses and more rooftops, and more rooftops help everybody.

Councilman Rossow asked Golf Course Director Brian Dybala what would be the reason for the increase in participation, in his opinion. Mr. Dybala replied that he would probably say his staff, but the greens, and he has a great staff and the greens are pretty good. Councilman Rossow stated that he is a lifelong resident of Freeport, and they have never tried to compete with Lake Jackson in the Wilderness. He said if they got all these hundreds of thousands of people coming out to the course, they do not want to send those already back out there. He explained people come to the golf course because of the price, and while the greens are good, they do not want to raise the price too much because golf is a luxury sport and people do not want to spend a lot of money. Mr. Dybala said he sees all sides of it and mentioned that it is humbling when someone drives from Bay City or farther to play. He added that whatever rates the Council comes up with, they just do not know that number. He acknowledged that in some cases people drive far. Councilman Rossow noted that the Council gets to vote on the price increase or whether it stays the same, but they need Mr. Dybala's expertise. He said Mr. Dybala has been there this long and has a better feel for it than the Council does. Mayor Cain said he felt that if Mr. Dybala was not comfortable with these numbers, he would be pushing for something different.

Councilman Pena stated that they need to be at least at a minimum in line with the market. He explained that if they are not in line with the market in terms of what they are going to do to improve the golf course, they will continue losing money, and they cannot do that. He added that his recommendation would be to amend it to 20 and 20, noting that they are still well below, and to let Golf Course Director Brian Dybala do his job as the golf course manager.

Mayor Cain stated that the motion on the floor is a \$10 increase in cost. He explained that this applies to all categories and \$15 per month for all classes for the monthly membership.

Mayor Cain called the motion to a vote with all present and voting "Aye" 4-1. The Council approved the motion. Councilman Pena voted "Nay".

Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2955 deeming property surplus and donating to local police department.

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to table 5C, seconded by Councilman Pena with all present and voting 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion to table this item.

Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2956 to adopt a policy for Hiring Incentive for First Responders.

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to table 5D. The motion failed due to a lack of a second.

Police Chief Jennifer Howell presented a proposed policy for a hiring incentive for first responders. She explained that the hiring incentive payment would be a one-time, non-recurring, non-accumulating allotment provided to individuals to accept employment with the City of Freeport as a first responder for full-time peace officers, firefighters, and EMTs. She noted that this incentive is to serve as a recruitment measure, in addition to a retention tool, and to help obtain the top candidates. Chief Howell detailed that, as outlined in the policy, the initial payment is at their first payroll of \$1,000 to encourage those individuals to apply and come to Freeport. Then, after a year of service or their eligibility date, whichever is later, \$2,000 would be provided, and an additional \$2,000 at the second year. She explained that certain requirements are associated with this. They must successfully complete a state-approved academy, pass all tests, and become current in

their license. They must not have been an officer, firefighter, or EMT with Freeport as of September 1, 2025. They must successfully pass all department requirements, pre-employment testing, background checks, and have successfully completed any required probationary period, with the exception of that first initial payment. They must have no reading or received disciplinary actions of a written reprimand or hire in the previous 12 months from the date of reimbursement. They also must not currently be the subject of a complaint investigation at the time of reimbursement.

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to adopt a policy for a hiring incentive for the Police Department alone with discussion that followed.

Councilman Pena stated that the reason he made this motion is that when looking at the fire department and the EMT, considering that the City of Freeport is one of the only Cities in the county that actually has a full-time fire department staff, whereas everybody else has a blended staff, the value of a full-time salary in Freeport should be sufficient enough of an incentive. He added that he knows it is really important to make sure that they are competitive on the police department side.

Councilman Davis seconded the motion.

Police Chief Jennifer Howell stated that she understands the aspect being pointed out. However, she noted that they made this policy for first responders because fire and EMS are having some of the same difficulties as the police department. She explained that it is the employees' market right now, and they get to pick and choose where they want to go. Chief Howell reflected that when she got into this 25 years ago, it was a fight for a position, and it is not that way anymore. She emphasized that it is really important that the policy holds across all first responders and that it also shows good support from the Council to be able to see this apply to the three different branches of first responders.

Mayor Cain stated that he believes Chief Howell mentioned this is not a reoccurring agenda item and that they are kind of thinking that this will be a one-time item. Police Chief Jennifer Howell responded that this was a one-time situation. She explained that individuals cannot leave and come back to get it again. He clarified that a little reoccurring to her would mean it would be on next year's budget as well and the year after that. Chief Howell confirmed that the goal is to make this a long-term policy. Mayor Cain stated that his second point is that he is in favor of the fire department receiving the same benefits as the police officers. He then raised a question and concern regarding the next agenda item. He noted that they have the current item, which is the hiring incentives, and the next agenda item is the academy reimbursement program. Mayor Cain expressed that he has some concern about one person receiving both benefits. He clarified that he would be perfectly fine if an individual received one or the other, and he just wanted to put that out there.

Councilman Pena stated that he first wants to say that he has heard the phrase "everybody loves a fireman" since he has been on the Council this year. He emphasized that everybody loves a fireman, and that this remains true no matter where you go. He then noted that the problem with this resolution, and why he limited it only to the police department, is that it creates a convolution of arguments and circumstances that muddy the water. He said they need to address this part and parcel for the police department and for the fire department separately. He noted that Chief Motley was not present and that the fire department issue would be put on another agenda. Councilman Pena clarified that the motion was strictly for the police department, not because it was absent, but because it needed to be separated. He explained that the reason for separation is that the job market for the police department is different from that for the fire department, not the employment market as a whole. He remarked that the overall economy of the country is challenging, and one might think, "I can not get a job anywhere in this economy, but Freeport is hiring," which could create an argument for the fire department. He stated that he does not want to have that discussion or use arguments for the fire department to justify incentives for the police department. He emphasized that he has enough concerns with the police department needing their own set of incentives. Councilman Pena

acknowledged the complexities of the fire department's issues and stated that they require their own unique solution. He noted that the police department requires its own unique set of solutions, as does the fire department, and putting them together would be inappropriate. He said that he truly believes this is like comparing apples and oranges: both are first responders, but their needs and job markets differ. He stated that the pay raise structure for the police department has been conveyed to him over the last three months, if not the last year. Councilman Pena stated that one of the things during this budget cycle was that the police department was sharing that the pay raise matrix was ineffective. He noted that the matrix was passed four years ago and that the Freeport Police Department is behind on the pay raise scale. He emphasized that this is very important and that it is critical to get this right.

Police Chief Jennifer Howell stated that this is something she and Chief Motley worked on together. She explained that it was the result of many discussions, and she was the one who went ahead and pushed it forward. She emphasized that it is very important that the policy includes all three individuals because they are dealing with the same problems and the same competitive market. She acknowledged that, even though they are apples and oranges, at the end of the day, they are all part of a big fruit basket.

Councilman Matamoros stated that the closest fire department and the Houston Chronicle recently published a pretty good article over the weekend. He noted that nobody stressed starting salaries, which for Pearland is \$68,300, their closest full-time paid fire department mileage-wise. In that article, it discussed the disparities between pay for police and pay for firefighters, where some cities are giving pay increases to one group more than another, resulting in the loss of talent. He explained that if the City decides to separate and not keep pay increases across the board, they will face similar issues with their firefighters. He added that full-time firefighters are also EMTs and EMS, and emphasized that he knows this because he spoke with Chief Motley to understand the department. He cautioned that separating the groups could lead to losing EMTs and EMS staff, noting the potential risk in emergency situations if personnel leave. He concluded that the two groups should not be separated and should be treated equally across the board, stating that if pay adjustments are made for one group, they should be applied to the other. Mayor Cain said he agreed.

Councilman Davis stated that, first, he would like to thank Councilman Matamoros for the research, noting that it is done down there. He mentioned that it shows Pearland is the closest one. He said that he had a question regarding the article, asking if it stated that other cities were separating and raising pay for one group and not the other. Councilman Matamoros clarified that the article referred to the City of Houston, where they had separated pay raises for fire and police, and the fire department sued, claiming it was unlawful. He added that Houston had to come up with \$600 million for back pay, and that the article also addressed starting pay for full-time firefighters. Councilman Davis emphasized that the City is not trying to separate raises, stating that if a raise is given, all departments should receive the same raise. Councilman Davis stated that this is not the category being discussed, clarifying that this is a bonus, a hiring bonus, or hiring incentive. He emphasized making sure everyone is clear that this is not about separating raises. He explained that if the police department receives the incentive, then the fire department would also get it, ensuring everyone is on the same page. He noted that the City should avoid situations like Houston and other places that separate raises, and emphasized the need for clarity due to the complexity of the discussion. He reiterated that the City is not trying to separate raises or add volunteer EMS considerations, and acknowledged that all paid employees are included. Councilman Davis stated that because there is a lot going on, it is important to make sure everyone understands that the Council is not trying to separate the raises and is not trying to add volunteer EMS. He emphasized that none of that is included and acknowledged that all of them go together, noting that every one of them are all paid employees.

Councilman Pena added clarification, noting that the motions on the floor are only for the police department. He expressed appreciation for Chief Howell speaking on behalf of the police department and acknowledged that Chief Motley is not present to speak for the fire department. He emphasized that Chief Motley is the

expert on his department and noted that some questions are beyond the scope of this discussion. He explained the math, stating that if the average salary in the police department is \$50,000 and the average salary in the fire department is \$75,000, a \$5,000 reimbursement represents a 10% savings for a police officer but less than 5%. He stressed the importance of giving each group a fair share, comparing it to giving apples and oranges their respective 10% value. He warned that the current resolution, as worded, could disadvantage the fire department. He concluded that the Council must ensure the pay scale for both departments is fair while working within the City's limited budget. He stressed the importance of treating the police department and fire department fairly and independently.

Mayor Cain called the motion to a vote with all present and voting "Aye" 2-3. The motion failed. Mayor Cain voted "Nay". Councilman Matamoros voted "Nay". Councilman Rossow voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to have a hiring incentive for strictly the Fire Department. The motion failed due to a lack of a second.

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to put this on the next agenda and table it so they can in fact have a policy that considers both the police department and the fire department. Mayor Cain said the motion to be tabled had already failed.

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to modify the resolution so it is two separate resolutions, seconded by Councilman Davis with discussion that followed.

Mayor Cain stated that the motion now is to modify the policy to fit the police department and the fire department, as he understands it.

Councilman Pena responded that he was actually articulating those as two separate ones, but he is okay with the resolution having two blank lines where the numbers for the fire department and the police department can be specified. Police Chief Jennifer Howell added that this was done with Chief Motley and that they had worked on it together. Councilman Pena said he can appreciate that, but he does not believe the implications of what is being discussed were fully considered. He clarified that no disrespect is intended, but he is looking at the staff bringing items over and the Council's job to scrub it to determine if it makes sense. He noted that Mr. Brian comes in with numbers, and they have to make sense of them. He is trying to ensure that the incentives for both departments are understood. He further stated that he is advocating for the maximum amount that can be pushed forward, which is likely higher than what is being offered now. Chief Howell admitted that she wanted to push for \$10,000 for police, fire, and EMS, but realized there are many budgetary items the Council must consider and that there is no available money. She explained that this is the lowest hiring incentive being offered, chosen to make it easier for the Council to approve.

Councilman Pena withdrew his motion.

Councilman Davis withdrew his second.

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to table 5D, seconded by Councilman Pena with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion to table this item.

Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No.2025-2957 to amend a policy for Academy Reimbursement Program for First Responders.

Police Chief Jennifer Howell recommended approval and adoption of a resolution to amend the City's current Policy 9.11 to create a new Section 9.11(a) for Academy Reimbursement for first responders. She explained that the proposal would establish a one-time, non-accumulating allotment intended both as a

recruitment measure and as an incentive for continued employment, with the goal of helping the City attract top candidates. She stated the program was very similar to the previously discussed hiring incentive, with reimbursement costs up to \$5,000 for police, fire, or EMS academies, divided into multiple payments. Chief Howell outlined the stipulations, noting that individuals must complete a state-approved academy, maintain licensing in good standing, and that Freeport must be their first employing agency following academy graduation. She added that participants must complete both their probationary and field training periods, have no written reprimands in the prior twelve months, and must have personally paid the academy costs without the assistance of scholarships or military funding. She explained that reimbursements would be paid in increments 25% after six months of training, another 25% after one year, and the remaining 50% at two years of service. Chief Howell emphasized that the program was structured on percentages rather than fixed dollar amounts, as each academy varies in cost.

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to amend the policy for academy reimbursement program for the police department. Councilman Pena withdrew his motion.

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to table 5E, seconded by Councilman Matamoros with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion to table this item.

Police Chief Jennifer Howell stated that if there is something specific on which the Council would like information, they should feel free to reach out to Chief Motley or herself.

Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2958 Supporting the Negotiation and Execution of a New Brazosport Industrial Partnership Contract.

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to table 5F, seconded by Councilman Pena with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion to table this item.

Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2959 Opioid Settlement Purdue/Sackler.

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to approve Resolution No. 2025-2959 Opioid Settlement Purdue/Sackler, seconded by Councilman Matamoros with discussion that followed.

Interim City Attorney Chris Duncan explained that nationwide there are some opioid prescription drugs that people become addicted to and abuse, which cost a lot of money for Cities to manage, including law enforcement, medical care, EMS, and related expenses. He noted that there have been numerous lawsuits brought by different states. Specifically, the Texas Attorney General's office sued several manufacturers and distributors of these prescription medications. He explained that there have been past settlements where the Attorney General reached agreements with manufacturers, and the City would sign off to participate in those settlements. He stated that the City has already basically agreed to participate in all Attorney General settlements, but each one requires a separate resolution. This particular case is different because it involves the Sackler family. One aspect is a direct lawsuit brought by the Attorney General's office, and the other is a bankruptcy case against the Sackler family, from which the City would participate in the funds resulting from that bankruptcy. He concluded that by voting to pass this resolution, the Council would allow the Mayor and City Manager to sign the necessary documents to receive the settlement money that the Attorney General has settled for other Cities in the state.

Mayor Cain called the motion to a vote with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion.

The Council took a recess at 8:57 PM.

Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2960 to approve Veolia proposed a temporary contract extension.

The Council entered back from recess at 9:10PM.

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to approve Resolution No. 2025-2960 to approve Veolia proposed a temporary contract extension, seconded by Councilman Davis with discussion that followed.

Public Works Director Rudy Ragle presented information regarding the contract extension for the City of Freeport and Veolia. The contract was scheduled to expire on September 30, 2025. Due to the City's prior notice of termination, the contract is not automatically renewed for an additional ten years. This amendment provides for a three-month extension to allow additional time to negotiate either a new long-term agreement or a modified extension. The existing Veolia agreement has governed the City's water utility operations since 2015. As the expiration date approached, the City provided a notice of termination, preventing an automatic ten-year renewal. To ensure continuity of water utility services during ongoing negotiations, both parties agreed to extend the contract until December 31, 2025, with no changes to scope, rates, or other terms. The extension maintains uninterrupted water utility operations while protecting the City from a long-term commitment during negotiations. No changes to service scope, rates, or conditions are included in this amendment. The short-term extension provides flexibility for the City to finalize terms in the best interest of residents.

Councilman Matamoros raised concerns regarding Veolia's operations in Freeport. He noted reports from employees that Veolia was allegedly disposing of and illegally moving equipment, including a water skid and vehicles, to sites outside the area. Veolia Representative James Carter clarified that the only equipment moved was an older truck from a closed site in Oklahoma to a site in Mississippi and denied any knowledge of a water skid being removed. Councilman Matamoros was encouraged to verify the specific equipment in question with Public Works Director Rudy Ragle.

Mayor Cain inquired about the status of the contract extension and negotiations. Interim City Manager Dan Pennington explained that a draft contract had been prepared for review, including a two-and-a-half-year initial term with a 180-day notice, addressing concerns about contract length while allowing cancellation if necessary.

Councilman Pena asked about the preliminary negotiations for the Veolia contract extension and how the success level of compromise between the two parties would be measured. Interim City Manager Dan Pennington noted that initially, during the meeting about extending, Veolia was open to changing several things, which were incorporated into the contract. Councilman Pena expressed concern that over the past several months, particularly during the budget cycle, one of the larger problems has been accountability and supervision of Veolia's work. He emphasized the need for strong oversight by City staff to prevent errors and unexpected issues, ensuring compliance with the contract and job responsibilities. Councilman Pena stressed the importance of avoiding surprises that could lead to significant budget amendments or leave the City vulnerable. Mr. Pennington highlighted the value of Mr. Nick, who has experience working with Veolia and understands the processes, noting that his involvement has been instrumental in tightening the contract and ensuring accountability. Councilman Pena and Mr. Pennington discussed the Veolia contract extension and oversight measures.

Mayor Cain called the motion to a vote with all present and voting "Aye" 4-1. The Council approved the motion. Councilman Matamoros voted "Nay".

Consideration and possible action approval of Asphalt Overlay Project for Two Alleyways.

Public Works Director Rudy Ragle presented the staff recommendation regarding two alleyway projects in Freeport. He stated that staff recommends approval of the lowest responsible quote of \$28,800 to complete an asphalt overlay on two alleyways totaling approximately 1,200 square feet. He explained that the city had solicited quotes to resurface two alleyways that were in poor condition, flooding backyards and in need of

immediate repair. Mr. Ragle noted that after reviewing multiple bids, the recommended contractor provided a competitive bid of \$28,800 to overlay the asphalt. He said several alleyways throughout Freeport have deteriorated and required resurfacing to maintain safe access for residents, solid waste vehicles, and emergency response equipment. These two locations were prioritized based on condition and use. He added that staff obtained multiple quotes and reviewed them for scope, price, and contractor qualifications. The recommended contractor has prior experience with municipal work and a track record of timely completion. Mr. Ragle emphasized that work would be scheduled to minimize disruption to residents, with alleyways closed during construction and advance notice provided to adjacent property owners. He noted that weather conditions may impact the project timeline. Regarding financial impact, Mr. Ragle stated that the total cost of \$28,800 equates to \$2.40 per square foot of asphalt overlay, with funding provided from the Public Works Department Fund or an appropriate fund as determined by finance. He concluded that the Public Works Department has reviewed the quotes and recommends awarding the project to the lowest bidder, and he asked the Council to approve the asphalt overlay project for the two alleyways for a total not to exceed \$28,800.

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to approve the Asphalt Overlay Project for Two Alleyways for a total not to exceed \$28,800, seconded by Councilman Rossow with discussion that followed.

Councilman Pena discussed the possibility of leveraging the county overlay program, noting that while the City pays for materials and not labor, there might be a way to apply some of that funding to the two alleyway projects. Public Works Director Rudy Ragle acknowledged that county restrictions may limit which streets can be covered and that this year's county roads have already been addressed.

Councilman Rossow explained that the City has no control over the county, which sets its own priorities and limits work based on mileage. He said the City can submit areas for consideration, but the county typically completes projects in larger stretches and may not cover small segments. Interim City Manager Dan Pennington pointed out that the county paperwork lists four areas that could potentially receive attention, including alleyways. Councilman Davis noted that last year the county did cover at least one alley. Councilman Davis explained that the county was previously behind due to equipment issues but is now caught up with new machines. Councilman Rossow agreed that communicating the needs of senior citizens might help prioritize the work. Councilman Rossow said Councilman Davis needed to get on the ball and let those people know what the Council is asking for.

Mayor Cain called the motion to a vote with all present and voting "Aye" 4-1. The Council approved the motion. Councilman Pena voted "Nay".

Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2961 approving a Facility Use and Rental Policy.

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to table 5J, seconded by Councilman Rossow with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion to table this item.

Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2962 approving pool renovation and maintenance proposals- Freeport Recreation Center.

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to table 5K, seconded by Councilman Davis with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion to table this item.

Consideration and possible action authorizing the Fire Chief to sign the 2025-26 Brazoria County Firefighter's Association Fire Protection Agreement with Brazoria County.

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to table 5L, seconded by Mayor Cain with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion to table this item.

Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2963 to amend section 9.07, titled

“Overtime/Compensatory Time”, adding Section 9.07 A “Alternative to Overtime: Flextime”.

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to table 5M, seconded by Councilman Davis with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion to table this item.

Consideration and possible action approving Ordinance No. 2025-2746 proposed adjustments to the City of Freeport's Texas Municipal Retirement System (TMRS) plan to enhance recruitment and retention.

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to table 5N, seconded by Councilman Matamoros with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion to table this item.

Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2964 to adopt the City of Freeport Grants Management Policy.

Finance Director Ashlee Hurst stated that this item and the following actually go together. She explained that recently they were closing out or working on closing, which actually started back in June. At that time, they did not have legal, so they had been waiting on legal, which is why it is now time-sensitive. She noted that HUD is the provider of the grant for the sanitary sewer replacement grant, with GLO overseeing the grant. During a recent file review for the closeout, it was discovered that the City did not have a grant management policy. Some elements were tucked in the back of the purchasing policy, some in the financial policy, and some were missing altogether. It was GLO's recommendation to adopt this policy to have it on hand in case of a HUD audit. As it stands, the City would owe the grant funds back. Staff recommends adopting the resolution. Ms. Hurst added that this policy will continue to be ongoing and evolve into something broader for all grants but this gets what we need for this grant.

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to approve Resolution No. 2025-2964 as presented, seconded by Councilman Rossow with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion.

Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2965 amending the Administration Services contract for the CDBG-MIT GLO Grant # 22-082-013-D213.

Finance Director Ashlee Hurst stated that the same thing applies to this item. She explained that during their file review, GLO noticed that the administrative contract written for this grant was missing two provisions that HUD requires. She emphasized that if HUD were to audit the City, they would owe back that grant funding. However, GLO recommended that they could fix this now to be in compliance. Ms. Hurst clarified that this is strictly their recommendation to bring the City grant-compliant for that contract. She noted that it does not change anything else with the contract and that the work for the grants has already been done.

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to approve Resolution No. 2025-2965 as presented, seconded by Councilman Rossow with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion.

Consideration and possible action to adopt Ordinance No. 2025-2747 adopting the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget.

Finance Director Ashlee Hurst presented the attached presentation titled "Exhibit A".

Mayor Cain said that the first discussion item was the Finance Project Account Module Cloud. He stated that this module is only available if the City moves to cloud hosting and staff has proposed \$3,470 for this addition.

Councilman Davis asked Finance Director Ashlee Hurst if she had requested this, to which she replied, yes. He then asked how it would help her. Ms. Hurst explained that if the City were able to move to cloud hosting, she could then add this module. The module would allow her to set up projects in the system such as alleyway projects and tie all related expenses directly in the system. Currently, she is providing the

Council a manual Excel report. This requires her to run reports in the system and then manually re-enter those expenses into a spreadsheet. Ms. Hurst further explained that project accounting cannot be implemented unless the City is hosted on the cloud. She stated that she had spoken with the Incode software representative, who was able to offer a \$9,000 discount over a three-year term. Councilman Pena asked how much time the system would save, to which Ms. Hurst replied, it would probably be pretty infinite, honestly. She noted that finance operations are managed solely by herself and Ms. Lily, and that the system would significantly reduce their manual workload while centralizing data. Additionally, Ms. Hurst stated that moving to the cloud would allow everyone in the City to have access to the financial system in real time. Council and department heads could view their own project dashboards, which would be especially useful during emergencies such as hurricanes when she may be working remotely. IT Director Toby Cohen added that cloud hosting would also save on server costs, allowing the City to downsize and save approximately \$1,800 annually in server maintenance. The Council unanimously approved this item.

Finance Director Ashlee Hurst then addressed the budgeting software, OpenGov, which the Council had considered last year. She explained that OpenGov feeds real-time data from the financial system, eliminating the need for her to manually input information line by line. She said the Council, the City Manager, and department heads would each have dashboards to view KPIs, financials, and budget data in real time. The software would also allow direct communication between Council and departments on budget matters. Ms. Hurst emphasized that this software fits the City's transparency goals, is fully set up by the vendor, and includes training for department heads relieving a burden from her. She concluded by saying, she would love to be able to use this OpenGov. She thinks it fits the transparency strategy. Mayor Cain commented that it sounded a whole lot like the same program that they talked the Council into buying a couple years ago. Ms. Hurst responded that she believed some wires had been crossed. She clarified that OpenGov was demoed last year, but the system chosen at that time was the same price with half the capabilities. She added that Council had already seen the digital budget book, which she described as very finicky, particularly with formatting for financial schedules. Councilman Pena asked if this was a one-time amount. Ms. Hurst confirmed, explaining that the one-time cost was for implementation and training, while the annual fee of approximately \$30,000 had already been authorized and would remain unchanged. She emphasized that this one-time cost would cover setup, department head training, Council training, and City Manager training. The Council unanimously approved this item.

Human Resource Director Donna Fisher presented the Texas HR certification program. She explained that this cost would cover certification for both herself and Ms. Genesis Martinez. The program is Texas municipal government specific, and if necessary, she was willing to cut the request in half to certify only Ms. Genesis, as Ms. Genesis needs the education to be prepared to step in when she eventually retires. Mayor Cain asked if she currently held this certification, to which Ms. Fisher responded that it is brand new, with the first class scheduled for November. That class filled almost immediately, but two more sessions are expected to open in the spring. Councilman Rossow asked if the certification was mandatory, and Councilman Davis noted it could not be, since Ms. Donna and Ms. Genesis is already working for the City. Interim City Manager Dan Pennington, who previously held a similar credential, stated that certifications like this are important because they professionalize a department, ensure personnel keep up with law changes and policies, and provide valuable training that is not readily available elsewhere. He emphasized that it was a relatively low cost for the professional development benefit gained. Ms. Fisher added that while she currently holds a SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management) certification, that is nationwide and not government-specific. This new certification is tailored to Texas local governments, and like most certifications, it is expected to include continuing education requirements, with conferences counting toward credits. She reiterated that the total \$3,000 request would cover both herself and Ms. Genesis. Mayor Cain, Councilman Matamoros, and Councilman Rossow voiced support for the certification. Councilman Pena and Councilman Jarvis Davis expressed opposition and would only like this for one employee if there was a policy. Councilman Pena also asked if the City could be reimbursed should an employee leave after obtaining the certification. Mr. Pennington advised that a policy could be drafted to address that issue. Ms.

Fisher confirmed she could work on developing such a policy. The Council approved this item.

Finance Director Donna Fisher presented a request to engage a personnel policy consultant. She explained that the City's current personnel policy manual has become unwieldy, with sections that could be combined, some that may be obsolete, and others that need updating to ensure compliance with current laws. At present, policies are only being added or adjusted on an as-needed basis. Ms. Fisher proposed hiring a consultant to review the entire manual, streamline it, and return a concise version for Council review and approval. Ms. Fisher estimated the cost at approximately \$3,000, based on quotes she had obtained from firms ranging between \$2,000 and \$5,000. She emphasized that she would not exceed \$3,000 for the work. Mayor Cain discussed the estimate, noting concerns that such projects sometimes exceed the quoted price. Ms. Fisher reiterated that she would cap the cost at \$3,000. Councilman Pena inquired whether certifications or training might help address the task internally. Ms. Fisher explained that while training could help somewhat, the main challenge was the time required to go through each policy in the manual, which spans 12 chapters with numerous individual policies. She clarified that a consultant would primarily consolidate and reorganize policies, not make major legal changes. Councilman Pena also discussed whether the City Attorney should review the manual instead. Interim City Attorney Chris Duncan noted that while he could review for compliance with laws, identifying best practices and reorganizing policies would fall outside his scope. Ms. Fisher emphasized that a consultant could ensure the manual followed current best practices while avoiding duplication and disorganization. The Council approved this item.

Finance Director Ashlee Hurst presented on the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) information software. She explained that while she was asked to present the item, both Ms. Clarisa in Administration and the Police Department would benefit most from the program, as well as the public. The software would provide an online portal where citizens could submit information requests. Those requests would automatically route to the City Secretary, who could then direct them to the appropriate department, with legal counsel also integrated into the workflow. The system would track requests from start to finish, improving transparency and efficiency. The software carries a recurring annual fee of \$10,314, along with a one-time setup fee of \$1,007. The cost would be split evenly between the Administration and Police Department budgets, and both department heads had agreed to this arrangement. Ashlee noted that the software vendor had already provided a demonstration and that the City had expressed interest in the system previously. She emphasized that the software would modernize the City's records request process, ensure compliance, and allow the public easier access to submit and track their requests. While all expenses would come from the general fund, the split allocation between Administration and Police was agreed upon. The Council unanimously approved this item.

Finance Director Ashlee Hurst presented on behalf of the Building Department. She explained that an increase was requested in the advertising line item due to the rising costs of publishing legal notices. The Building Department is required to advertise for items such as plats, re-plats, and demolitions. She said Building Official Reginald Harris was requesting roughly an additional \$3,000 for his budget this year. Councilman Pena inquired about the nature of the advertisements. Ms. Hurst clarified that these were legal notices required by state law to be published in a news publication. Councilman Pena discussed whether alternative advertising avenues such as social media could provide greater reach. While social media offer broader visibility, it was reiterated that state law mandates publication in a qualifying newspaper. Ms. Hurst confirmed that some local publications no longer meet the qualifications for these legal notices. Councilman Pena asked about the current advertising budget. Ms. Hurst reported that last year the Building Department budgeted \$4,500 and was expected to spend about \$6,000. The Council unanimously approved this item.

Police Chief Jennifer Howell presented a request to combine the Police Department and Code Enforcement budgets. Chief Howell emphasized that this request carried no cost and was purely a matter of housekeeping. She explained that, in past meetings, there had been some confusion regarding a related House Bill and whether it would permanently alter the department's budget structure. She clarified that the information provided previously was incorrect. The intent of the change was not to increase or decrease funding but

simply to consolidate the two budgets into one for cleaner operations. Chief Howell noted that both departments currently operate out of the same building, and managing two separate budgets for shared resources such as office supplies, postage, and other small operational expenses had proven unnecessarily complicated. There was no dollar amount associated with this change, and it would not affect the overall budget. Mayor Cain and the Council agreed with the request to combine the Police Department and Code Enforcement budgets. The Council unanimously approved this item.

Police Chief Jennifer Howell presented a request for a 5.5% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) increase for all Police Department staff, applied across the salary matrix. She explained that the higher percentage was requested because PD staff did not receive the COLA adjustment last year. Chief Howell emphasized that her priority was to advocate for her personnel, ensuring salaries remain competitive both for retention and recruitment purposes. She noted that recruitment and retention have been ongoing challenges and that increasing salaries was an important step in maintaining a strong workforce. Chief Howell further explained that this request aligned with broader efforts already underway to review and improve the department's pay structure, although that project would take additional time and likely be considered in the next budget year. Councilman Pena proposed increasing the adjustment slightly from 5.5% to 6% COLA in order to fully address the gap from the previous year. The Council unanimously approved a 6% COLA increase for Police Department staff.

Police Chief Jennifer Howell presented a request for an increase to the Police Department's overtime budget. She explained that she had originally requested \$120,000 overall for overtime. In the current proposal, an additional \$60,000 was included. Chief Howell noted that overtime costs for holiday coverage alone total approximately \$134,900 annually. This expenditure immediately places the department in a deficit position at the beginning of each budget year. She emphasized that this figure does not account for other recurring overtime needs, such as training, beach patrol, court appearances, and special events. She explained that increasing the overtime allocation would provide a more accurate reflection of the department's operational demands and prevent starting each year with an underfunded line item. The Council approved this item.

Police Chief Jennifer Howell presented a request to update the Police Department's Microsoft Office software. She explained that the department is currently operating on outdated versions and that several state and federal agencies regulate the department's compliance standards. Specifically, the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) has mandated that the department update its Microsoft Office software in order to remain compliant. Chief Howell emphasized that this update is not optional, but a serious compliance requirement imposed by the state. The proposal would ensure that the Police Department remains in good standing with regulatory agencies and continues to meet mandated standards. The Council unanimously approved this item.

Police Chief Jennifer Howell presented a request to replace the Police Department's building cameras and video storage system. She explained that the current storage system has reached the end of its service life and can no longer reliably support the department's needs. Chief Howell noted that maintaining functional video surveillance is critical for both security and operational purposes. The proposal, originally brought forward by Detective Fernandez, addressed the need to replace outdated equipment to ensure reliable long-term storage and monitoring capabilities. She emphasized the importance of this investment for maintaining the integrity of police operations and safeguarding facilities. The Council unanimously approved this item.

Police Chief Jennifer Howell presented a request to relocate the Police Department's servers. She explained that the servers are currently housed in a closet being used as Detective Fernandez's office, which is not a secure area and places the department out of CJIS compliance. To address this, the proposal would relocate the servers to a secure room, identified as the 911 room, which already contains equipment and has adequate space. An additional mini-split unit would be installed to ensure proper temperature control. Chief Howell emphasized that compliance with CJIS standards requires servers to be placed behind secure, locked doors,

and failure to meet this requirement could jeopardize the department's agency license. The estimated cost of the relocation is approximately \$28,000, based on quotes obtained for budgeting purposes. The Council approved this item.

Police Chief Jennifer Howell reported that there are a number of chairs throughout the department that are broken. She explained that some have missing arms and others are unsafe, noting that if someone slightly leans back, they could do a double flip. The chairs do not raise or lower properly, and many have continued to break over the years without being replaced. She stated her concern for safety, saying she would like to replace the office chairs before someone gets seriously injured. Chief Howell confirmed that a report on the chairs had been obtained and that the department would replace as many chairs as possible with the available funds. She noted that some dispatch chairs are specially designed and set in place 24 hours a day, costing a couple of thousand dollars each, while the remainder of the chairs would be replaced with the remaining funds. She mentioned that high-end ergonomic chairs, often used by software developers, can cost \$300–\$500, but the chairs needed for the department can cost thousands due to medical considerations and constant use. Chief Howell explained that less expensive chairs would need frequent replacement and would not provide adequate support for staff sitting long hours. She clarified that the chairs in question are for office use, Monday through Friday, 8 to 5, and that the department is looking to replace approximately five chairs, including some in dispatch and on the sergeants' records side. Chief Howell confirmed that the chairs in dispatch are literally called dispatch chairs. She stated that replacing these chairs could help with staff retention. Chief Howell concluded by affirming that the department is ready to proceed with the replacements. The Council unanimously approved this item.

Police Chief Jennifer Howell reported on the department's vehicle replacements. She explained that although the original request showed five vehicles, there was a miscalculation, and the total should have been six vehicles, including patrol units. The proposal brought by Mr. Pennington was to allocate \$350,000 for vehicle replacements, with the flexibility to purchase whatever combination of vehicles could be covered for that cost or less. Chief Howell confirmed that this \$350,000 is a one-time expense and would not be added to the next year's general fund budget, as it is considered a capital project. Chief Howell clarified that other items such as office chairs, server relocation, Microsoft licenses, and storage are also one-time expenses, with only COLA and overtime being recurring items. She noted that the Police Department has maintained a vehicle replacement plan for several years, generally replacing three vehicles annually, sometimes including patrol, CID, administrative, or animal control vehicles, to manage maintenance costs effectively. Last year, no vehicles were received. Councilman Pena inquired why vehicles were not purchased last year, and Chief Howell explained the Council did not approve this. She identified the oldest fully equipped vehicles currently in the fleet as a 2016 patrol unit and a 2015 animal control vehicle. Mileage and engine hours are considered when evaluating the condition of the vehicles, especially since patrol vehicles accumulate significant idle time. Some newer vehicles include engine hour monitoring, which may be applied to future fleet management. Chief Howell emphasized the importance of maintaining the rotation to avoid excessive repair costs, noting that some older vehicles, such as 2016 and 2017 units, cost more to repair than their value. She highlighted that patrol units are equipped with full police packages, including graphics, cameras, radar, prisoner partitions, and lighting systems, whereas CID, Code, administrative and animal control vehicles are not fully package. Insurance covers the vehicles and add-ons, but depreciation is applied, which may prevent immediate replacement at full cost. She described the planned purchases for the current year, indicating that three fully outfitted patrol units are requested. Depending on the final approval and allocated funds, the department will decide whether to purchase Tahoes or F-150 trucks, with each fully outfitted vehicle costing around \$105,000–\$110,000. Chief Howell confirmed that final vehicle selection will return to the Council for approval. Regarding prior vehicle purchases, Chief Howell clarified that in 2022, 23 vehicles were purchased, some at better rates due to older model availability, and for the 2025–2026 budget, approximately 26 vehicles are planned for purchase to maintain the fleet rotation and replace outdated units efficiently. The Council approved this item.

Councilman Pena stated that he recommended placing the sign on bonuses and tuition reimbursement items

for \$50,000 each on the agenda for discussion at the October 6th meeting. He emphasized that they are not off the table and are certainly needed. He noted that any additions should be made via a budget amendment and in concert with the current resolution. Police Chief Jennifer Howell stated that she would like to go ahead and have these approved now so they can be used as recruiting measures. She noted that if the Council wants to alter the resolution or the policy, those are matters that can be worked out at the next meeting. She added that a number of cities are already recruiting at the police academy and, even though they have been there once, they want to return with a more aggressive approach to inform recruits about available opportunities. She emphasized the desire to implement more aggressive recruiting measures rather than delay further. When asked about the sign-on bonus and the number of officers being recruited, they stated the bonus is \$5,000 and there are currently four openings, totaling \$20,000, which would be limited to those funds on a first-come, first-served basis. Chief Howell credited Detective Fernandez for securing grants that offset expenses in various programs and noted that staffing positions had not been fully filled, which was part of regular accounting procedures. Interim City Manager Dan Pennington said the policies will be brought back to the Council with the stipulation that the employee is only eligible for one. The Council approved this item.

Police Chief Jennifer Howell stated that the tower and surge protector removal was allocated \$30,000 and noted that the jail cameras were replaced for \$5,000. She mentioned the beach buggy replacement, with a possible grant being explored, totaling \$32,000, and discussed license plate reader (LPR) cameras, with a recurring cost of \$63,000 and a one-time cost of \$84,000, for which grant opportunities were also being considered. She clarified that other items, such as batteries and lower-priority equipment for the police department, were not proposed by staff and had not been earmarked as part of the \$1.6 million council budget. The Council approved these items.

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to approve the Budget as presented, seconded by Councilman Rossow with all present and voting "Aye" 3-2. The Council approved the motion. Councilman Pena voted "Nay". Councilman Davis voted "Nay".

Consideration and possible action to adopt Ordinance No. 2025-2748 establishing a Tax Rate for the 2025 Tax Year.

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to set the maintenance and operation tax rate as \$0.45127 per \$100 property valuation, seconded by Mayor Cain with all present and voting "Aye" 4-0. Councilman Davis voted "Aye". Councilman Rossow voted "Aye" Councilman Matamoros voted "Aye". Mayor Cain voted "Aye". Councilman Pena was not present for this motion.

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to set the debt service tax rate as \$0.062940 per \$100 property valuation, seconded by Councilman Rossow with all present and voting "Aye" 4-0. Councilman Davis voted "Aye". Councilman Rossow voted "Aye" Councilman Matamoros voted "Aye". Mayor Cain voted "Aye". Councilman Pena was not present for this motion.

First reading in consideration of approving Resolution No. 2025-2966 economic development projects to be enacted by the Freeport Economic Development Corporation.

EDC Director Robert Johnson read Resolution No. 2025-2966 economic development projects to be enacted by the Freeport Economic Development Corporation.

First reading and consideration of approving Resolution No. 2025-2967 an economic development agreement to be enacted by the Freeport Economic Development Corporation and Developer.

EDC Director Robert Johnson read Resolution No. 2025-2967 an economic development agreement to be enacted by the Freeport Economic Development Corporation and Developer.

Discussion and Possible Action – TIRZ Board Appointment

Discussion and possible action regarding auditor assignment of City Council as the Board of Directors for the Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) and consider proper designation.

Mayor Cain read the memo for the item summary, stating that the Council seeks to discuss and take action regarding the proper designation of the City Council as the board of directors for the Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ), in response to auditor findings and the need to formalize the structure. He explained that the City's auditor identified a board deficiency in the proper designation of the City Council as the board of directors for the TIRZ. Proper designation is necessary to ensure transparency, accountability, and compliance with financial reporting requirements under state law. Mayor Cain emphasized that this action is critical to maintain public trust and to advance the City's reinvestment and development goals within the TIRZ area. He noted that the absence of formal designation creates ambiguity about governance and may expose the City to compliance risks. Additionally, this correction allows the Council to take expedient action on the UTSA development plan, which has seen no formal movement in over a year since its completion. Mayor Cain stated that clarifying authority ensures the Council can connect swiftly on stalled or time-sensitive development priorities.

Shonda Marshall inquired about the selection process for the TIRZ board. She noted that for other City boards, applicants are required to fill out a volunteer application, and asked if the same requirement applied to the TIRZ board before selections were made. She questioned whether there had been a deadline or notice to make residents aware of the board vacancy. Ms. Marshall expressed her interest in serving on the TIRZ board, stating that she has returned to the City of Freeport as a resident and is committed to public service. She highlighted her relevant experience and wanted to ensure her interest was communicated to the Council. She also asked for clarification on the composition of the board, specifically whether a nine-member board would be appointed, including representatives from the college and the county.

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to deny the changing of the TIRZ board appointments, seconded by Mayor Cain with discussion that followed.

Mayor Cain asked legal counsel whether having the EDC serve as the TIRZ board, as it has since its inception, presented any legal issues. Interim City Attorney Chris Duncan confirmed that the City Council can appoint anyone to the board, and if they choose, the EDC can serve as the board while other participating organizations make their own determinations. He clarified that the EDC serving as the TIRZ board is legal. Finance Director Ashlee Hurst noted that in reviewing past audits, including the 2017 audit conducted prior to the formation of the TIRZ, no findings were identified. Interim City Manager Dan Pennington said that he did searches through the audits and did not reveal any formal audit findings against the board. He said the only issue noted was a misstatement in the audit identifying the TIRZ board as the City Council, which had been corrected via a letter. Mayor Cain emphasized that while the EDC administers the TIRZ board, ultimate oversight remains with the City Council. Any project or funding decision by the TIRZ must be approved by the Council before moving forward. Mr. Pennington noted that the TIRZ had approved pool renovations of approximately \$170,000, which had been tabled at the current meeting but would appear again on the agenda for future consideration.

Mayor Cain called the motion to a vote with all present and voting "Aye" 4-0. The Council approved the motion. Councilman Pena was not present for the motion.

A motion was made by Mayor Cain to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilman Matamoros with all present and voting "Aye" 4-0. Mayor Cain adjourned the meeting at 12:52A.M. Councilman Pena was not present for the motion.

Work Session

Councilman Pena Ward A announcements and comments.

Councilman Davis Ward B announcements and comments.

Councilman Matamoros Ward C announcements and comments.

Councilman Rossow Ward D announcements and comments.

Mayor Jerry Cain announcements and comments.

City Manager announcements and comments.

Executive Session

Executive Session: Texas Government Code, Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney) 1.) Pending Litigation Ezell, Petty, Covarrubias, and Mireles.

Personnel Matters (Gov't Code § 551.074)

Discussion and possible action regarding personnel matters related to Human Resources Director Donna Fisher, specifically in connection with:

- o Lance Petty's Unemployment Compensation Claim
- o Timesheet reporting violations
- o Other alleged work-related violations (Councilman Pena)

Consultation with Attorney (Gov't Code §§ 551.071) and Deliberation Regarding Real Property (Gov't Code §§ 551.072)

Discussion and possible action to consult with the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Director Robert Johnson and EDC's legal counsel, Olson & Olson, LLP, and deliberate legal and real property matters, related to:

- o Lawsuit between the Freeport EDC and Realty World, related to the failed Skinner Street Townhome Project
 - o Lawsuit involving alleged development contract violations by Freeport EDC, as alleged by A&T LLC
 - o Developer Agreement between the City of Freeport and Jim Maddux
- Properties concerning the vacant 19-acre tract located on Skinner Street (Councilman Pena)

Reconvene into Open Session:

Take any action resulting from Executive Session.

Adjournment

Adjournment – Jerry Cain, Mayor

Jerry Cain, Mayor

Clarisa Fernandez, City Secretary

“Exhibit A”

CITY OF FREEPORT FY2025-2026 UPDATED - PROPOSED BUDGET



Presentation prepared for 9/15/2025 meeting

Prepared by: Ashlee Hurst, CGFO

(979) 871-0112 – Office Line

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Monday – Friday 8a-5p – Office Hours

GENERAL FUND – OVERALL SUMMARY

	FY2022-2023 ACTUALS	FY2023-2024 ACTUALS	FY2024-2025 ADOPTED BUDGET	FY2024-2025 ESTIMATE	FY2025-2026 PROPOSED BUDGET	Increase / (Decrease)
REVENUE TOTAL	\$21,413,066	\$21,458,191	\$19,476,665	\$22,006,573	\$21,380,445	\$1,903,780
EXPENDITURES TOTAL	16,975,659	18,617,038	18,788,140	16,513,753	19,608,753	\$820,613
BEG. FUND BALANCE	5,503,901	6,933,321	7,970,334	7,970,334	12,901,489	4,931,155
REVENUE LESS EXPENDITURES	4,437,407	2,841,153	688,525	5,492,820	1,771,692	1,083,167
NET TRANSFERS	(2,998,189)	(1,804,141)	(561,665)	(561,665)	169,635	731,300
ENDING FUND BALANCE	6,933,321	7,970,334	8,097,194	12,901,489	14,842,816	6,745,622
90 DAY RESERVE	4,198,867	4,537,215	4,695,265	4,123,344	4,902,188	206,923
AVAILABLE FUND BALANCE	\$2,734,454	\$3,433,119	3,401,929	8,778,145	9,940,628	6,538,699

GENERAL FUND – REVENUE SUMMARY

	FY2022-2023 ACTUALS	FY2023-2024 ACTUALS	FY2024-2025 ADOPTED BUDGET	FY2024-2025 ESTIMATE	FY2025-2026 PROPOSED BUDGET	Increase / (Decrease)
Industrial Districts	\$8,954,728	\$9,423,021	\$9,389,300	\$10,545,561	\$10,475,000	\$1,085,700
Property Tax	3,167,166	3,397,417	3,370,000	3,419,000	3,419,000	49,000
Sales Tax	2,471,744	2,649,294	2,450,000	2,495,000	2,680,000	230,000
Charges for Service	2,306,951	2,444,863	2,224,200	2,752,400	2,836,550	612,350
Franchise & Other Taxes	724,988	713,297	715,000	696,000	689,000	(26,000)
Intergovernmental	1,756,606	633,846	152,000	564,312	165,000	13,000
Fines & Forfeits	191,086	233,483	222,600	251,050	230,050	7,450
Miscellaneous Income	759,070	1,254,199	215,000	581,050	268,500	53,500
Lease Income	60,876	17,012	175,765	173,000	134,545	(41,220)
Investment Earnings	481,374	553,846	300,000	370,000	330,000	30,000
License and Permits	538,477	137,913	262,800	159,200	152,800	(110,000)
Revenue Total	\$21,413,066	\$21,458,191	\$19,476,665	\$22,006,573	\$21,380,445	\$1,903,780

GENERAL FUND – EXPENDITURE SUMMARY

	FY2022-2023 ACTUALS	FY2023-2024 ACTUALS	FY2024-2025 ADOPTED BUDGET	FY2024-2025 ESTIMATE	FY2025-2026 PROPOSED BUDGET	Increase / (Decrease)
Administration	\$2,398,690	\$2,804,664	\$2,091,359	\$1,946,642	\$2,133,450	42,091
Information Technology	521,163	416,857	493,358	396,550	307,450	(185,908)
Municipal Court	278,525	249,065	260,830	269,336	257,280	(3,550)
Police / Animal Control	4,949,804	5,864,196	6,086,942	5,174,378	6,477,095	390,153
Fire	1,498,388	1,503,133	1,717,303	1,455,931	1,806,076	78,773
EMS	909,426	993,214	1,152,227	1,048,371	1,280,560	128,333
Streets / Drainage	1,447,827	1,454,419	1,456,908	1,436,699	1,571,705	114,797
Service Center	202,594	464,614	214,666	196,041	221,240	6,574
Beach Maintenance	30,745	7,959	42,850	26,694	42,850	-
Garbage	747,174	763,915	775,000	747,000	755,000	(20,000)
Building / Permits	278,817	279,323	478,502	411,325	492,359	13,857
Code Enforcement	452,232	399,495	356,227	334,729	420,240	64,013

GENERAL FUND – EXPENDITURE SUMMARY

	FY2022-2023 ACTUALS	FY2023-2024 ACTUALS	FY2024-2025 ADOPTED BUDGET	FY2024-2025 ESTIMATE	FY2025-2026 PROPOSED BUDGET	Increase / (Decrease)
Library	36,451	26,445	51,850	34,059	42,200	(9,650)
Parks	1,191,375	1,227,823	1,316,140	1,035,632	1,267,715	(48,425)
Recreation	350,601	329,216	525,869	349,686	488,381	(37,488)
Sr. Citizen's Commission	7,588	17,182	17,500	16,500	18,000	500
Golf Course	1,382,506	1,486,179	1,324,854	1,357,581	1,537,973	213,119
Historical Museum	292,785	211,006	343,230	262,899	334,419	(8,811)
Main Street	-	113,757	72,525	13,700	154,760	82,235
Emergency Mgmt	-	4,576	-	-	-	-
Expenditure Total	\$16,976,689	\$18,617,038	\$18,788,140	\$16,513,753	\$19,608,753	\$820,613

WATER/SEWER – OVERALL SUMMARY

	FY2022-2023 ACTUALS	FY2023-2024 ACTUALS	FY2024-2025 ADOPTED BUDGET	FY2024-2025 ESTIMATE	FY2025-2026 PROPOSED BUDGET	Increase / (Decrease)
REVENUE TOTAL	\$8,992,824	\$10,502,689	\$7,950,000	\$10,502,975	\$8,775,718	\$825,718
EXPENDITURES TOTAL	7,578,353	7,505,561	7,846,078	10,161,042	7,984,679	138,601
BEG. FUND BALANCE	5,011,419	8,422,932	11,951,130	11,951,130	11,841,413	(106,717)
REVENUE LESS EXPENDITURES	1,414,471	2,997,128	103,922	341,933	791,039	687,117
NET TRANSFERS	(390,725)	531,070	(451,650)	(451,650)	(791,039)	339,389
ENDING FUND BALANCE	8,446,050	11,951,130	11,603,402	11,841,413	11,841,413	238,011
90 DAY RESERVE	2,315,002	2,451,425	2,589,206	2,404,002	2,549,801	(39,405)
AVAILABLE FUND BALANCE	6,131,048	9,499,705	9,014,196	9,437,410	9,291,611	277,415

WATER/SEWER – REVENUE SUMMARY

	FY2022- 2023 ACTUALS	FY2023- 2024 ACTUALS	FY2024-2025 ADOPTED BUDGET	FY2024- 2025 ESTIMATE	FY2025-2026 PROPOSED BUDGET	INCREASE / (DECREASE)
INTERGOVERNMENTAL	1,048,606	2,092,254	4,000	3,107,475	30,000	26,000
MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	1,936,879	14,600	127,000	147,400	147,500	20,500
BOND PROCEEDS	-	-	-	-	-	-
INVESTMENT EARNINGS	20,074	38,227	15,000	15,000	15,000	-
WATER & SEWER SERVICES	7,926,352	8,357,607	7,804,000	7,233,000	8,583,218	779,218
REVENUE TOTAL	10,931,911	10,502,689	7,950,000	10,357,375	8,516,710	825,718

WATER/SEWER – EXPENDITURE SUMMARY

	FY2022-2023 ACTUALS	FY2023-2024 ACTUALS	FY2024-2025 ADOPTED BUDGET	FY2024-2025 ESTIMATE	FY2025-2026 PROPOSED BUDGET	INCREASE / (DECREASE)
REVENUE TOTAL	\$10,931,911	\$10,502,689	\$7,950,000	\$10,502,975	\$8,775,718	\$825,718
SALARIES	100,584	120,943	204,932	121,610	181,880	(23,052)
BENEFITS	52,108	62,493	82,676	55,071	93,741	11,065
SUPPLIES	33,202	27,290	58,700	35,600	38,500	(20,200)
SERVICES	6,142,994	6,404,863	7,340,270	7,026,875	7,366,600	26,330
MAINTENANCE	58,587	100,096	115,000	15,100	14,000	(101,000)
SUNDRY	627,684	712,875	44,500	30,600	31,950	(12,550)
DEBT SERVICE	91,397	76,369	-	-	-	-
CAPITAL OUTLAY	-	633	-	2,876,186	258,008	258,008
TRANSFERS	390,725	(531,070)	451,650	451,650	791,039	337,189
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	7,497,280	6,974,491	8,297,728	10,612,692	8,775,718	477,990

City of Freeport
Supplemental Budget Request
For Fiscal Year 2025-2026

Department	Description	Recurring Amount	One-time Amount	Proposed Items by Staff	Council Chosen Items	Notes
Administration	Fin - Project account module cloud (only available if we move to cloud hosting)	\$3,470		\$3,470		
	Fin - Incode move to website hosting	\$27,221		\$27,221		
	Fin - Implementation OpenGov		\$29,950	\$29,950		
	HR - TMHR Certifications		\$3,000	\$3,000		
	HR - Personnel Policy Consultant		\$3,000	\$3,000		
	Just FOIA Public Info Software (cost split between Admin & PD)	\$10,314	\$1,007	\$11,321		
Building	Advertising Line Increase	\$3,000		\$3,000		
Information Tech	No request					
Police/Code	Combine PD and Code budget	\$0	\$0			
	5.5% COLA	\$175,000		\$99,000		
	Overtime Increase	\$120,000		\$60,000		
	Microsoft Office 2022 Update		\$11,670	\$11,670		
	Replace PD Building Camera Storage		\$12,000	\$12,000		
	Server Relocation		\$28,000	\$28,000		
	Replace Office Chairs		\$10,000	\$10,000		
	5 Vehicle Replacements (3 Patrol, Admin, 1 CID, 1 Animal Control)		\$475,000	\$350,000		
	Sign on bonuses			\$50,000		
	Tuition reimbursement			\$50,000		
	Remove Tower and Surge Protection		\$30,000			
	Replace Jail Cameras		\$5,000			
	Beach Buggy Replacement (possible grant)		\$32,000			
	LPR Cameras (possible grant)	\$63,000	\$84,250			

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City of Freeport Supplemental Budget Request For Fiscal Year 2025-2026						
Department	Description	Recurring Amount	One-time Amount	Proposed Items by Staff	Council Chosen Items	Notes
Fire	Tire Replacement - Fire Engines		\$13,000	\$13,000		
	Training Overtime (Fire & EMS each; to correct	\$24,000		\$24,000		
	3 Firefighters/Medics (billable revenue of \$168,000)	\$258,800		\$258,800		
	New Ambulance (Transfer a portion to fund this for 2027)	\$4,000	\$400,000	\$200,000		
	Sign on bonuses			\$50,000		
	Tuition reimbursement			\$50,000		
	New Fire Engine	\$10,000	\$1,700,000			
	3 EMS Personnel	\$212,080				
Streets	Concrete Saw		\$6,256	\$6,256		
	Vibratory plate compactor		\$1,595	\$1,595		
	Jumping Jack		\$2,998	\$2,998		
	15' Batwing		\$29,000	\$29,000		
	Zero turn mower		\$14,000	\$14,000		
Service Center	No request					
Parks	Riverplace Exterior Metal Coating (TIRZ)		\$30,000			
	Repair Playground Equipment (TIRZ)		\$20,000			
	Border and mulch (playgrounds) (TIRZ)		\$10,000			
Recreation Center	Annual Pool Contract (TIRZ)		\$10,000			
	Splash Pad Replacement (TIRZ)		\$10,000			
	Rec Center Exterior Metal Coating (TIRZ)		\$30,000			
Museum	Museum Staff Raises above COLA (divided between 2 staff)	\$10,000		\$6,000		
	Museum Manager Raise	\$10,000		\$6,000		
	Generator (TIRZ)		\$14,000			
	Central Dehumidifer (TIRZ)		\$5,000			
	Renovate Museum Storage Room		\$15,000			
	Fire Suppression System		\$45,000			
	Renovate Exhibit Hall		\$25,000			
	Interactive Touch-Screen Displays		\$10,000			
	Advertising	\$9,000				
Main Street	No director and no request.					

City of Freeport Supplemental Budget Request For Fiscal Year 2025-2026						
Department	Description	Recurring Amount	One-time Amount	Proposed Items by Staff	Council Chosen Items	Notes
Golf Course	Annual Cart Path Repair	\$10,000		\$10,000		
	Pump Station Platform (Future Project Within 2 Years)		\$10,000			
Water/Sewer	No request					
	Total Non-Grant	\$949,885	\$3,125,726			
Grants						
Police	Cybersecurity Grant 20% Match	\$21,605	\$21,605	\$21,605		
Fire						
	Total Grant	\$21,605	\$21,605			
Council Requests						
Matamoros	Slaughter road generator	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000		Water / sewer funds
Pena	Additional splashpad	\$0	\$10,000	\$20,000		
	Total Council Requets	\$0	\$60,000			
	Grand Total	\$971,490	\$3,207,331	\$1,514,886	\$0	
				1,622,177.00	1,622,177.00	Available resources
				107,290.88	1,622,177.00	Remaining
The below are possible options for any remaining funds:						
	Contingency Fund for Street Repairs					
	Contingency Fund for Vehicles					
	Contingency Fund for Facilities - \$3mil transfer in 2025 funds for City Hall & Golf Course grants					

DISCUSSION



City Council Agenda Item #[5.B]

Title: Second reading in consideration of approving Resolution No. 2025-2966 economic development projects to be enacted by the Freeport Economic Development Corporation.

Date: October 6, 2025

From: Robert Johnson, Economic Development Director

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends City Council discuss for future consideration the Resolution for the requested EDC Economic Development project for the Business Improvement Grant Program.

Item Summary: The Freeport Economic Development Corporation (EDC) has identified the Business Improvement Grant program as an economic development project that it would like to consider for funding in the 2025-2026 fiscal year. Because of its nature, it is required to have City Council approval following two readings. This is the second of the two required readings.

Background Information: 2025-26 LOCAL BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

The local business improvement grant program provides grant funding from the EDC under several categories including Façade Improvements, Sign Improvements, General Property Improvements, Fire Suppression System Improvements, and Landscaping Improvements. Applications for these categories are accepted and then considered individually as they are received. With the exceptions of Signage Improvements and Fire Suppression Improvements, funding for these categories is available up to \$10,000 per category. Fire Suppression has a maximum reimbursement of \$25,000 and Signage has a maximum reimbursement amount of \$3,500. There is also a single Mega Grant of up to \$30,000 which will be competitively offered, with one awarded each year in February. Businesses that receive the grant are reimbursed 50% of their documented and qualified expenses up to the maximum grant category amount. The EDC is requesting council approval for expenditures of up to \$300,000 in the 2025-2026 fiscal year for this grant program.

The purpose of this program is to promote the development and expansion of new and existing business enterprises within the City of Freeport. The program is intended to enhance the economic welfare of the citizens of Freeport by securing and retaining business enterprises and maintaining a higher level of employment, economic activity, and stability.

Special Considerations: On July 8, 2025, the EDC conducted a public hearing with no opposition to the proposed project.



Financial Impact: Funding for this project would come out of the Special Project line item included in the EDC fiscal year budget for project.

Board or 3rd Party Recommendation: The EDC Board voted to recommend approval of this project at the aforementioned dollar limits.

Supporting Documentation:

1. Resolution EDC 2025-2026 Business Improvement Grant Program Project
2. Grant Packet - Reviewed 04.29.2025

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-2966

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT, TEXAS, CONTAINING A PREAMBLE; APPROVING AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT TO BE ENACTED BY THE FREEPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION; AND PROVIDING THAT THIS RESOLUTION SHALL TAKE EFFECT AND BE IN FORCE FROM AND AFTER ITS PASSAGE AND ADOPTION.

WHEREAS, the City of Freeport, Texas is a Home Rule City and a Home Rule Municipality situated in Brazoria County, Texas, as described in and defined by Section 5, Article XI of the Constitution of Texas and Section 1.005 of the Local Government Code of Texas, respectively; and,

WHEREAS, the Freeport Economic Development Corporation (the “EDC”) is a “type B” nonprofit economic development corporation, authorized under Texas Development Corporations Act, Title 12, Section 501.001 et. seq. specifically Chapter 505 of said Act; and,

WHEREAS, the EDC’s specific purpose is to sustain economic development efforts and promote business development in the City; and,

WHEREAS, the City and the EDC have made the specific findings that the EDC may pursue the development project set forth below, that said project is authorized by the Texas Development Corporation Act, and that the project promotes economic development within the City of Freeport and satisfies the requirement of serving a public purpose; and,

WHEREAS, prior to passage of this resolution, the City Council conducted two (2) public readings of this resolution, in open session of duly noticed and posted council meetings, and further finds that a duly noticed and posted public hearing was previously held by the EDC on the projects contained herein.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT, TEXAS:

FIRST, the City Council of the City of Freeport finds that the facts recited in the preamble hereof are true.

SECOND, the City Council of the City of Freeport hereby approves the following economic development project: 2025-2026 Local Business Improvement Grant Program;

THIRD, the funds to fund the above project have been budgeted and no further authorization is required from the City Council for the EDC to implement the above project.

FOURTH, this resolution shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and adoption.

READ, PASSED AND ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2025.

APPROVED:

Jerry Cain, Mayor
City of Freeport, Texas

ATTEST:

Clarisa Fernandez, City Clerk
City of Freeport, Texas

APPROVED AS TO FORM ONLY:

Christopher Duncan, Interim City Attorney
City of Freeport, Texas



Business Improvement Grant Program Guidelines and Criteria

Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of this program is to promote the development and expansion of new and existing business enterprises within the City limits of Freeport, Texas and enhance the economic welfare of the citizens of the City by securing and retaining business enterprises and maintaining a higher level of employment, economic activity, and stability.

Section 2. Type and amount of grants

A. Façade Improvement:

Exterior front façade enhancements. Improvements may be considered if located on a corner or paralleling an internal public space such as a park, parking lot, pedestrian way, or visible from a public right-of-way.

Improvements to store facade including, but not limited to:

Exterior painting that incorporates a major visual change
(Maintenance painting does not apply.);

Significant masonry cleaning and/or restoration;

Addition of awnings (business logo & letters on awnings are acceptable);

Enhanced exterior building lighting that creates a noticeably enhanced appearance
(Replacement of current lighting that is simply repair does not enhance the appearance of the building, such as replacement of inoperable fixtures and is not included.);

Store front entry systems and individual windows and door replacement or modification (if part of an overall design restoration; general building maintenance repairs are not included);

New or restored façade elements, such as cornices, soffits, canopies, and other detail elements.

The grant amount may be up to 50% of the cost of such improvement, up to a maximum of \$10,000

B. Sign Improvement:

New signs and/or major renovations or removal of existing signs. Typically LED Signs are not approved but may be reviewed on a case-by-case basis if integrated into an overall sign.

The grant amount may be up to \$3,500 for both new and existing business.

C. Property Improvement:

Items such as, but not limited to, parking lot resurfacing, striping, driveway improvement, lighting, decorative fencing, pedestrian oriented/streetscape amenities, including street furniture, new curb and sidewalk, and related amenities, demolition and/or removal of a dilapidated structure

The grant amount may be up to 50% of the cost of such improvement, up to a maximum of \$10,000.

D. Landscaping Improvement:

Material such as, but not limited to, grass, ground covers, shrubs, vines, hedges, trees or palms, landscape lighting and non-living durable materials that are commonly used in landscaping such as, but not limited to, rocks, pebbles, sand, but excluding paving. (All living materials will be reviewed at 25% of the cost if irrigation is not present or will be applied)

The grant amount may be up to 50% of the cost of such improvement, up to a maximum of \$10,000.

E. Fire Suppression System Grant:

The purpose of this grant is to assist payment for purchase and installation of a sprinkler/fire suppression system as required by the Freeport Fire Marshall. The grant application must contain documentation from the applicant and the Freeport Fire Marshall containing a floorplan, a diagram of the proposed system, and the specific occupancy and use that was submitted to the Freeport Fire Marshall. If this grant is provided to a leased space, the landlord and tenant are jointly responsible to pay back the grant if the applicant fails to complete the performance requirements. Further, this grant will only be made for an active commercial business or a business that has signed a lease to begin operation of a commercial business.

The grant amount may be up to 50% of the cost of such improvement, up to a maximum of \$25,000.

F. MEGA Grant:

Can be a combination of Grant Type A, C, or D or can stand alone as either. This grant will be reserved for those business that are within the defined Downtown boundaries as laid out by our Community Comprehensive Plans or at the discretion of the FEDC Board of Directors. Must provide 1 additional Job with this grant. This grant will be awarded to one (1) applicant per a fiscal year (October 1st– September 30th). Grant applications will be accepted starting October 1st and will close February 28th. Review will be held in March and notification of grant recipient will be announced by May 15th. The grant amount may be up to 50% of the cost of such improvement up to a maximum of \$30,000.

Section 3. Eligibility

- A. All business buildings and facilities located within the City at the time of adoption of these guidelines shall be eligible for this program.
- B. Any new business planning to locate within the City, or any business currently located within the city limits, shall be eligible for this program.
- C. A *business* is defined as an occupation, profession, or trade in the purchase or sale of goods or services in an attempt to make a profit.
- D. The proposed project must comply with applicable regulations, city- approved planning studies, comprehensive plan designations, City Ordinances, Building Codes, and Americans with Disabilities Act Guidelines.
- E. All applicants must be current and provide FEDC with documentation providing they are current with all Ad Valorem Taxes.
- F. Grants may not be used for refinancing existing loans, working capital, inventory, permits, inspections, security fencing or gates, home occupations, interior remodeling, new construction, and routine maintenance of landscaping and signage (with the exception of letters/logos on new awnings).

Section 4. Guidelines

- A. Proof of the applicant's ownership of the subject facility or facilities, or proof that the owner of such facility has approved the application for such grant funds, shall be required.

- B. The owner of a business to be operated within a leased facility, and the owner of such lease facility, must apply jointly for the program. Copies of a lease agreement and proof of ownership of the leased facility shall be required.
- C. A business or property owner may apply for one (1) or more of the five (5) types of grants per physical location (address) set forth herein within any fiscal year (October 1 to September 30). A business that receives grant funding during a fiscal year shall not be precluded from making subsequent applications for funding in following years.
- D. The maximum amount of funding available to any one applicant, business establishment or property owner at one physical location (address) shall be \$50,000.00 per fiscal year unless applying for the mega grant.
- E. All grants are reimbursement grants and will only be funded after completion of the project in accordance with drawings and specifications approved by the Freeport Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors and after the applicant submits to the FEDC proof of paid receipts for all applicable labor, materials, and permits. Digital photographs of the completed work shall also be required.
- F. Reimbursement grants are a cash payment of up to the approved percentage of funds expended by the applicant on the improvements and are not to exceed the limits set forth in Section 2(A), (B), (C), (D), and (E) hereof. In-kind contributions to the improvements by the applicant will not be considered as an expenditure by the applicant. Only cash expenditures by the applicant may be used in calculating the cost of improvements.
- G. The applicant shall be obligated to make the improvements in accordance with the application submitted to and approved by the FEDC Board of Directors. Thereafter, any modifications must first receive written approval by either the FEDC Board or the FEDC Executive Director. Failure to obtain such written approval prior to making any such modifications shall render the applicant ineligible to receive grant funding.
- H. The applicant shall be responsible for obtaining all applicable permits related to the improvement project, and failure to do so will render the applicant ineligible to receive grant funding.
- I. The improvements, as presented in the application, must be completed in their entirety. Failure to complete all of the stated improvements shall render the applicant ineligible to receive grant funding.
- J. Upon approval of a grant application, and during the construction of the improvements, a representative or representatives of the FEDC shall have the right, at all reasonable times, to have access to and inspect the work in progress.
- K. The applicant shall not begin any improvements prior to receiving written approval of grant funding from the FEDC.

- L. The applicant must complete the improvement project within six (6) months of receiving written approval from the FEDC. Failure to complete the improvements within the required time period shall result in the loss of the grant funds allocated for the project. Time extensions may be granted at the discretion of the FEDC Board of Directors.
- M. Approval of all applications shall be with the understanding and agreement that, in the event the business (applicant) fails to remain open, or the business or property is sold or transferred and subsequently closes, within twelve (12) months after the funding of the grant, the applicant shall be considered in default of its obligations under the grant, and shall be required to reimburse the FEDC the grant money received.
- N. The applicant must agree that, in the event of default of its obligations, the applicant shall repay to the FEDC the amount of grant funds it has received, with interest, at the rate of 10% per annum, within thirty (30) days after the FEDC notifies the applicant of the default. The form of such payment shall be a cashier's check or money order, made payable to the Freeport Economic Development Corporation.
- O. The applicant must certify that the applicant does not employ nor will it employ any undocumented workers (an individual who, at the time of employment, is not lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States or authorized under law to be employed in that manner in the United States). The applicant must agree that if, after receiving grant funds, it is convicted of a violation under 8 U.S.C. Section 1324a(f), the applicant shall repay the amount of the grant funds received by the applicant, with interest, at the rate of 10% per annum, within thirty (30) days after the FEDC notifies the applicant of the violation.
- P. The FEDC shall have the authority to bring a civil action to recover any amounts that the applicant must repay to the FEDC under paragraphs M, N, and O of this Section, and in such action may recover court costs and reasonable attorney's fees.

Section 5. Application and Approval

- A. Applications must be made on a form provided by the FEDC, which form shall be made available at the FEDC offices located at 1201 North Ave. H, Freeport, TX 77541 and on the FEDC website at <https://www.freeportedc.com/> -
- B. The grant application must include:
- Request Letter describing proposed project and the need for grant funds
 - Establishment of business entity name (Copy of Article of Incorporation, dba, etc.)
 - Copy of business plan
 - Copy of Lease Agreement (if facility is leased)
 - Legal description of subject property
 - Vicinity map of subject property

- Estimates of proposed improvements. This quote shall be utilized only for the purpose of determining the amount of grant needed for the project and any costs incurred in obtaining the quote shall be the responsibility of the applicant, not the FEDC.
 - Itemized work estimates which include details and information such as color samples of paint, fabric, sign material
 - Digital Picture of Property and the area to be improved
 - Written statement from Code Enforcement stating approval of the work to be performed.
 - Notarized Seal on Application
 - Acknowledge that a sign will be placed at your property stating FEDC – Business Improvement Grant Recipient
- C. All applications must be approved by the FEDC Board of Directors
- D. An applicant shall be notified, in writing or email, within (10) ten business days of the FEDC Board’s decision to approve or disapprove its application.
- E. The FEDC may award grant funds to an applicant, with certain provisions, conditions, or other requirements that the FEDC deems necessary or appropriate.
- F. The FEDC Board of Directors shall have sole discretion to accept or reject an application. Applications are submitted on a competitive basis and will be graded on but not limited to:
1. Those applicants that best match our Community Comprehensive Plans
 2. Needs of the City of Freeport and FEDC
 3. Best match for our Downtown Specific Plan
 4. Those that will be beneficial for the growth of our Freeport’s Economic Development

Section 6. Funding

- A. Upon notification to the FEDC by the applicant that a project has been completed, an inspection by a FEDC representative or representatives shall be made to confirm that such project has been completed in accordance with the application or any approved modifications thereto. Such notification shall include, but not be limited to, documentation of paid receipts for materials, labor, permits, inspection reports, an affidavit stating that all contractors and subcontractors providing work and/or materials in the construction of the project improvements have been paid and any and all liens and claims regarding such work have been released, or any other item that the FEDC may reasonably deem necessary for determining the project’s completion.

- B. The FEDC agrees to distribute such funds to the applicant within thirty (30) days following the inspection required in paragraph (A) hereof, and confirmation of completion of the project in accordance with the application or any approved modifications thereto. The Executive Director of the FEDC shall issue a letter to the FEDC Board of Directors notifying them of the funding action to be taken. A copy of such letter shall also be provided to the applicant.
- C. Within ten (10) business days following an inspection and the presentation of the receipts as provided in Section 6(A) above, and after a determination is made by the FEDC's representative that the project has not been completed in accordance with the application, or any approved modifications thereof, the Executive Director shall issue a letter to the applicant indicating any and all areas of non-compliance. The applicant shall then have sixty (60) days, from the date of such letter, to make the modifications necessary to bring the project into compliance. Failure to complete such modifications within said sixty-day period shall be deemed a default of applicant's obligations under the grant, and the applicant shall be ineligible to receive grant funding.
- D. Available funding: The FEDC has budgeted \$150,000 per the current fiscal year (October 1 to September 30) to fund improvement grants. Grant applications received after the available funding has been exhausted may be accepted and held until the following fiscal year. The FEDC retains sole discretion to accept or reject applications received after the available funding has been exhausted.

Section 7. Miscellaneous

- A. THE FREEPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION SHALL DELIVER A COPY OF THESE GUIDELINES TO ANY APPLICANT FOR HIS/HER REVIEW AND THE DELIVERY HEREOF DOES NOT CONSTITUTE AN OFFER OF A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GRANT TO THE APPLICANT.
- B. THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF TEXAS SHALL GOVERN THE INTERPRETATION, VALIDITY, PERFORMANCE, AND ENFORCEMENT OF THIS BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM. IF ANY PROVISION OF THIS BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM IS HELD TO BE INVALID OR UNENFORCEABLE, THE VALIDITY AND ENFORCEABILITY OF THE REMAINING PROVISIONS SHALL NOT BE AFFECTED THERE.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF AND AGREE TO COMPLY WITH THE
GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA FOR BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM
BY THE FREEPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

Applicant: _____

Address: _____

Phone No.: _____

Signature: _____

Property Owner/Landlord: _____

Address: _____

Phone No.: _____

Signature: _____

This acknowledgement page must be signed and returned to the Executive Director of Freeport Economic Development Corporation. Please retain the Guidelines and Criteria for your records.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to shop local Brazoria County businesses for products and services.



Application for Business Improvement Grant

DOCUMENTATION CHECKLIST **Business Improvement Grant Program**

As a part of this application, the following documentation is being provided by the applicant:

- _____ 1. Request Letter describing proposed project and the need for grant funds
- _____ 2. Establishment of business entity name
(Copy of Articles of Incorporation, dba, etc.)
- _____ 3. Copy of lease agreement (if facility is leased)
- _____ 4. Copy of business plan
- _____ 5. Legal description of subject property (Exhibit A)
- _____ 6. Vicinity map of subject property (Exhibit B)
- _____ 7. Estimates of proposed improvements (Exhibit C)
Itemized work estimates which include details and information such as color
samples of paint, fabric, and sign material
- _____ 8. Digital Pictures of Property and area to be improved (Exhibit D)
- _____ 9. Acknowledge that a sign will be placed at your property stating
FEDC-Business Improvement Grant Recipient
- _____ 10. Signed statement from Code Enforcement stating project is in compliance
with City Ordinance

I (We), referred to as “APPLICANT”, on behalf of the identified entity, submit to the Freeport Economic Development Corporation, referred to as “FEDC”, this application for consideration of a Business Improvement Grant under the provisions of the FEDC’s Business Improvement Grant Program.

As part of this application, APPLICANT represents to FEDC the following:

1. APPLICANT has received a copy of the FEDC’s Guidelines and Criteria for the Business Improvement Grant Program. APPLICANT acknowledges to FEDC that in making this application, APPLICANT understands the terms and provisions, and all questions relating to any needed interpretation have been answered by authorized representatives of FEDC prior to the submission of this application.
2. APPLICANT has secured such legal, accounting, and/or other advice that may be necessary for APPLICANT to determine the desirability of making this application and/or accurately and correctly answering any questions as set out. APPLICANT acknowledges that it has completely relied on the advice and counsel of experts and/or appropriate persons retained, employed, or compensated by APPLICANT, and that it has not relied upon, nor is APPLICANT now attempting to rely upon, the advice and counsel of FEDC, its servants, agents, employees and/or elected or appointed officers.
3. By signing this document, “Application for Business Improvement Grant” either in an individual capacity, jointly, or in a representative capacity. APPLICANT acknowledges and verifies that all of the facts, information, and allegations as set out are true, correct and accurate, and that FEDC may rely on as if the same had been signed by APPLICANT or APPLICANT’S agent before a Notary Public or other authorized officer permitted by law to administer oaths and to take acknowledgements. APPLICANT further acknowledges and understands that any materially false or misleading statements of fact may be considered a violation of the criminal laws of the State of Texas.
4. The APPLICANT, whether a corporate entity, partnership, or other legal type business entity, or an individual, acknowledges and verifies that it is current on all current tax obligations, assessments, or other governmental levies and assessments, and that the same have been paid when due and payable, and that no delinquencies exist at this time. The APPLICANT swears and affirms that the APPLICANT is fully authorized to transact business in the State of Texas and in the state of incorporation if different from the State of Texas.
5. The APPLICANT hereby certifies that the APPLICANT does not and will not knowingly employ an undocumented worker. An “undocumented worker” shall mean an individual who, at the time of employment, is not (a) lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States; or (b) authorized under the law to be employed in that manner in the United States. APPLICANT understands and agrees that if, after receiving a Business Improvement Grant, APPLICANT is convicted of a violation under 8 U.S.C. Section 1324a(f), the APPLICANT shall be required to reimburse to the FEDC the grant amount received. Payments must be paid in full within thirty (30) days after the date of written notification by the FEDC. The form of such payment shall be a cashier’s check or money order, made payable to the Freeport Economic Development Corporation. The FEDC has the right to recover court costs and reasonable attorney’s fees as a result of any civil action required to recover such repayment.

Business Entity Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Location in the City of Freeport for which the improvement is being requested

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Other companies and locations owned and/or operated by the APPLICANT

Company Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

6. Please attach a separate document providing a legal description of the property upon which the contemplated improvements will be located as *Exhibit A*.
7. Please attach a vicinity map locating the property within the City of Freeport as *Exhibit B*.
8. Please furnish detailed drawings, plans, specifications, color schemes, or any other available supporting documents for the proposed improvements and cost estimates as *Exhibit C*.
9. Please attach a letter addressing the need for the project as well as need for the FEDC grant funds.
10. Description of proposed improvements:

DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED REPAIR	ESTIMATED START DATE	COMPLETION DATE

11. New or existing business: _____ New _____ Existing

_____ has been in operation for _____ years.

Existing number of jobs: _____ (if applicable) FT _____ PT _____

New jobs (FT): _____

New jobs (PT): _____

12. If leased facility, provide the following information (*attach copy of current lease*):

Current Landlord: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

13. Prior to APPLICANT'S execution of this application, APPLICANT has had this reviewed by an Attorney of the APPLICANT, or has had the opportunity to do so, and the parties agree that based on the foregoing, this application for the business improvement grant program shall not be construed in favor of one party over the other based on the drafting of this application.
14. APPLICANT and owner/landlord indemnify, defend, and hold FEDC harmless from any liability, injury, claim, expenses, and attorney's fees arising out of a contractor, builder, or contract for performance of improvements, or repair to buildings and facilities.
15. FEDC has delivered a copy of the guidelines and criteria for a business improvement grant program to applicant for review, and the delivery does not constitute an offer of an improvement grant.
16. The laws of the State of Texas shall govern the interpretation, validity, performance, and enforcement of the application for the business improvement grant program. The Business Improvement Grant Program shall be performable in the County of Brazoria. If any provision of this application for business improvement grant program should be held to be invalid or unenforceable, the validity and enforceability of the remaining provisions of this application shall not be affected.
17. Before submitting an application to the FEDC, the APPLICANT must meet with the Planning/Building Department of the City of Freeport for any code requirements.

VERIFICATION

I (We), the undersigned APPLICANT(S), certify that all the information furnished to FEDC has been furnished freely by the APPLICANT(S), and further acknowledge that no rights or privileges may be relied on as a part of any application. In addition, it is acknowledged that the Freeport Economic Development Corporation may or may not grant a Business Improvement Grant based upon application or request purely as a matter of discretion, and that there is no legal right to rely on any previous actions taken in same or similar applications, or previous actions taken on other applications concerning the same or similar property.

Signed and submitted to Freeport Economic Development Corporation on this, the _____ day of _____, 20 ____.

Applicant: _____ Applicant: _____

Signature: _____ Signature: _____

Address: _____ Address: _____

Phone No.: _____ Phone No.: _____

Property _____

Owner/Landlord:

Signature: _____

Address: _____

Phone No.: _____

The State of Texas
County of Brazoria

Before me, the undersigned authority, on this day personally appeared _____, known to me to be the persons whose names are subscribed to the foregoing instrument, and acknowledged to me and that they executed the same for the purposes therein expressed.

Notary Public in and for the State of Texas
My Commission Expires: _____

The State of Texas
County of Brazoria

Before me, the undersigned authority, on this day personally appeared _____, known to me to be the persons whose names are subscribed to the foregoing instrument, and acknowledged to me and that they executed the same for the purposes therein expressed.

Notary Public in and for the State of Texas
My Commission Expires: _____

The State of Texas
County of Brazoria

Before me, the undersigned authority, on this day personally appeared _____, known to me to be the persons whose names are subscribed to the foregoing instrument, and acknowledged to me and that they executed the same for the purposes therein expressed.

Notary Public in and for the State of Texas
My Commission Expires: _____



City Council Agenda Item #[5.C]

Title: Second reading and consideration of approving Resolution No. 2025-2967 an economic development agreement to be enacted by the Freeport Economic Development Corporation and Developer.

Date: October 6, 2025

From: Robert Johnson, Economic Development Director

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends City Council approve the requested Freeport Economic Development Corporation (EDC) economic development project.

Item Summary: The EDC has identified an economic development project that it would like to fund. Because of the project's nature, it is required to have City Council approval following two readings. This is the second of the two required readings.

Background Information: The EDC negotiated a property sale agreement with Mama C's to be located at 212 West Park Avenue, in Freeport, TX. The agreement stipulates that the EDC will grant a low-cost property sale in exchange for outlined refurbishments to, and development of, the building, the creation of seven jobs, and the requirement that the business remain open for at least five years. If these requirements and benchmarks are not met, the property shall revert to the EDC. The EDC believes this will help further the City's stated goal of downtown redevelopment and the project will bring additional traffic to the downtown historic district as outlined in the University of Texas at San Antonio - Center for Urban and Regional Planning Research's Comprehensive Downtown Plan for the City of Freeport, Texas.

Special Considerations: The EDC has done extensive vetting of this project, the condition of the extant building, and the business owners since it was proposed in April of 2025.

Financial Impact: As a part of an economic development incentive plan, the EDC will sell the property at a low cost to the Developer. In return, the community shall receive an operating restaurant, bringing both vital sales tax and property tax to the City. The establishment will also add commercial density to the historic downtown's Main Street district.

Board or 3rd Party Recommendation: Following a public hearing on September 10, 2025, the FEDC voted to recommend approval of this low-cost property sale agreement with the Developer.

Supporting Documentation:

1. Resolution EDC 2025-2026 Sale of 212 W. Park Project (1)

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-2967

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT, TEXAS, CONTAINING A PREAMBLE; APPROVING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT TO BE ENACTED BY THE FREEPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION; AND PROVIDING THAT THIS RESOLUTION SHALL TAKE EFFECT AND BE IN FORCE FROM AND AFTER ITS PASSAGE AND ADOPTION.

WHEREAS, the City of Freeport, Texas is a Home Rule City and a Home Rule Municipality situated in Brazoria County, Texas, as described in and defined by Section 5, Article XI of the Constitution of Texas and Section 1.005 of the Local Government Code of Texas, respectively; and,

WHEREAS, the Freeport Economic Development Corporation (the “EDC”) is a “type B” nonprofit economic development corporation, authorized under Texas Development Corporations Act, Title 12, Section 501.001 et. seq. specifically Chapter 505 of said Act; and,

WHEREAS, the EDC’s specific purpose is to sustain economic development efforts and promote business development in the City; and,

WHEREAS, the City and the EDC have made the specific findings that the EDC may pursue the development projects set forth below, that said projects are authorized by the Texas Development Corporation Act, and that the projects promote economic development within the City of Freeport and satisfy the requirement of serving a public purpose; and,

WHEREAS, prior to passage of this resolution, the City Council conducted two (2) public readings of this resolution, in open session of duly noticed and posted council meetings, and further finds that a duly noticed and posted public hearing was previously held by the EDC on the projects contained herein.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT, TEXAS:

FIRST, the City Council of the City of Freeport finds that the facts recited in the preamble hereof are true.

SECOND, the City Council of the City of Freeport hereby approves the following economic development project:

1. Sale of property at 212 West Park Blvd. Project;

THIRD, the funds to fund the above projects have been budgeted and no further authorization is required from the City Council for the EDC to implement the above projects.

FOURTH, this resolution shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and adoption.

READ, PASSED AND ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2021.

APPROVED:

Jerry Cain, Mayor
City of Freeport, Texas

ATTEST:

Clarisa Fernandez, City Clerk
City of Freeport, Texas

APPROVED AS TO FORM ONLY:

Christopher Duncan, City Attorney
City of Freeport, Texas



City Council Agenda Item #[5.D]

Title: Consideration and possible action approving Ordinance No. 2025-2749 Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for City Employees.

Date: October 6, 2025

From: Donna Fisher, HR Director

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends that City Council approve the ordinance providing:

1. A 5.5% COLA for all Police Department employees/positions (Department 525) & Code Enforcement employees/positions (Department 557),
2. A 3% COLA for all other Department employees/positions,
3. New Police Department pay matrix and City pay-scale range attached and
4. An additional annual \$6,000 allocation to the Museum Director, \$4,000 annual allocation to the Museum Programs Coordinator, and \$2,000 annual allocation to the Museum Attendant.

Item Summary: The purpose of this item is to provide specificity and transparency as to the COLA breakdown of the previously approved and related authorization and appropriation. On 9-15-25 City Council approved an ordinance establishing a COLA for all City employees, with one rate adjustment (5.5%) for the Police Department and Code Enforcement employees, (3%) for all other employees, with a fixed additional allocation for three Museum employees.

Background Information: The City of Freeport remains committed to providing competitive and equitable compensation for its employees. Rising inflationary pressures, combines with the need to maintain a stable and motivated workforce, make cost-of-living adjustments an important component of the City's personnel policy.

- General Employees: To maintain fairness and recognize the contributions of all staff, a 3% COLA is proposed for all eligible employees across City departments,
- Police Department and Code Enforcement Employees: Due to unique operational demands and the need to remain competitive in public safety recruitment and retention, a 5.5 % COLA is proposed for all eligible Police department employees.
- Museum Employees: In recognition of the cultural and educational value provided by the Museum and its staff as well as a dramatic increase in visitors, exhibit renovations, and increase in programming, an additional allocation of \$12,000 is proposed to be distributed among Museum employees.

These adjustments are designed to balance fiscal responsibility with the need to recognize and support the City's dedicated workforce.



Special Considerations: N/A

Financial Impact: These increases are included in the City's FY26 budget.

Board or 3rd Party Recommendation: N/A

Supporting Documentation:

1. COLA ordinance (1)
2. Pay Matrix 2025-2026
3. 2025 Police Pay Scale Matrix

CITY OF FREEPORT, TEXAS

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-2749

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT, TEXAS, PROVIDING FOR A COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT (COLA) FOR CITY EMPLOYEES; PROVIDING FOR A, 5.5% COLA FOR POLICE DEPARTMENT & CODE ENFORCEMENT EMPLOYEES, 3% COLA FOR ALL OTHER EMPLOYEES, AND AN ADDITIONAL \$12,000 TO BE ALLOCATED AMONG MUSEUM EMPLOYEES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Freeport recognizes the need to provide equitable cost-of-living adjustments to its employees to maintain competitive compensation and to account for inflationary pressures; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds it necessary to provide a uniform increase to employees, while also recognizing the unique service requirements of the Police Department; and

WHEREAS, the City Council further recognizes the contributions of the Museum employees and allocates additional compensation to support the continued preservation and operation of the City's cultural resources;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT, TEXAS:

SECTION 1. GENERAL COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT.

Effective October 1, 2025, all City of Freeport employees shall receive a three percent (3%) cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to their base salary.

SECTION 2. POLICE DEPARTMENT & CODE ENFORCEMENT COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT.

Notwithstanding Section 1, all employees of the City of Freeport Police Department shall receive a five and one-half percent (5.5%) cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to their base salary.

SECTION 3. MUSEUM EMPLOYEE SUPPLEMENT.

In addition to the cost-of-living adjustments provided in Sections 1 and 2, the sum of \$6,000 annually to the Museum Director, \$4,000 to the Museum Programs Coordinator, and \$2,000 to the Museum Administrative Attendant.

SECTION 4. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision, section, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance, and the City Council hereby declares that it would have passed this Ordinance and each section, subsection, clause, or phrase thereof irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, or phrases be declared invalid.

SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its passage and adoption.

PASSED AND APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2025.

Jerry Cain, Mayor
City of Freeport, Texas

ATTEST:

Clarisa Fernandez, City Secretary
City of Freeport, Texas

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND CONTENT:

Duncan Law Firm, Interim City Attorney
City of Freeport, Texa

City of Freeport Pay Scale Matrix 2025-2026

Department/Position	Minimum	Maximum
Administration		
City Manager	148,394	215,914
City Secretary	66,415	96,634
Finance Director	99,143	144,253
Human Resources Director	95,838	139,445
Receptionist	32,285	46,975
Financial Analyst	63,110	91,825
HR Specialist I	44,881	65,302
HR Specialist II	50,999	74,204
Executive Admin. Assistant	46,350	67,439
Assistant Finance Director	77,250	112,399
Special Assistant to Finance Director	66,950	97,412
Human Resources Assistant	32,285	46,975
Staff Accountant	61,800	89,919
GIS Manager/Property Manager2	64,280	93,527
Building		
Building Inspector	47,227	68,715
Building Official/Director	68,974	100,357
Permit Coordinator	35,606	51,807
Planning & Zoning Coordinator	36,246	52,737
Rental Inspector	51,418	74,813
Code Enforcement		
Code Officer	40,620	59,102
Code Officer Supervisor	52,959	77,055
Economic Development		
Director of Economic Development	115,133	167,519
Economic Development Specialist	54,369	79,106
Fire		
Fire Lieutenant	68,397	99,518
Fire Captain	78,674	114,471
Fire Chief	106,286	154,646
Fire Deputy Chief - EMS Director	79,741	116,022
Firefighter	56,650	82,426

City of Freeport Pay Scale Matrix 2025-2026

Department/Position	Minimum	Maximum
Emergency Medical Tech - PT	25,898	37,682
Firefighter - PT	24,607	35,803
Fire Marshal	79,741	116,023
Golf Course		
Golf Course Director	71,852	104,544
Mechanic	40,379	58,752
Range Attendant P/T	10,466	15,228
Groundkeeper/Range Attendant	32,285	46,975
Pro Shop Attendant	32,285	46,975
Golf Course Coordinator	35,606	51,807
Historical Museum		
Museum Coordinator	38,563	56,109
Museum Director	53,930	78,468
Museum Manager	44,774	65,146
Museum Attendant	32,285	46,975
Museum/Main Street Director	77,250	112,399
Municipal Court		
Court Clerk	32,285	46,975
Court Supervisor	48,783	70,979
Parks		
Parks Director	95,518	138,979
Parks Supervisor	50,318	73,212
Maintenance Technician II/Bldg Maint	53,218	77,432
Maintenance Technician I/Bldg Maint	35,192	51,204
Police		
Animal Control Officer	40,908	59,167
Assistant City Manager	128,410	186,837
Dispatcher	44,947	65,226
Jailer	44,855	65,088
Police Captain	97,309	145,964
Police Chief	106,135	154,427
Police Corporal	64,378	89,445
Police Lieutenant	84,419	126,629
Police Officer	59,668	84,861
Police Sergeant	72,569	108,854
Records/CID Clerk	43,682	63,590
TCO Supervisor-Dispatch	48,873	73,452
Police Detective	64,196	96,295

City of Freeport Pay Scale Matrix 2025-2026

Department/Position	Minimum	Maximum
CID Corporal	68,838	100,937
Crossing Guard	21,944	31,929
TCO/Records Supervisor	50,102	81,754
Recreation		
Rec Attendant P/T	10,466	15,228
Rec Program Coordinator	35,606	51,807
Recreation Center Supervisor	49,998	72,747
Life Guard	10,466	15,228
Service Center		
Mechanic Helper	31,043	45,168
Streets		
Equipment Operator/Technician	38,804	56,460
Streets Supervisor	51,170	74,453
Public Works Director	95,945	139,599
Streets Superintendent	64,923	94,463
Water		
Utility Clerk	32,285	46,975
Utility Billing Supervisor	48,783	70,979
Utility Operations Manager	82,400	119,892
Utility Billing Clerk	38,804	56,460
Multiple Departments		
Administrative Assistant	38,911	56,616
Administrative Secretary	34,860	50,722
Clerk/ Rec Att	32,285	46,975
Crew Leader	40,404	58,788
Field Crew	32,285	46,975
Lead Supervisor	65,865	95,834
Mechanic	40,379	58,751
Secretary	32,285	46,975
Maintenance Technician I (Field Crew)	32,285	46,975
Maintenance Technician II	36,720	53,427
Information Technology		
Information Technology Director2	61,831	89,964
Main Street		
Mainstreet Coordinator	41,200	59,946

Position	Department	Salary Min	Salary Max
Special Assistant to Finance Director	Administration	\$ 66,950	\$ 97,412
Staff Accountant	Administration	\$ 61,800	\$ 89,919
Assistant City Manager	Police	\$ 128,410	\$ 186,837
City Manager	Administration	\$ 148,394	\$ 215,914
City Secretary	Administration	\$ 66,415	\$ 96,634
Human Resources Assistant	Administration	\$ 32,285	\$ 46,975
Executive Admin. Assistant	Administration	\$ 46,350	\$ 67,439
Finance Director	Administration	\$ 99,143	\$ 144,253
Assistant Finance Director	Administration	\$ 77,250	\$ 112,399
Financial Analyst	Administration	\$ 63,110	\$ 91,825
GIS Manager/Property Manager	Administration	\$ 64,280	\$ 93,527
HR Specialist I	Administration	\$ 44,881	\$ 65,302
HR Specialist II	Administration	\$ 50,999	\$ 74,204
Human Resources Director	Administration	\$ 95,838	\$ 139,445
Receptionist	Administration	\$ 32,285	\$ 46,975
Information Technology Director	Information Technology	\$ 61,831	\$ 89,964
Building Inspector	Building	\$ 47,227	\$ 68,715
Building Official/Director	Building	\$ 68,974	\$ 100,357
Permit Coordinator	Building	\$ 35,606	\$ 51,807
Planning & Zoning Coordinator	Building	\$ 36,246	\$ 52,737
Rental Inspector	Building	\$ 51,418	\$ 74,813
Code Officer	Code Enforcement	\$ 40,620	\$ 59,102
Code Officer Supervisor	Code Enforcement	\$ 52,959	\$ 77,055
Director of Economic Development	Economic Development	\$ 115,133	\$ 167,519
Economic Development Specialist	Economic Development	\$ 54,369	\$ 79,106
Court Clerk	Municipal Court	\$ 32,285	\$ 46,975
Court Supervisor	Municipal Court	\$ 48,783	\$ 70,979
Fire Lieutenant	Fire	\$ 68,397	\$ 99,518
Fire Captain	Fire	\$ 78,674	\$ 114,471
Fire Chief	Fire	\$ 106,286	\$ 154,646
Fire Deputy Chief - EMS Director	Fire	\$ 79,741	\$ 116,022
Fire Marshal	Fire	\$ 79,741	\$ 116,023
Firefighter	Fire	\$ 56,650	\$ 82,426
Emergency Medical Tech - PT	Fire	\$ 25,898	\$ 37,682
Firefighter - PT	Fire	\$ 24,607	\$ 35,803
Golf Course Coordinator	Golf Course	\$ 35,606	\$ 51,807
Golf Course Director	Golf Course	\$ 71,852	\$ 104,544
Groundkeeper/Range Attendant	Golf Course	\$ 32,285	\$ 46,975
Mechanic	Golf Course	\$ 40,379	\$ 58,752
Range Attendant P/T	Golf Course	\$ 10,466	\$ 15,228
Pro Shop Attendant	Golf Course	\$ 32,285	\$ 46,975
Museum Coordinator	Historical Museum	\$ 38,563	\$ 56,109
Museum/Main Street Director	Historical Museum	\$ 77,250	\$ 112,399
Museum Director	Historical Museum	\$53,930	\$ 78,468
Museum Manager	Historical Museum	\$ 44,774	\$ 65,146
Museum Attendant	Historical Museum	\$ 32,285	\$ 46,975

Position	Department	Salary Min	Salary Max
Mainstreet Coordinator	Main Street	\$ 41,200	\$ 59,946
Administrative Assistant	Multiple Departments	\$ 38,911	\$ 56,616
Administrative Secretary	Multiple Departments	\$ 34,860	\$ 50,722
Clerk/ Rec Att	Multiple Departments	\$ 32,285	\$ 46,975
Crew Leader	Multiple Departments	\$ 40,404	\$ 58,788
Field Crew	Multiple Departments	\$ 32,285	\$ 46,975
Lead Supervisor	Multiple Departments	\$ 65,865	\$ 95,834
Maintenance Technician I (Field Crew)	Multiple Departments	\$ 32,285	\$ 46,975
Mechanic	Multiple Departments	\$ 40,379	\$ 58,751
Secretary	Multiple Departments	\$ 32,285	\$ 46,975
Maintenance Technician II	Multiple Departments	\$ 36,720	\$ 53,427
Parks Director	Parks	\$ 95,518	\$ 138,979
Parks Supervisor	Parks	\$ 50,318	\$ 73,212
Maintenance Technician II/Bldg Maint	Parks	\$ 53,218	\$ 77,432
Maintenance Technician I/Bldg Maint	Parks	\$ 35,192	\$ 51,204
Animal Control Officer	Police	\$ 40,908	\$ 59,167
CID Corporal	Police	\$ 68,838	\$ 100,937
Crossing Guard	Police	\$21,944	\$ 31,929
Dispatcher	Police	\$ 44,947	\$ 65,226
Jailer	Police	\$ 44,855	\$ 65,088
Police Captain	Police	\$ 97,309	\$ 145,964
Police Chief	Police	\$ 106,135	\$ 154,427
Police Corporal	Police	\$ 64,378	\$ 89,445
Police Detective	Police	\$ 64,196	\$ 96,295
Police Lieutenant	Police	\$ 84,419	\$ 126,629
Police Officer	Police	\$ 59,668	\$ 84,861
Police Sergeant	Police	\$ 72,569	\$ 108,854
Records/CID Clerk	Police	\$ 43,682	\$ 63,590
TCO Supervisor-Dispatch	Police	\$ 48,873	\$ 73,452
TCO/Records Supervisor	Police	\$50,102	\$81,754
Rec Attendant P/T	Recreation	\$ 10,466	\$ 15,228
Rec Program Coordinator	Recreation	\$ 35,606	\$ 51,807
Recreation Center Supervisor	Recreation	\$ 49,998	\$ 72,747
Life Guard	Recreation	\$ 10,466	\$ 15,228
Mechanic Helper	Service Center	\$ 31,043	\$ 45,168
Equipment Operator/Technician	Streets	\$ 38,804	\$ 56,460
Public Works Director	Streets	\$ 95,945	\$ 139,599
Streets Superintendent	Streets	\$ 64,923	\$ 94,463
Streets Supervisor	Streets	\$ 51,170	\$ 74,453
Utility Clerk	Water	\$ 32,285	\$ 46,975
Utility Operations Manager	Water	\$82,400	\$ 119,892
Utility Billing Clerk	Water	\$38,804	\$ 56,460
Utility Billing Supervisor	Water	\$ 48,783	\$ 70,979

Police Pay Matrix 2025

POSITION	POLICE OFFICER	DETECTIVE	POLICE SERGEANT	POLICE LIEUTENANT	POLICE CAPTAIN	POLICE CORPORAL	CID SUPERVISOR	DISPATCHER	RECORDS/CID CLERK	ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER	TCO SUPERVISOR-DISPATCH	JAILER
DEPARTMENT	POLICE	POLICE	POLICE	POLICE	POLICE	POLICE		POLICE	POLICE	POLICE	POLICE	POLICE
NEW Maximum	\$ 84,861.34	\$ 96,295.33	\$ 108,854.29	\$ 126,629.10	\$ 145,964.17	\$ 89,445.39	\$ 100,937.33	\$ 65,226.30	\$ 63,590.67	\$ 59,167.72	\$ 73,452.91	\$ 65,088.38
Year of Service												
0	\$ 59,668.00	\$ 64,196.89	\$ 72,569.53	\$ 84,419.40	\$ 97,309.45	\$ 64,378.57	\$ 68,838.89	\$ 44,947.15	\$ 43,682.50	\$ 40,908.09	\$ 48,873.40	\$ 44,855.20
1	\$ 60,297.84	\$ 64,999.35	\$ 73,476.65	\$ 85,474.64	\$ 98,525.82	\$ 65,005.24	\$ 69,641.35	\$ 45,454.13	\$ 44,180.20	\$ 41,364.58	\$ 49,487.89	\$ 45,361.02
2	\$ 60,927.67	\$ 65,801.82	\$ 74,383.77	\$ 86,529.89	\$ 99,742.19	\$ 65,631.91	\$ 70,443.82	\$ 45,961.11	\$ 44,677.91	\$ 41,821.07	\$ 50,102.38	\$ 45,866.85
3	\$ 61,557.51	\$ 66,604.27	\$ 75,290.89	\$ 87,585.13	\$ 100,958.55	\$ 66,258.58	\$ 71,246.27	\$ 46,468.09	\$ 45,175.62	\$ 42,277.55	\$ 50,716.87	\$ 46,373.05
4	\$ 62,187.34	\$ 67,406.74	\$ 76,198.01	\$ 88,640.37	\$ 102,174.92	\$ 66,885.25	\$ 72,048.74	\$ 46,975.07	\$ 45,673.31	\$ 42,734.05	\$ 51,331.35	\$ 46,878.51
5	\$ 62,943.14	\$ 68,369.69	\$ 77,286.55	\$ 89,906.66	\$ 103,634.57	\$ 67,637.25	\$ 73,011.69	\$ 47,583.43	\$ 46,270.56	\$ 43,281.84	\$ 52,068.74	\$ 47,485.51
6	\$ 63,950.87	\$ 69,653.62	\$ 78,737.93	\$ 91,595.05	\$ 105,580.75	\$ 68,639.92	\$ 74,295.62	\$ 48,394.60	\$ 47,066.89	\$ 44,012.23	\$ 53,051.92	\$ 48,294.84
7	\$ 65,462.48	\$ 71,579.53	\$ 80,915.02	\$ 94,127.63	\$ 108,500.04	\$ 70,143.93	\$ 76,221.53	\$ 49,611.35	\$ 48,261.38	\$ 45,107.80	\$ 54,526.69	\$ 49,508.83
8	\$ 67,981.81	\$ 74,789.37	\$ 84,543.50	\$ 98,348.60	\$ 113,365.51	\$ 72,650.61	\$ 79,431.37	\$ 51,639.26	\$ 50,252.20	\$ 46,933.76	\$ 56,984.64	\$ 51,532.15
9	\$ 70,501.13	\$ 77,999.22	\$ 88,171.97	\$ 102,569.57	\$ 118,230.98	\$ 75,157.30	\$ 82,641.22	\$ 53,667.19	\$ 52,243.02	\$ 48,759.73	\$ 59,442.59	\$ 53,555.47
10	\$ 73,020.47	\$ 81,209.07	\$ 91,800.45	\$ 106,790.54	\$ 123,096.45	\$ 77,663.98	\$ 85,851.07	\$ 55,695.11	\$ 54,233.84	\$ 50,585.70	\$ 61,900.54	\$ 55,578.78
11	\$ 75,539.80	\$ 84,418.91	\$ 95,428.93	\$ 111,011.51	\$ 127,961.92	\$ 80,170.66	\$ 89,060.91	\$ 57,723.02	\$ 56,224.65	\$ 52,411.66	\$ 64,358.49	\$ 57,602.10
12	\$ 77,807.20	\$ 87,307.77	\$ 98,694.55	\$ 114,810.39	\$ 132,340.85	\$ 82,426.68	\$ 91,949.77	\$ 59,548.15	\$ 58,016.39	\$ 54,055.02	\$ 66,570.65	\$ 59,423.10
13	\$ 79,822.67	\$ 89,875.64	\$ 101,597.33	\$ 118,187.16	\$ 136,233.23	\$ 84,432.03	\$ 94,517.64	\$ 61,170.47	\$ 59,609.04	\$ 55,515.80	\$ 68,537.01	\$ 61,041.75
14	\$ 81,586.20	\$ 92,122.54	\$ 104,137.27	\$ 121,141.83	\$ 139,639.06	\$ 86,186.71	\$ 96,764.54	\$ 62,590.02	\$ 61,002.61	\$ 56,793.97	\$ 70,257.58	\$ 62,458.07
15	\$ 82,342.00	\$ 93,085.49	\$ 105,225.81	\$ 122,408.13	\$ 141,098.70	\$ 86,938.71	\$ 97,727.49	\$ 63,198.39	\$ 61,599.86	\$ 57,341.76	\$ 70,994.96	\$ 63,065.06
16	\$ 82,971.84	\$ 93,887.94	\$ 106,132.93	\$ 123,463.37	\$ 142,315.07	\$ 87,565.38	\$ 98,529.94	\$ 63,705.37	\$ 62,097.56	\$ 57,798.26	\$ 71,609.44	\$ 63,570.89
17	\$ 83,601.67	\$ 94,690.41	\$ 107,040.05	\$ 124,518.61	\$ 143,531.43	\$ 88,192.05	\$ 99,332.41	\$ 64,212.35	\$ 62,595.27	\$ 58,254.75	\$ 72,223.93	\$ 64,076.72
18	\$ 84,231.51	\$ 95,492.87	\$ 107,947.17	\$ 125,573.85	\$ 144,747.80	\$ 88,818.72	\$ 100,134.87	\$ 64,719.33	\$ 63,092.97	\$ 58,711.24	\$ 72,838.42	\$ 64,582.55
19	\$ 84,861.34	\$ 96,295.33	\$ 108,854.29	\$ 126,629.10	\$ 145,964.17	\$ 89,445.39	\$ 100,937.33	\$ 65,226.30	\$ 63,590.67	\$ 59,167.72	\$ 73,452.91	\$ 65,088.38
20	\$ 84,861.34	\$ 96,295.33	\$ 108,854.29	\$ 126,629.10	\$ 145,964.17	\$ 89,445.39	\$ 100,937.33	\$ 65,226.30	\$ 63,590.67	\$ 59,167.72	\$ 73,452.91	\$ 65,088.38

Date 9/16/2025

City Manager Finance Director

TCO/RECORDS SUPERVISOR
POLICE
\$ 81,754.92
\$ 50,102.38
\$ 50,716.87
\$ 51,331.35
\$ 52,068.74
\$ 53,051.92
\$ 54,526.69
\$ 56,984.64
\$ 59,442.59
\$ 61,900.54
\$ 64,358.49
\$ 66,570.65
\$ 68,537.01
\$ 70,257.58
\$ 70,994.96
\$ 71,609.44
\$ 72,223.93
\$ 72,838.42
\$ 73,452.91
\$ 77,492.82
\$ 81,754.92
\$ 81,754.92



City Council Agenda Item #[5.E]

Title: Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2979 approving amendment to Certification Pay Policy.

Date: October 6, 2025

From: Donna Fisher, HR Director

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the proposed amendment to Section 9.17 – Certification Pay, to include the new Certification Cost Reimbursement condition.

Item Summary: To promote retention and ensure responsible use of City funds, it is recommended that Section 9.17 of the Personnel Policy Handbook be amended to include the following condition:

Certification Cost Reimbursement

If the City pays for the cost of a certification class and/or testing, the employee must remain employed with the City for a minimum of two (2) years following the date of certification.

If the employee voluntarily separates employment before completing the two-year period, the employee must reimburse the City for the full cost of the certification class and/or testing. The City reserves the right to deduct any owed reimbursement from the employee's final paycheck, as permitted by law, or otherwise seek repayment.

Background Information: The City of Freeport currently provides certification pay to eligible employees in Police, Fire/EMS and other departments, as outlined in Personnel Policy Section 9.17. Certification Pay is intended to recognize and reward employees who obtain specialized credentials beyond minimum job requirements.

Currently, the City does not have a retention requirement tied to certifications that are paid for directly by the City (including certification classes and/or testing fees).

Special Considerations: N/A

Financial Impact: This amendment does not create a new budgetary cost. Instead it ensures the City can recoup funds if an employee voluntarily leaves employment before the two-year retention period has elapsed.

Board or 3rd Party Recommendation: N/A

Supporting Documentation:

979.233.3526 Fax 979.233.8867



1201 North Avenue H. Freeport, TX 77541

1. RESOLUTION Certification Pay DUNCAN 9.17
2. Certification pay revision

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-2979

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT, TEXAS, AMENDING THE CITY OF FREEPORT PERSONNEL POLICY HANDBOOK TO AMEND SECTION 9.17, TITLED “CERTIFICATION PAY”, TO REQUIRE A TWO-YEAR EMPLOYMENT COMMITMENT OR REIMBURSEMENT FOR CITY-PAID CERTIFICATION CLASSES AND/OR TESTING; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND CONTAINING OTHER PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE SUBJECT.

WHEREAS, the City of Freeport provides Certification Pay to eligible employees who obtain certifications above and beyond the minimum requirements of their job descriptions, as outlined in Section 9.17 of the Personnel Policy Handbook; and

WHEREAS, the City may, at its discretion, pay the costs of certification classes and/or testing for employees; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the City to ensure that employees who benefit from City-paid certifications remain employed for a reasonable period of time, or otherwise reimburse the City for its investment; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that a two-year minimum employment requirement following City-paid certification is fair and reasonable, and will promote employee retention and responsible fiscal management;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT, TEXAS:

SECTION 1. That Section 9.17 of the City of Freeport Personnel Policy Handbook is hereby amended to include the following provision:

Certification Cost Reimbursement

If the City pays for the cost of a certification class and/or testing, the employee must remain employed with the City for a minimum of two (2) years following the date of certification.

If the employee voluntarily separates employment prior to completing the two-year period, the employee shall reimburse the City for the full cost of the certification class and/or testing. The City reserves the right to deduct any owed reimbursement from the employee’s final paycheck, as permitted by law, or otherwise seek repayment.

SECTION 2. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

PASSED AND APPROVED this _____ day of _____, 2025, by the City Council of the City of Freeport, Texas.

Jerry Cain, Mayor
City of Freeport, Texas

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Clarisa Fernandez, City Secretary
City of Freeport

Chris Duncan, Interim City Attorney
City of Freeport

9.17 Certification Pay – Adopted 09/08/2020 * Updated 11/02/2020 *Updated 10/06/2025

General Policy

Effective fiscal year 2020-2021 (Oct. 1, 2020) all certification pay is paid-out on a **per pay period** basis, not annually. Written proof of certification is required. Pay begins in the pay period following receipt of the official certificate in HR. Certification Pay is **not retroactive**.

Because Certification Pay is paid-out to active employees on a per pay period basis, no additional certification pay is issued upon separation of employment.

In combination with Education Pay in Section 9.16, the maximum combined pay for Education and Certification is \$5,000.00 annually. Employees with existing Education and Certification pay above this maximum before October 1, 2020, will be grandfathered at their existing higher total annual amount, if all educational and certification qualifications are maintained.

Certification Cost Reimbursement

If the City pays for the cost of a certification class and/or testing, the employee must remain employed with the City for a minimum of two (2) years following the date of certification.

- If an employee voluntarily separates employment prior to the completion of this two-year period, the employee must reimburse the City for the full cost of the certification class and/or testing.
- This condition applies regardless of whether the employee receives Certification Pay for the credential.
- The City reserves the right to deduct any owed reimbursement from the employee's final paycheck, as permitted by law, or otherwise seek repayment.

CERTIFICATION PAY

POLICE/TCO:	YEARLY	PER PAY PD
Intermediate	\$ 500.00	\$ 19.23
Advanced	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 38.47
Master	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 57.70
FIRE/EMT:	YEARLY	PER PAY PD
Intermediate	\$ 600.00	\$ 23.08
Advanced	\$ 900.00	\$ 34.62
Master	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 57.70
Fire Engine Operator/Driver	\$ 3,600.00	\$ 138.46
EMS (TDSHS):	YEARLY	PER PAY PD
EMT-Intermediate	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 92.31

EMT-Paramedic	\$ 4,800.00	\$ 184.62
DEPARTMENT SPECIFIC CERTIFICATIONS:	YEARLY	PER PAY PD
Designated Language Interpreter [as deemed necessary by Director]	\$ 600.00	\$ 23.08
Functional Specialization: [approved by Director & City Manager; -excludes required minimums]	\$ 600.00	\$ 23.08
Secondary Specialization: (max of 2; second paid at 50%)	\$ 300.00	\$ 11.54

Key Notes

- Certification benefits apply only to certifications above and beyond minimum requirements stated in job descriptions.
- Examples of functional specialization include: Utilities/Wastewater, Heavy Equipment Operator, Pesticide Handler, SHRM-CP.
- Examples of language interpreter include: Spanish-speaking, if deemed necessary for departmental operations.



City Council Agenda Item #[5.F]

Title: Consideration and possible action regarding an application for rezoning submitted by Headway Estates, Ltd to rezone from R2 and MH to IN, a part of the Velasco Townsite North of Ave F, Southeast of Skinner Street & Northwest of Velasco Blvd.

Date: October 6, 2025

From: Reggie Harris, Building Official

Staff Recommendation: The item was heard before the P/Z committee and a recommendation given.

Item Summary: The Item was presented before the Planning and Zoning Committee on August 26, 2025. The item was rejected by the committee unanimously.

Background Information: The owner of the 291.518 acres wants to rezone the property for R2 and MH to IN.

Special Considerations: The property is located within the City of Freeport city limits.

Financial Impact: N/A

Board or 3rd Party Recommendation: N/A

Supporting Documentation:

1. Application for Rezoning_Redacted
2. Land Surveys 10062025



Application for Rezoning

OFFICE USE ONLY
Date Received: _____

Complete this application in its entirety and submit along with the required materials (including any required supplements) as listed on page 2 to the address below:

City of Freeport - Community Development Department
200 S. 2nd St
Freeport, TX 77541
Phone 979-871-0109

1. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Address or Location Part of the Velasco Townsite North of Ave. "F", Southeast of Skinner Street & Northwest of Velasco Boulevard

Current Zoning District R2 and MH Proposed Zoning District IN

Current Land Use Semi Urban Residential Infill and Manufactured Home Subdivision

Proposed Land Use Industrial

The proposed use will be in: ☐ an existing building ☐ a new addition ☐ a new building

2. PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION (an individual or a legal entity may be listed as owner)

Owner's Name Headway Estates, Ltd

Address [REDACTED] City Houston State Tx Zip 77057

Phone [REDACTED] Email [REDACTED]

3. APPLICANT INFORMATION (if different from owner)

Applicant's Name Blackline Engineering

Address [REDACTED] City Houston State Tx Zip 77057

Phone [REDACTED] Email [REDACTED]

4. APPLICANT AGENT INFORMATION (if different from applicant)

Agent's Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

5. CERTIFICATION FOR LEGAL ENTITY PROPERTY OWNERS

Complete this section only if the property owner is **not** an individual but rather a legal entity such as a corporation, trust, LLC, partnership, diocese, etc. as specified in Step 2 above.

"I hereby submit that I am legally authorized to execute this application on behalf of the fee-simple owner of this property. I have read this application and it is submitted with my full knowledge and consent. I authorize city staff and representatives to have access to this property for inspection. The information contained in this application is accurate and correct to the best of my knowledge."

Name(s), title(s), signature(s), and date(s) of authorized representative(s) of the legal entity (attach additional page if necessary):

Name of Legal Entity Headway Estates, Ltd.

Signed by:

Name (printed) Eric Linger, Its (title) Vice President

Signature [Signature] Date 7/30/2020

Name (printed) _____, Its (title) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Name (printed) _____, Its (title) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

6. CERTIFICATION FOR INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY OWNERS

Complete this section only if the property owner is an individual or individuals.

"I hereby submit that I am the fee-simple owner of this property. I have read this application and it is submitted with my full knowledge and consent. I authorize city staff and representatives to have access to this property for inspection. The information contained in this application is accurate and correct to the best of my knowledge."

Name(s), signature(s), and date(s) of owner(s) (attach additional page if necessary):

Name (printed) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Name (printed) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

OFFICE USE ONLY

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| ☐ Application Form | ☐ Narrative Statement | ☐ Other: _____ |
| ☐ Application Fee | ☐ Survey Plat | ☐ Additional materials (if required) |

City of Freeport – Community Development Department
200 S. 2nd Street
Freeport, Texas 77541

July 30, 2025

Re: Narrative Statement for Rezone of part of the Valesco Townsite

Dear Planning and Zoning Commission,

Headway Estates, Ltd. respectfully submits this rezoning request in support of the proposed Urban Renewal Project, which is designed to stimulate economic growth and expand industrial development within the region.

The primary request involves the rezoning of **291.518 acres**, currently designated as **R2 – Semi Urban Residential Infill** and **MH – Manufactured Home Subdivision** to **IN – Industrial Use**. This change will facilitate the development of an industrial and warehouse complex tailored to meet the increasing demand for logistics and industrial infrastructure from local businesses.

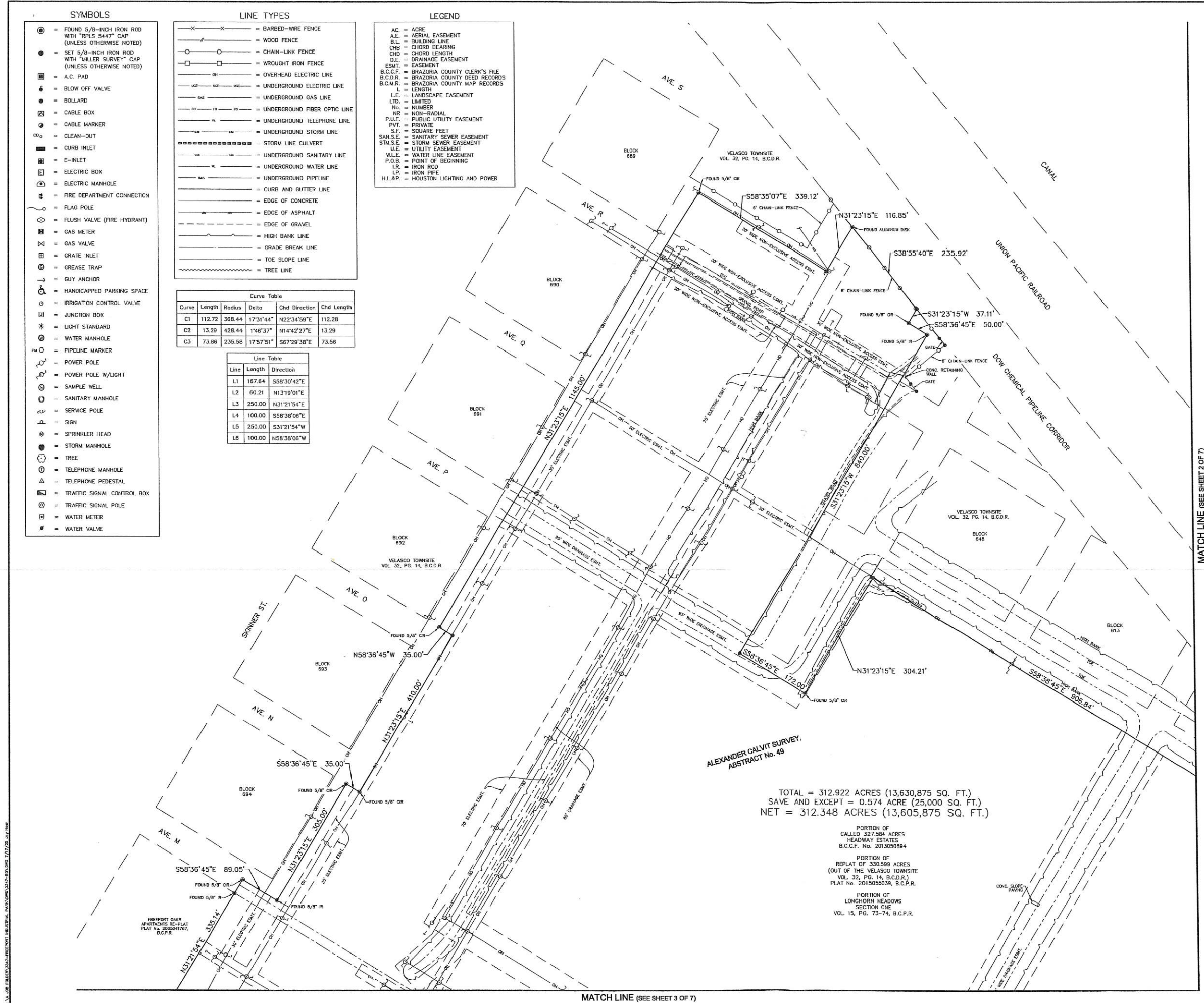
The broader site, originally platted with 20-foot-wide lots as part of the historic **Valesco Townsite**, was initially intended for residential development. However, evolving market conditions and regional economic trends now support a shift toward industrial use. This rezoning proposal is a direct response to those changes and is aimed at positioning the city for long-term economic growth and stability.

Key benefits of the proposed rezoning include:

- **Job Creation and Economic Growth:** The industrial park will support local industry, attract investment, and generate sustained employment opportunities.
- **Reduced Municipal Strain:** Industrial developments typically require less intensive municipal infrastructure—such as water, sewer, and public services—compared to higher-density residential development.
- **Infrastructure and Environmental Readiness:** A comprehensive drainage study has been completed to ensure the development will not result in increased runoff or flooding, thereby protecting neighboring properties.

- **Strategic Plan Alignment:** The rezoning supports the City's Strategic Plan by broadening the tax base, encouraging industrial investment, and fostering smart, sustainable land use.

In summary, this rezoning represents a forward-looking development initiative that supports the City's economic objectives while reducing infrastructure demands and respecting surrounding land uses. Headway Estates is committed to responsible development that contributes to the City's long-term prosperity and industrial resilience.



- SYMBOLS**
- = FOUND 5/8-INCH IRON ROD WITH "RPLS 5447" CAP (UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)
 - = SET 5/8-INCH IRON ROD WITH "MILLER SURVEY" CAP (UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)
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 - = BLOW OFF VALVE
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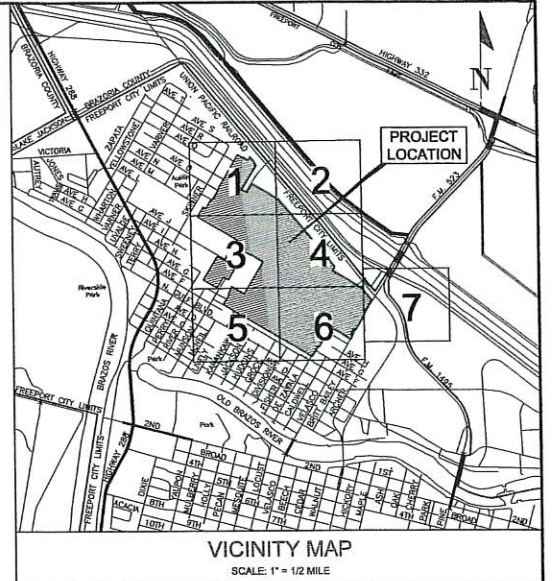
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 - H.L.&P. = HOUSTON LIGHTING AND POWER

Curve Table

Curve	Length	Radius	Delta	Chd Direction	Chd Length
C1	112.72	368.44	17°31'44"	N22°34'59"E	112.28
C2	13.29	428.44	1°46'37"	N14°42'27"E	13.29
C3	73.86	235.58	17°57'51"	S67°29'38"E	73.56

Line Table

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L4	100.00	S58°38'08"E
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- NOTES:**
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 - AS PER SAID COMMITMENT FOR TITLE INSURANCE THE SURVEYED PROPERTY LIES WITHIN FREEPORT MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT No. 1.

TO: HEADWAY ESTATES, LTD., A TEXAS LIMITED PARTNERSHIP AND FIDELITY NATIONAL TITLE INSURANCE COMPANY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS SURVEY SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLIES WITH THE CURRENT TEXAS SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL SURVEYORS MANUAL OF PRACTICE REQUIREMENTS FOR A CATEGORY 1B, CONDITION 2 SURVEY.

DATED THIS 17TH DAY OF JULY, 2025

Anthony R. Peacock
ANTHONY R. PEACOCK, R.L.S.
TEXAS REGISTRATION No. 5047
PEACOCK@MILLERSURVEY.COM

STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF BRAZORIA
REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYOR
5047

N. VELASCO BLVD.
FREEPORT, TX 77541

SHEET 1 OF 7

STANDARD LAND SURVEY
312.922 ACRES (13,630,875 SQ. FT.)

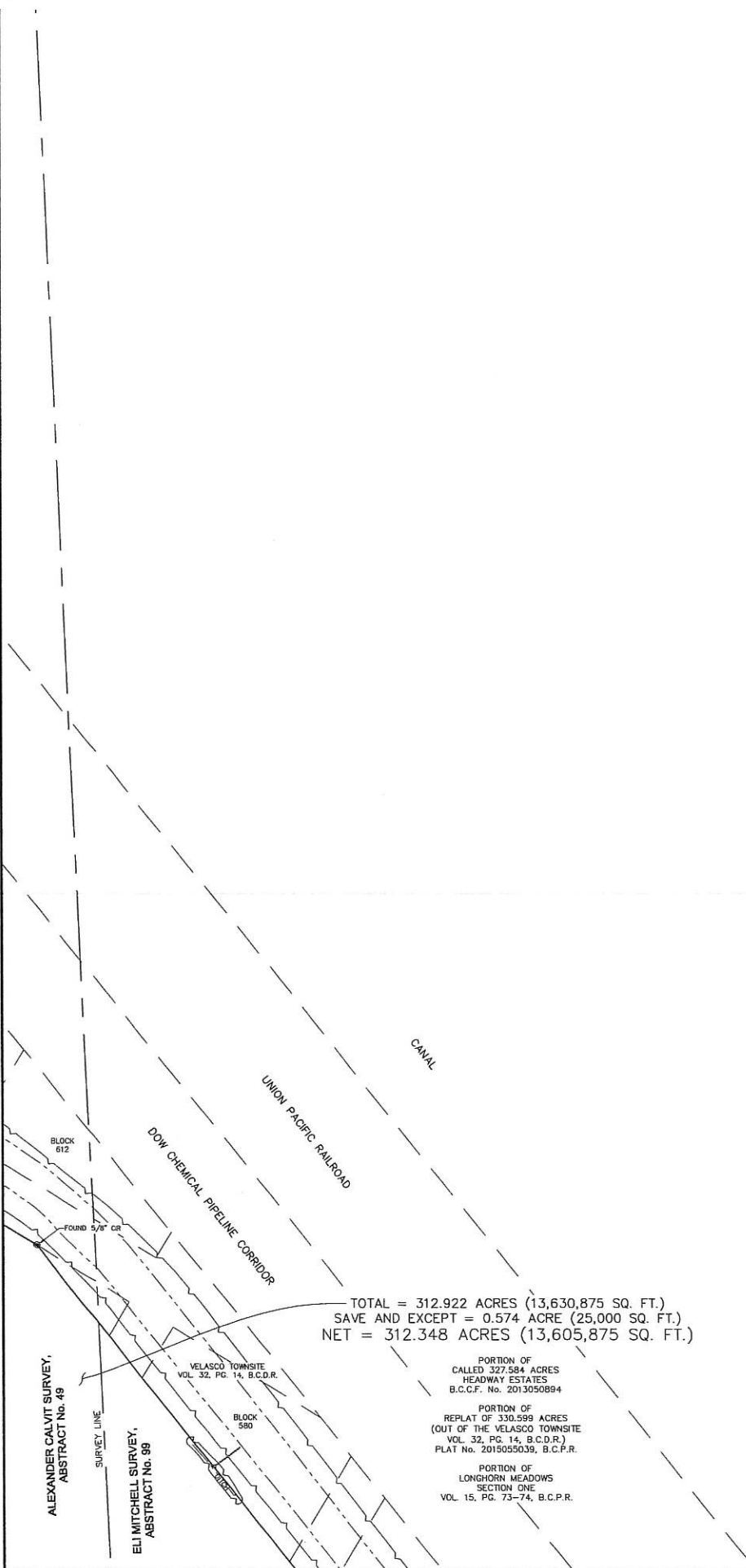
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CITY OF FREEPORT, BRAZORIA COUNTY, TEXAS

MillerSurvey | Firm Reg. No. 10047100
1760 W. Sam Houston Pkwy N.
Houston, TX 77043
713.413.1900 | millersurvey.com

DCCM

JOB No.: 70085 (3347) | SCALE: 1"= 100' | DATE: 07/17/2025 | FIELD BOOK: 25-036/HM
DWG. No.: 3347-BDY.DWG | DRAWN BY: SG | CHECKED BY: BJN/ARP | M&B No.: 251131

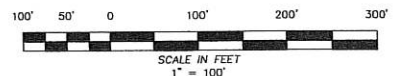
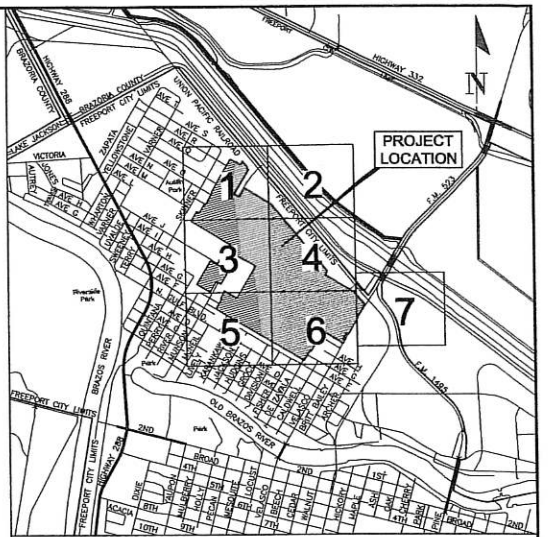
MATCH LINE (SEE SHEET 1 OF 7)



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N. VELASCO BLVD.
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SHEET 2 OF 7

REVISED:

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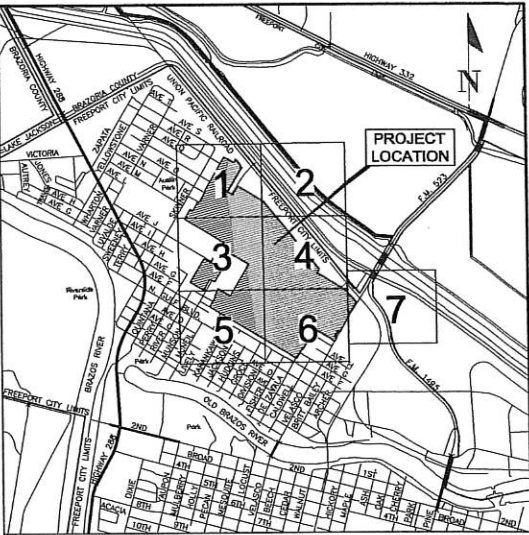
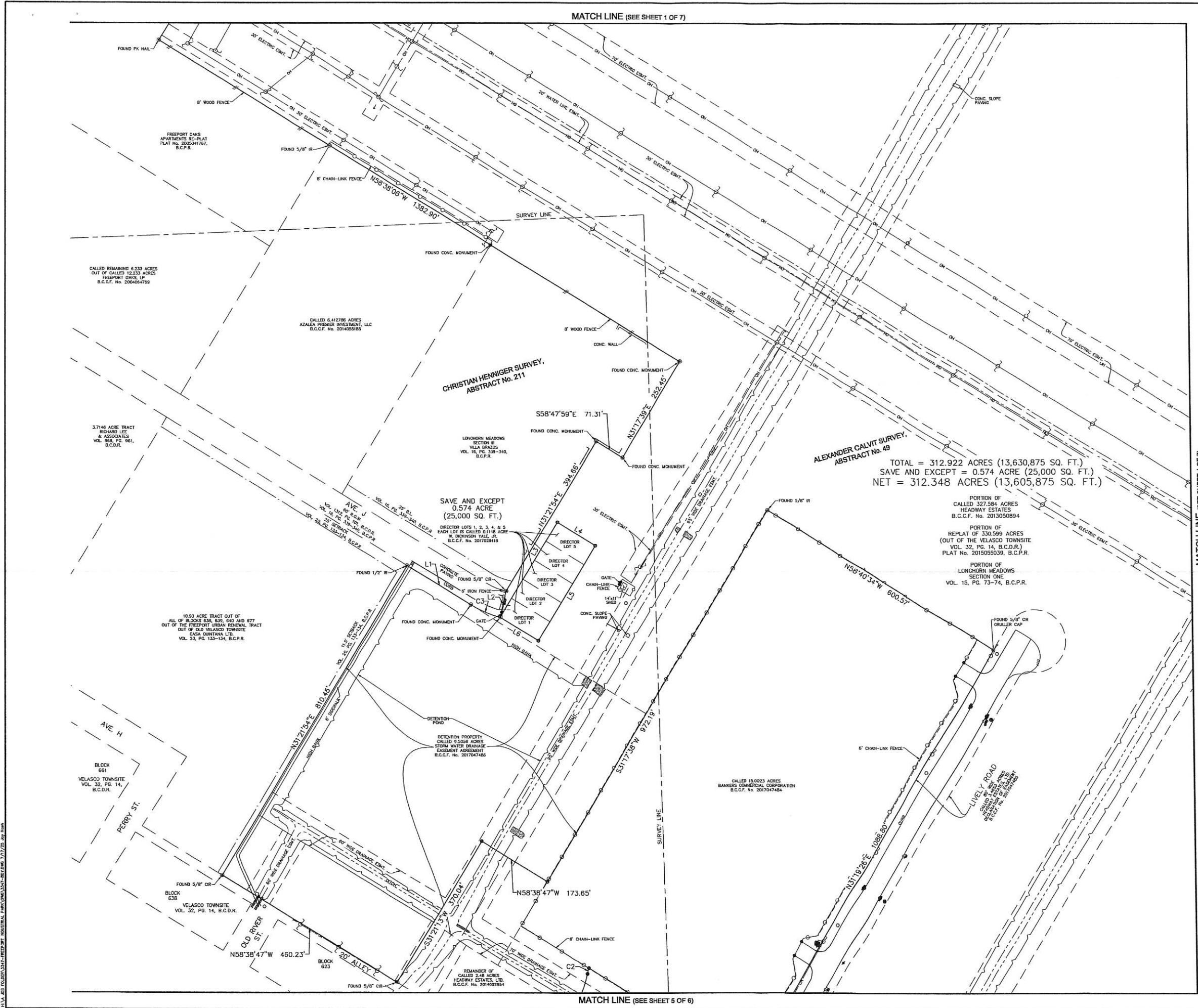
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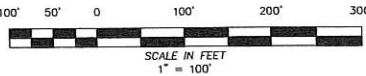
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DWG. No.: 3347-BDY.DWG DRAWN BY: SG CHECKED BY: BJN/ARP M&B No.: 251131

MATCH LINE (SEE SHEET 4 OF 7)



VICINITY MAP



- NOTES:
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 8. AS PER SAID COMMITMENT FOR TITLE INSURANCE THE SURVEYED PROPERTY LIES WITHIN FREEPORT MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT No. 1.

Curve Table				
Curve	Length	Radius	Delta	Chd Direction
C1	112.72	368.44	173°1'44"	N22°34'59"E
C2	13.29	428.44	1°46'37"	N14°42'27"E
C3	73.86	235.58	175°57'51"	S67°29'38"E

Line Table		
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N. VELASCO BLVD.
FREEPORT, TX 77541

SHEET 3 OF 7

STANDARD LAND SURVEY
312.922 ACRES (13,630,875 SQ. FT.)

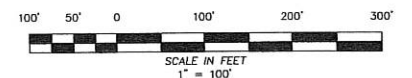
LOCATED IN THE
ALEXANDER CALVIT SURVEY, ABSTRACT No. 49,
ELI MITCHELL SURVEY, ABSTRACT No. 99 AND
CHRISTIAN HENNIGER SURVEY, ABSTRACT No. 211
CITY OF FREEPORT, BRAZORIA COUNTY, TEXAS

MillerSurvey

Miller Survey | Firm Reg. No. 10047100
1760 W. Sam Houston Pkwy N.
Houston, TX 77043
713.413.1900 | millersurvey.com

DCCM

JOB No.: 70085 (3347)	SCALE: 1" = 100'	DATE: 07/17/2025	FIELD BOOK: 25-036/HM
DWG. No.: 3347-BDY.DWG	DRAWN BY: SG	CHECKED BY: BJA/ARP	M&B No.: 251131



8. AS PER SAID COMMITMENT FOR TITLE INSURANCE THE SURVEYED PROPERTY LIES WITHIN FREEPORT MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT No. 1.

Line Table		
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L1	167.64	S58°30'42"E
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SHEET 4 OF 7

STANDARD LAND SURVEY
312.922 ACRES (13,630,875 SQ. FT.)

LOCATED IN THE
ALEXANDER CALVIT SURVEY, ABSTRACT No. 49,
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DECM

JOB No.: 70065 (3347)	SCALE: 1"= 100'	DATE: 07/17/2025	FIELD BOOK: 25-036/HM
DWG. No.: 3347-BDY.DWG	DRAWN BY: SG	CHECKED BY: BJN/ARP	M&B No.: 251131

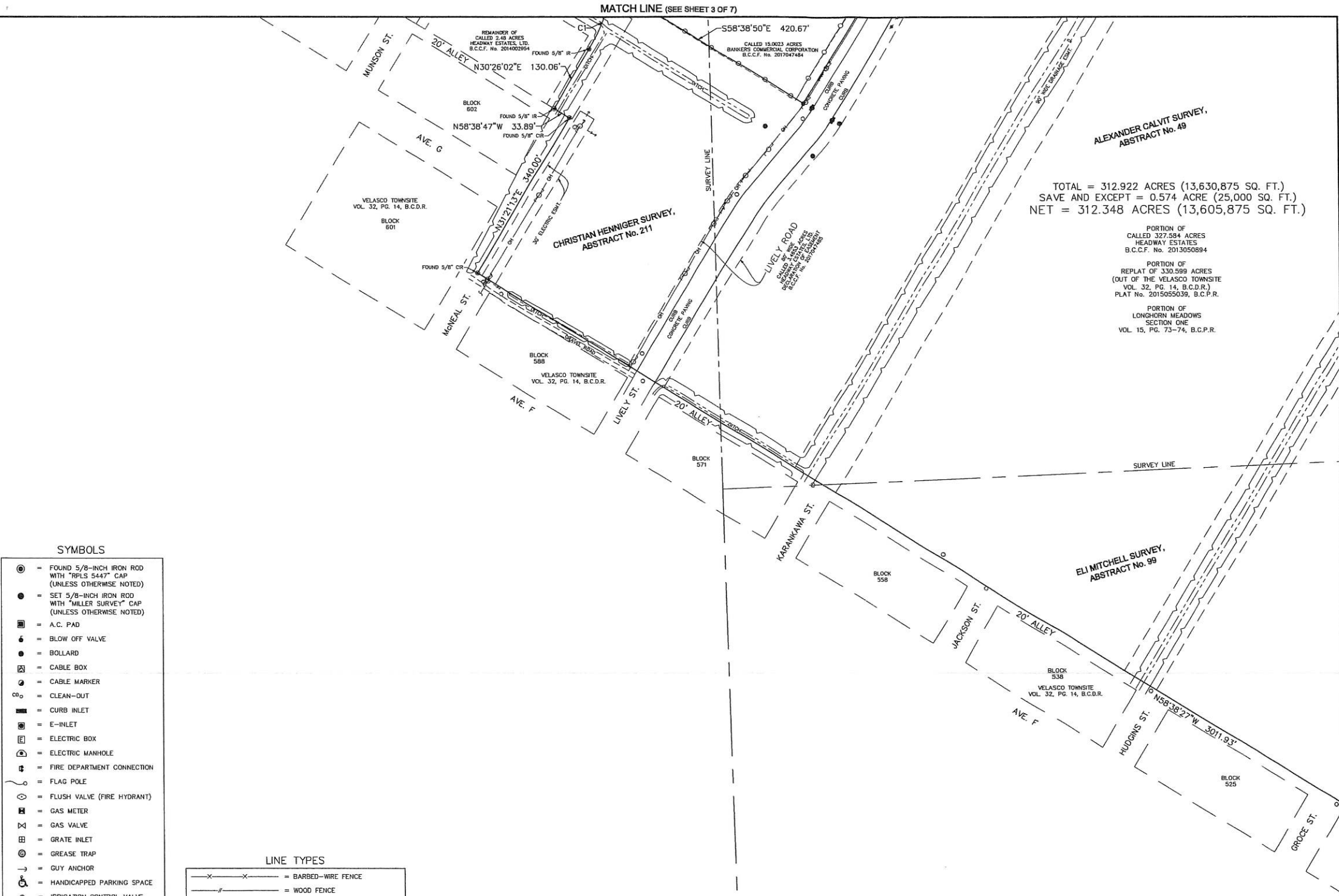
4: A JOB FOLDER\3347-FREEPORT INDUSTRIAL PARK.DWG 3347-BOY.DWG 7/17/25 Jay Neath

N:\A_038_FLOODPLAIN\312-7500\312-7500.DWG 7/17/25 BJJ/HM

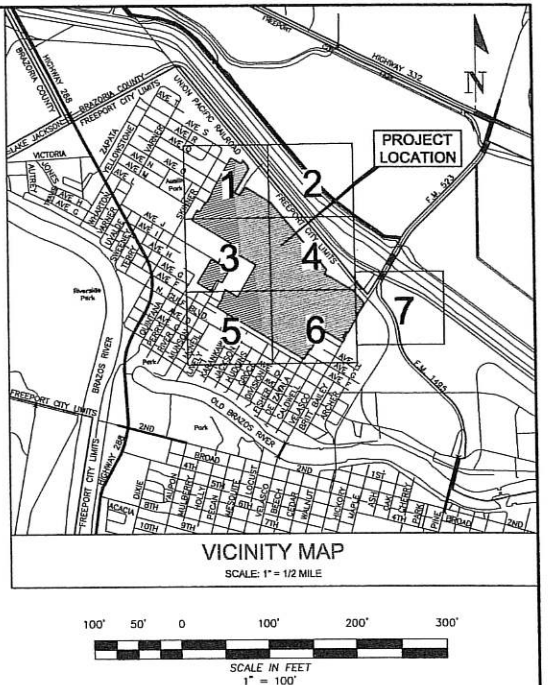
SYMBOLS	
	= FOUND 5/8-INCH IRON ROD WITH "RPLS 5447" CAP (UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)
	= SET 5/8-INCH IRON ROD WITH "MILLER SURVEY" CAP (UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)
	= A.C. PAD
	= BLOW OFF VALVE
	= BOLLARD
	= CABLE BOX
	= CABLE MARKER
	= CLEAN-OUT
	= CURB INLET
	= E-INLET
	= ELECTRIC BOX
	= ELECTRIC MANHOLE
	= FIRE DEPARTMENT CONNECTION
	= FLAG POLE
	= FLUSH VALVE (FIRE HYDRANT)
	= GAS METER
	= GAS VALVE
	= GRATE INLET
	= GREASE TRAP
	= GUY ANCHOR
	= HANDICAPPED PARKING SPACE
	= IRRIGATION CONTROL VALVE
	= JUNCTION BOX
	= LIGHT STANDARD
	= WATER MANHOLE
	= PIPELINE MARKER
	= POWER POLE
	= POWER POLE W/LIGHT
	= SAMPLE WELL
	= SANITARY MANHOLE
	= SERVICE POLE
	= SIGN
	= SPRINKLER HEAD
	= STORM MANHOLE
	= TREE
	= TELEPHONE MANHOLE
	= TELEPHONE PEDESTAL
	= TRAFFIC SIGNAL CONTROL BOX
	= TRAFFIC SIGNAL POLE
	= WATER METER
	= WATER VALVE

LINE TYPES	
	= BARBED-WIRE FENCE
	= WOOD FENCE
	= CHAIN-LINK FENCE
	= WROUGHT IRON FENCE
	= OVERHEAD ELECTRIC LINE
	= UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC LINE
	= UNDERGROUND GAS LINE
	= UNDERGROUND FIBER OPTIC LINE
	= UNDERGROUND TELEPHONE LINE
	= UNDERGROUND STORM LINE
	= STORM LINE CULVERT
	= UNDERGROUND SANITARY LINE
	= UNDERGROUND WATER LINE
	= UNDERGROUND PIPELINE
	= CURB AND GUTTER LINE
	= EDGE OF CONCRETE
	= EDGE OF ASPHALT
	= EDGE OF GRAVEL
	= HIGH BANK LINE
	= GRADE BREAK LINE
	= TOE SLOPE LINE
	= TREE LINE

LEGEND	
AC.	= ACRE
A.E.	= AERIAL EASEMENT
B.L.	= BUILDING LINE
CHB	= CHORD BEARING
CHD	= CHORD LENGTH
D.E.	= DRAINAGE EASEMENT
ESMT.	= EASEMENT
B.C.C.F.	= BRAZORIA COUNTY CLERK'S FILE
B.C.D.R.	= BRAZORIA COUNTY DEED RECORDS
B.C.M.R.	= BRAZORIA COUNTY MAP RECORDS
L	= LENGTH
L.E.	= LANDSCAPE EASEMENT
LTD.	= LIMITED
No.	= NUMBER
NR	= NON-RADIAL
P.U.E.	= PUBLIC UTILITY EASEMENT
P.V.T.	= PRIVATE
S.F.	= SQUARE FEET
SAN.S.E.	= SANITARY SEWER EASEMENT
STM.S.E.	= STORM SEWER EASEMENT
U.E.	= UTILITY EASEMENT
W.L.E.	= WATER LINE EASEMENT
P.O.B.	= POINT OF BEGINNING
I.R.	= IRON ROD
I.P.	= IRON PIPE
H.L.&P.	= HOUSTON LIGHTING AND POWER



MATCH LINE (SEE SHEET 6 OF 7)



- NOTES:
1. THIS SURVEY WAS PREPARED WITH THE BENEFIT OF A COMMITMENT FOR TITLE INSURANCE ISSUED BY FIDELITY NATIONAL TITLE INSURANCE COMPANY, COMMITMENT No. 1076602500040, OF No. CH-7660-1076602500040, WITH AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF FEBRUARY 5, 2025, ISSUED ON FEBRUARY 12, 2025, WITH REGARD TO ANY RECORDED EASEMENTS, RIGHTS-OF-WAY OR SETBACKS AFFECTING THE SURVEYED PROPERTY. NO ADDITIONAL RESEARCH REGARDING THE EXISTENCE OF EASEMENTS, RESTRICTIONS, OR OTHER MATTERS OF RECORD HAS BEEN PERFORMED BY THE SURVEYOR.
 2. ALL BEARINGS SHOWN HEREON ARE REFERENCED TO THE TEXAS COORDINATE SYSTEM, SOUTH CENTRAL ZONE No. 4204, NORTH AMERICAN DATUM OF 1983 (NAD83), WITH A PROJECT AVERAGE COMBINED SCALE FACTOR OF 0.99988730089, AS PER GPS OBSERVATIONS.
 3. ACCORDING TO THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA) FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP No. 480350080K, EFFECTIVE DATE OF 12/30/2020, THE SURVEYED PROPERTY LIES WITHIN ZONE "X" (UNSHADED). AREAS DETERMINED TO BE OUTSIDE THE 0.2% ANNUAL CHANCE FLOODPLAIN AND ZONE "AE", SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREAS SUBJECT TO INUNDATION BY THE 1% ANNUAL CHANCE FLOOD EVENT, BASE FLOOD ELEVATION DETERMINED.
 4. ALL EASEMENTS AND BUILDING LINES PLOTTED HEREON ARE AS PER PLAT No. 2015055039, B.C.P.R., UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.
 5. AS PER SAID COMMITMENT FOR TITLE INSURANCE THE SURVEYED PROPERTY IS AFFECTED BY A STORM WATER DRAINAGE EASEMENT AGREEMENT RECORDED IN B.C.C.F. No. 2017047486. (DETENTION PROPERTY IS PLOTTED HEREON)
 6. AS PER SAID COMMITMENT FOR TITLE INSURANCE THE SURVEYED PROPERTY IS AFFECTED BY A SHORT FORM BLANKET EASEMENT RECORDED IN B.C.C.F. No. 2018032013. (BLANKET TYPE EASEMENT, UNABLE TO PLOT THE EXACT LOCATION)
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N. VELASCO BLVD.
FREEPORT, TX 77541

SHEET 5 OF 7

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DCCM

JOB No.: 70065 (3347) SCALE: 1" = 100' DATE: 07/17/2025 FIELD BOOK: 25-036/HM
DWG. No.: 3347-BDY.DWG DRAWN BY: SG CHECKED BY: BJJ/ARP M&B No.: 251131



City Council Agenda Item #[5.G]

Title: Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2970 to approve a water bill credit for the winners of Code Division's "Yard of the Month".

Date: October 6, 2025

From: Chief Jennifer Howell, Police Chief

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of resolution to allow a water bill credit to be issued each month to the winners of the Code Division "Yard of the Month".

Item Summary: The Freeport Police Department's Code Division has worked toward a collaborative approach working with the community for a better Freeport. The Yard of the Month is designed to promote positive interactions between Code and the community. The public purpose for a city to give a water bill credit for winning "yard of the month" is to promote community recognition and encourage residents to maintain and beautify their yards. This initiative can serve as a means to enhance community pride and encourage active participation in maintaining a clean and attractive environment. Additionally, it may promote tourism and local economic activity by encouraging residents to engage in yard maintenance and beautification efforts.

Background Information:

Special Considerations: N/A

Financial Impact: The total credit could be up to \$2400 a year, or \$200 a month, for one credit for each ward.

Board or 3rd Party Recommendation: N/A

Supporting Documentation:

1. Resolution Yard of the Month 09302025
2. Yard of the Month Vote

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-2970

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT CREATING
“YARD OF THE MONTH” PROGRAM AND PROVIDING FOR AN AWARD OF A
WATER DISCOUNT.**

WHEREAS, the City Council acknowledges their appreciation of citizens that devote their time and efforts to beautify our city through exemplary landscaping and yard maintenance; and

WHEREAS, the City Council wants to create a “Yard of the Month” program to recognize outstanding effort and provide for an award each month in the form of a water bill credit; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to promote community beautification, water conservation, and neighborhood pride by recognizing residents who maintain exceptional yards and gardens.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT THAT:

Section 1. The City Council hereby finds that the facts set forth in the above preamble are true and correct.

Section 2. The City Council hereby adopts the “City of Freeport Water Bill Credit for Yard of the Month Policy” attached to this Resolution as Exhibit A, incorporated herein for all purposes.

PASSED AND APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2025.

Jerry Cain, Mayor
City of Freeport, Texas

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Clarisa Fernandez, City Secretary
City of Freeport

Chris Duncan, Interim City Attorney
City of Freeport

EXHIBIT A

City of Freeport Water Bill Credit for Yard of the Month Policy

Policy

To create a standardized procedure for selecting and awarding a residential yard of the month.

Purpose

The public purpose for a city to give a water bill credit for winning "yard of the month" is to promote community recognition and encourage residents to maintain and beautify their yards. This initiative can serve as a means to enhance community pride and encourage active participation in maintaining a clean and attractive environment. Additionally, it may promote tourism and local economic activity by encouraging residents to engage in yard maintenance and beautification efforts.

Eligibility

- Must be a residential water customer in the City of Freeport.
- Must be current on all utility bills.
- Property must comply with local ordinances and not be in violation of any city ordinances.
- Must not have received the award in the last 12 months.

Selection Criteria

- Overall appearance and curb appeal.
- Creativity and use of landscaping features.
- Evidence of water-wise or drought-tolerant landscaping practices.
- Cleanliness and maintenance (e.g., trimmed grass, no clutter).

Award

- One winner per ward will be selected each month.
- The winner will receive a \$50 credit on their next water bill.
- A "Yard of the Month" sign may be displayed in the yard for recognition during the month.
- Winners may be featured/recognized on City of Freeport website, City Council meetings and social media platforms.

Nomination and Selection Process

- Residents may nominate themselves or others.
- Nominations must be submitted by the 20th of each month.
- The Code & Health Division of the Freeport Police Department will provide nominations to the Parks and Beautification Committee and together they will review and select the winner by the 30th of each month.
- A minimum of two members of Code Division and two members from the Parks Committee, but no more than four from one group, must submit a vote.
- The winning yard will be announced on the 1st business day of the following month.

Example: 123 Main Street is selected and announced on September 1st for Yard of the Month. They will receive a credit on their bill issued September 15th, which is due October 5th.

Terms and Conditions

- The credit has no cash value and is non-transferable.
- City Employees and City Council Members are ineligible to win.
- The program may be modified or terminated at any time at the discretion of the City of Freeport City Council.



FREEPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT

430 N. Brazosport Blvd • Freeport, TX 77541 • 979.239.1211 • Fax 979.239.2075

Code & Health Division

Yard of the Month Nominations: _____ (Month & Year)

Circle/Select One Address Per Ward:

A	YES _____	YES _____
	YES _____	YES _____
	YES _____	YES _____
	YES _____	YES _____
B	YES _____	YES _____
	YES _____	YES _____
	YES _____	YES _____
	YES _____	YES _____
C	YES _____	YES _____
	YES _____	YES _____
	YES _____	YES _____
	YES _____	YES _____
D	YES _____	YES _____
	YES _____	YES _____
	YES _____	YES _____
	YES _____	YES _____

I understand that I am not to discuss my vote or addresses selected with anyone outside of the Code Division as the final candidates have to be confirmed that they qualify and meet the criteria.

Employee/Board: _____
Print Name Signature Date

For Office Use Only:

Code Enforcement Supervisor: _____ Approved [] Denied []
Finance Director: _____ Completed [] Denied []
Denied Reason: _____





City Council Agenda Item #[5.H]

Title: Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2980 replacing Section 9.14 of the Employee Handbook and Establishing a Travel Authorization and Expense Policy.

Date: October 6, 2025

From: Chief Jennifer Howell, Police Chief

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the resolution.

Item Summary: This resolution adopts a comprehensive Travel Authorization and Expense Policy that provides guidelines for allowable travel expenses, reimbursement procedures, required documentation, and enforcement measures. The policy applies to all employees and City officials traveling outside the City on City business and ensures consistent standards for travel authorization, advance reporting, and eligible expenses.

Background Information: The City seeks to promote fairness, accountability, and responsible use of public funds related to travel. Currently, procedures for travel authorization and expense reimbursement vary across departments. This resolution establishes clear, consistent guidelines, including requirements for prior authorization, use of City credit cards or vehicles, and limits on reimbursable costs such as meals, lodging, and mileage. It also prohibits certain expenses such as non-hotel lodging, rental cars, and rideshare services unless specifically pre-approved.

Special Considerations:

- Travel expense eligibility is based on distance from Freeport
- Strict documentation standards are required, including itemized receipts and submission within 10 days of travel.
- Noncompliance may result in denial of reimbursement or disciplinary action.
- This policy takes effect immediately upon adoption.

Financial Impact: The policy is expected to improve accountability and ensure appropriate use of City funds but does not create new budgetary allocations. Expenses will continue to be funded through departmental travel budgets as approved in the annual budget process.

Board or 3rd Party Recommendation: N/A



Supporting Documentation:

1. City Travel Resolution DUNCAN (1)
2. Travel and Training Expense Report
3. Travel Reimbursement Policy
4. Travel Reimbursement Policy

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-2980

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT, TEXAS, ESTABLISHING A TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION AND EXPENSE POLICY FOR CITY EMPLOYEES AND CITY OFFICIALS TRAVELING OUT OF THE CITY ON CITY BUSINESS FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES; PROVIDING FOR ALLOWED EXPENSES, REQUIRED RECEIPTS, PROHIBITED EXPENSES, AND PROCEDURES; REPLACING SECTION 9.14 OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Freeport desires to establish a uniform policy to govern travel expenditures and reimbursements for City employees and City officials who travel outside the City on City business for public purposes; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the City to ensure fairness, accountability, and responsible use of public funds for travel expenses;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT, TEXAS:

Section 1. Purpose

This Travel Authorization and Expense Policy shall apply to all City employees and City officials who travel out of the City on City business for public purposes. The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines for applicable travel expenses and ensure proper accountability through itemized receipts and prior authorization.

Section 2. Travel Authorization

All out-of-City travel on official City business must be authorized in advance by the department head or City Manager, unless said travel is taken by city council members or the city attorney. All travelers must complete a Travel Advance and Expense Report prior to departure, stating the purpose, destination, dates, and estimated costs of the trip. Additionally, a course flyer, advertisement or event guideline must be submitted with travel report.

Section 3. Allowed Expenses

In most cases a hotel room will be reserved via the use of a city issued credit card. Any purchases over the allotted credit card amount must be emailed for authorization to increase the card limit 3-7 days prior to travel. The following expenses will be eligible for reimbursement when incurred in the course of City business travel:

- A. Hotel Accommodations – Hotel stays must be booked in advance and for the duration of the authorized event only. Additional days beyond the event will not be reimbursed. Airbnb, short-term rentals, and non-hotel lodging will not be reimbursed. **Only applies to those traveling fifty (50) miles or more outside of Freeport, Texas.**
- B. Mileage – Mileage for use of a personal vehicle, calculated from City Hall or the employee/city official's assigned work location (whichever is closer) to the event destination, reimbursed at the current IRS mileage rate. **Only applies to those traveling twenty (20) miles or more outside of Freeport, Texas.**

1. If the department has a vehicle for training that can be used, a request must be submitted to the department head or designee for the use a city owned vehicle for travel. If department vehicle is authorized, a city credit card/fuel card will be used for fuel for the duration of the trip.
 - a) Credit card/fuel card must be checked out prior to travel.
 - b) Receipts must be maintained by employee/city official.
 - c) Each receipt must state: the employee/city official name, the unit, mileage and the reason for use.
 - d) At the end of travel, receipts and credit card/fuel card must be returned to the department head or designee.
 2. If a department vehicle is not available for the travel, an employee/city official is permitted to take their personal vehicle and will be reimbursed at the current IRS mileage rate.
 3. If a department vehicle is available but the employee chooses not to use it, mileage reimbursement will not be provided.
- C. Meals/Per Diem – Daily per diem amounts will follow IRS guidelines. Meals provided by conferences or events must be deducted from the daily allowance. **Only applies to those traveling forty (40) miles or more outside of Freeport, Texas.**
1. To receive per diem prior to travel, requests must be submitted at 14 days in advance and must include travel location, travel dates and approved department travel authorization.
 - 2.. Meal Receipt Reimbursement Guidelines:
 - a) Receipts must be itemized to clearly show all purchased items.
 - b) Gratuity reimbursement is limited to a maximum of 20%.
 - c) Dinner or late evening meals are eligible for reimbursement only during overnight travel.
- D. Parking – Parking fees at the hotel or at the event location will be reimbursed when supported by itemized receipts.
1. Parking fees included in the hotel bill and reflected in the total charges will be considered an approved expense.

Section 4. Required Documentation

To ensure proper use of city funds, the following documentation is required:

- A. All expenses must be supported by itemized receipts.
- B. Summary credit card receipts will not be accepted.
- C. The receipts must correspond with training dates and times.
- D. All receipts must be submitted no later than ten (10) calendar days following return from travel, unless authorized by Department Head or City Manager.

Section 5. Prohibited Expenses

The following expenses will **not** be reimbursed by the City:

- A. Airbnb, vacation rentals, or non-hotel lodging unless pre-approved by Department Head or City Manager.
- B. Rental cars, unless pre-approved by Department Head or City Manager.
- C. Hotel incidentals, including but not limited to movies, room service, mini-bar, spa, laundry, and personal purchases.
- D. Additional days at the hotel not directly tied to the City business purpose of the trip.
- E. Alcoholic beverages or personal entertainment.
- F. Ride share services, including but not limited to Uber, Lyft, or similar providers, unless pre-approved by Department Head or City Manager.

Section 6. Travel Time

If travel is required to attend training, conferences, or events, other than the employee normal work station or within the city, travel time may be compensated. The following conditions are evaluated for travel time:

- A. For overnight travel, time spent in transit on both the departure day and return to day.
- B. For same day travel, time spent traveling to and from the training if outside the employee's work station or city limits.

Section 7. Enforcement

Failure to comply with this policy, including failure to provide itemized receipts, may result in denial of reimbursement and/or disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the City.

Section 8. Effective Date

This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption and shall replace Section 9.14 of the City of Freeport Employee Handbook in its entirety.

PASSED AND APPROVED this _____ day of _____, 2025, by the City Council of the City of Freeport, Texas.

Jerry Cain, Mayor
City of Freeport, Texas

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Clarisa Fernandez, City Secretary
City of Freeport

Chris Duncan, Interim City Attorney
City of Freeport

City of Freeport Travel Advance and Expense Report

To be completed by employee/official prior to travel and approved before funds are issued

Date: _____ Employee/Official Name: _____

Department: _____ Job Title: _____

Travel Dates: _____ Travel Location: _____

Travel Purpose: Training/Conference Event Cost: _____

(Please attach course flyer, advertisement or event guideline with report)

Category	Estimated Cost	Notes/Details
Hotel (City Credit Card)	\$ _____	Attach reservation confirmation
Mileage (Personal Vehicle @ IRS Rate)	\$ _____	From City Hall or worksite to destination
Per Diem (Meals)	\$ _____	Deduct meals provided by event
Parking Fees	\$ _____	Attach hotel/event parking info
Other (Explain)	\$ _____	
Total Estimated	\$ _____	

To ensure proper use of city funds, the following documentation is required:

- All expenses must be supported by itemized receipts.
- Summary credit card receipts will not be accepted.
- The receipts must correspond with training dates and times.
- All receipts must be submitted no later than ten (10) calendar days following return from travel, unless authorized by Department Head or City Manager.

Traveler (Print, Sign & Date) : _____

Dept Head/City Manager (Print, Sign & Date) : _____

Will the department be responsible for issuing and tracking vehicle and credit card/fuel card usage?

☐ Yes ☐ No *If no, the below information is to be completed by Finance or Department Head.*

For Office Use Only:

Fuel Card: ☐ Yes ☐ No Last 2 # _____ Credit Card: ☐ Yes ☐ No Last 4 # _____

City Vehicle used? ☐ Yes ☐ No Dept: _____ Unit #: _____

Other: _____

9.14 Travel Reimbursement - REVISED 08/03/2020

The City of Freeport will pay per diem expense for travel based on the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) Standard Rate dependent upon destination. Employees must submit an event schedule that includes start and end times, including meals. Meals that are provided and covered in registration fees will be deducted from per diem. Approved meals will be reimbursed at GSA Standard Rates for meals and incidentals.

9.14 Travel Authorization and Expense Policy

Purpose

This Travel Authorization and Expense Policy shall apply to all City employees and City officials who travel out of the City on City business for public purposes. The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines for applicable travel expenses and ensure proper accountability through itemized receipts and prior authorization.

Travel Authorization

All out-of-City travel on official City business must be authorized in advance by the department head or City Manager. Travelers must complete a Travel Advance and Expense Report prior to departure, stating the purpose, destination, dates, and estimated costs of the trip. Additionally, a course flyer, advertisement or event guideline must be submitted with travel report.

Allowed Expenses

In most cases a hotel room will be reserved via the use of a city issued credit card. Any purchases over the allotted credit card amount must be emailed for authorization to increase the card limit 3-7 days prior to travel. The following expenses will be eligible for reimbursement when incurred in the course of approved City business travel:

- A. Hotel Accommodations – Hotel stays must be booked in advance and for the duration of the authorized event only. Additional days beyond the event will not be reimbursed. Airbnb, short-term rentals, and non-hotel lodging will not be reimbursed. **Only applies to those traveling fifty (50) miles or more outside of Freeport, Texas.**
- B. Mileage – Mileage for use of a personal vehicle, calculated from City Hall or the employee/city official's assigned work location (whichever is closer) to the event destination, reimbursed at the current IRS mileage rate. **Only applies to those traveling twenty (20) miles or more outside of Freeport, Texas.**
 - 1. If the department has a vehicle for training that can be used, a request must be submitted to the department head or designee for the use a city owned vehicle for travel. If department vehicle is authorized, a city credit card/fuel card will be used for fuel for the duration of the trip.
 - a) Credit card/fuel card must be checked out prior to travel.
 - b) Receipts must be maintained by employee/city official.
 - c) Each receipt must state: the employee/city official name, the unit, mileage and the reason for use.
 - d) At the end of travel, receipts and credit card/fuel card must be returned to the department head or designee.
 - 2. If a department vehicle is not available for the travel, an employee/city official is permitted to take their personal vehicle and will be reimbursed at the current IRS mileage rate.

3. If a department vehicle is available but the employee chooses not to use it, mileage reimbursement will not be provided.
- C. Meals/Per Diem – Daily per diem amounts will follow IRS guidelines. Meals provided by conferences or events must be deducted from the daily allowance. **Only applies to those traveling forty (40) miles or more outside of Freeport, Texas.**
1. To receive per diem prior to travel, requests must be submitted at 14 days in advance and must include travel location, travel dates and approved department travel authorization.
 - 2.. Meal Receipt Reimbursement Guidelines:
 - a) Receipts must be itemized to clearly show all purchased items.
 - b) Gratuity reimbursement is limited to a maximum of 20%.
 - c) Dinner or late evening meals are eligible for reimbursement only during overnight travel.
- D. Parking – Parking fees at the hotel or at the event location will be reimbursed when supported by itemized receipts.
1. Parking fees included in the hotel bill and reflected in the total charges will be considered an approved expense.

Required Documentation

To ensure proper use of city funds, the following documentation is required:

- A. All expenses must be supported by itemized receipts.
- B. Summary credit card receipts will not be accepted.
- C. The receipts must correspond with training dates and times.
- D. All receipts must be submitted no later than ten (10) calendar days following return from travel, unless authorized by Department Head or City Manager.

Prohibited Expenses

The following expenses will **not** be reimbursed by the City:

- A. Airbnb, vacation rentals, or non-hotel lodging unless pre-approved by Department Head or City Manager.
- B. Rental cars, unless pre-approved by Department Head or City Manager.
- C. Hotel incidentals, including but not limited to movies, room service, mini-bar, spa, laundry, and personal purchases.
- D. Additional days at the hotel not directly tied to the City business purpose of the trip.

- E. Alcoholic beverages or personal entertainment.
- F. **Ride share services, including but not limited to Uber, Lyft, or similar providers, unless pre-approved by Department Head or City Manager.**

Travel Time

If travel is required to attend training, conferences, or events, other than the employee normal work station or within the city, travel time may be compensated. The following conditions are evaluated for travel time:

- A. For overnight travel, time spent in transit on both the departure day and return to day.
- B. For same day travel, time spent traveling to and from the training if outside the employee's work station or city limits.

Enforcement

Failure to comply with this policy, including failure to provide itemized receipts, may result in denial of reimbursement and/or disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the City.



City Council Agenda Item #[5.I]

Title: Consideration and possible action authorizing the Chief of Police to sign MOU.

Date: October 6, 2025

From: Chief Jennifer Howell, Police Chief

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorizing the Chief of Police to sign MOU.

Item Summary: The Freeport Police Department has the capability to run individuals' fingerprints in the field for identification purposes. When we obtain these fingerprints, they can be submitted to AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Identification System) database system, which is maintained by Harris County Sheriff's Office for this region. This promotes regional collaboration and information sharing among law enforcement agencies.

Background Information: The Freeport Police Department previously had a MOU with Harris County Sheriff Office's and submitted fingerprints through a locally hosted server-based system. In moving to a cloud-based system, an updated MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) is required.

Special Considerations: None

Financial Impact: None.

Board or 3rd Party Recommendation: None.

Supporting Documentation:

1. scans@freeport.tx.us_20250924_093714

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)
BETWEEN HARRIS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE (HCSO), HARRIS COUNTY
UNIVERSAL SERVICES (HCUS), AND THE REGIONAL AGENCY FOR ACCESS TO
HC AFIS AND CLOUD-BASED AFIS DATABASE**

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") establishes the guidelines between the **Harris County Sheriff's Office (HCSO)** and **Harris County Universal Services (HCUS)** for providing access to **Harris County's Automated Fingerprint Identification System (HC AFIS)** and its **cloud-based AFIS database services**.

HCSO and HCUS aim to promote regional collaboration and information sharing among law enforcement agencies within Harris County and neighboring counties. This MOU is extended to include access to HC AFIS and the integrated **cloud-hosted AFIS database**, administered by **IDEMIA**, the County's designated vendor.

I. AGREEMENT TO FOLLOW GUIDELINES

Any law enforcement agency ("Regional Agency") desiring access to HC AFIS and the cloud-based criminal database agrees to adhere to the guidelines established herein. This MOU shall be signed by an authorized representative of the Regional Agency prior to the delivery and activation of services.

All services provided under this MOU, including AFIS and the cloud-based criminal database, are strictly for authorized law enforcement use in accordance with federal, state, and local law.

II. HC AFIS AND CLOUD DATABASE SERVICES

HC AFIS is a regional fingerprint and photograph identification system maintained by HCSO. It provides fingerprint search capabilities, latent searching, image storage, and the electronic exchange of fingerprints and results.

The cloud-based AFIS database, hosted by IDEMIA, is an extension of HC AFIS and offers secure, remote access to criminal identification services, biometric data, and analytical tools for participating Regional Agencies.

The following applies to both HC AFIS and the cloud-based criminal database:

- The Regional Agency may procure compatible AFIS equipment from a vendor of its choice, ensuring all submissions meet NIST standards.

- The Regional Agency is responsible for maintaining all interfaces and software to ensure compatibility with the AFIS and cloud infrastructure.

Once the Regional Agency is connected to the **cloud-based system**, **all future technical and operational correspondence regarding database access, functionality, and troubleshooting shall be conducted directly between the Regional Agency and IDEMIA.**

III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF REGIONAL AGENCIES

A. Costs

Regional Agency shall be responsible for:

1. All equipment and workstation costs.
2. Installation, maintenance, and operational costs.
3. Personnel to operate systems.
4. Networked printer setup for RapSheet printouts.
5. FBI-certified Lexmark printer (if printing fingerprint cards is desired).

B. Installation

1. Secure installation space for LiveScan or other devices.
2. Adherence to equipment footprint and spacing requirements.
3. Provide location and contact number to HCSO AFIS Operations Center.
4. Notify AFIS Operations Center of any relocation or service interruption.

C. Connections and Operation

1. Work with vendor to establish secure connectivity.
2. Maintain electrical and network infrastructure.
3. Allow access to authorized law enforcement personnel.
4. Ensure AFIS users are trained and registered with IDEMIA.
5. Comply with all legal requirements in processing juveniles.

D. CJIS Compliance

1. Adhere to FBI CJIS Security Policy.
2. Maintain compliance on Regional Agency systems.
3. Provide documentation for CJIS audits.
4. Use CJIS-secure locations or CJIS-compliant VPN for access.
5. Do not share access beyond the scope of this agreement.

E. Maintenance and Warranty

1. Maintenance agreements are managed by the Regional Agency and their vendor.
2. IDEMIA support will be available for their respective equipment.
3. HCUS network support is provided on a best-effort basis.

F. Negligence and Liability

1. Regional Agency is liable for equipment damage due to operator negligence.
2. HCSO and HCUS are not liable for malware originating from Regional Agency.
3. TO THE EXTENT PERMITTED BY LAW, HARRIS COUNTY AND ITS OFFICIALS SHALL NOT BE LIABLE FOR DAMAGES ARISING FROM NEGLIGENCE OR MISUSE BY THE REGIONAL AGENCY.

G. Liaison

The Regional Agency will designate a liaison for communication with HCSO and HCUS. Liaison details must be kept current.

IV. CLOUD CONNECTIVITY AND CORRESPONDENCE WITH IDEMIA

1. Once the Regional Agency establishes cloud connectivity, all operational support, troubleshooting, system updates, and other related communications shall be handled **directly between the Regional Agency and IDEMIA.**
2. HCSO and HCUS will no longer serve as intermediaries for such support once cloud access is confirmed.

V. DISCONNECTION

1. HCSO or HCUS reserves the right to immediately terminate access if the system is used unlawfully or inappropriately.
2. If the Regional Agency decides to discontinue services, it must notify HCSO and HCUS promptly for coordination of disconnection.

In consideration for the use of HC AFIS services described herein, an authorized representative of Freeport Police Department

(Name of Regional Agency)

hereby binds said agency to follow the conditions stated herein.

REGIONAL AGENCY

By: _____
Signature Authorized Representative
Name: Jennifer Howell
Title: Chief of Police
Date: _____
Agency: Freeport Police Department

HARRIS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

By: _____
Ed Gonzalez
Sheriff
Date: _____

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
CHRISTIAN D. MENEFE
COUNTY ATTORNEY

By: _____
Graylon Wells
Senior Assistant County Attorney
Date: _____

**HARRIS COUNTY
UNIVERSAL SERVICES**

By: _____
Sindhu Menon
Date: _____

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
CHRISTIAN D. MENEFE
COUNTY ATTORNEY

By: _____
Cherelle Sims
Senior Assistant County Attorney
CA File No.

Date: _____



City Council Agenda Item #[5.J]

Title: Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2969 on the nomination of candidates to be placed on the ballot for the Brazoria County Appraisal District's Board of Directors.

Date: October 6, 2025

From: Dan Pennington, Interim City Manager

Staff Recommendation: N/A

Item Summary: This resolution allows City Council to nominate up to two individuals to be placed on the ballot for board of the Brazoria County Appraisal District.

Background Information: The City has until October 15, 2025, to submit its nominations. Once all nominations have been received, the Brazoria County Appraisal District will submit the ballot to the City, at which time the City Council will have 8 votes to use to vote for the Council choice(s).

Special Considerations: N/A

Financial Impact: N/A

Board or 3rd Party Recommendation: N/A

Supporting Documentation:

1. CAD Resolution 2025 DUNCAN 8.15
2. copier@freeport.tx.us_20250915_094951

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-2969

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF FREEPORT, TEXAS NOMINATING
CANDIDATE(S) FOR AN APPOINTED POSITION ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE BRAZORIA COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT**

WHEREAS, those eligible taxing units participating in the Brazoria County Appraisal District have the right and responsibility to nominate up to two candidate(s) to fill the five (5) positions of the Board of Directors of the Brazoria County Appraisal District for a four-year term of office commencing on January 1, 2026; and

WHEREAS, this governing body desires to exercise its right to nominate the said candidate(s) for such position on said board of directors; now, therefore

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
FREEPORT, TEXAS, THAT:**

Section 1. That the facts and recitations set forth in the preamble of this resolution be, and they are hereby, adopted, ratified, and confirmed.

Section 2. That the following individuals be, and are hereby, nominated as candidate(s) for positions on the board of directors of the Brazoria County Appraisal District to be filled by those eligible taxing units participating in the Brazoria County Appraisal District.

Name & Address: _____

Name & Address: _____

Section 3. That the presiding officer of the governing body of this taxing unit be, and that he or she is hereby, authorized and directed to deliver or cause to be delivered a certified copy of this resolution to the chief appraiser of the Brazoria County Appraisal District on or before October 15, 2025.

PASSED, ADOPTED AND APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2025.

Jerry Cain, Mayor
City of Freeport, Texas

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Clarisa Fernandez, City Secretary
City of Freeport, Texas

Christopher Duncan, City Attorney
City of Freeport, Texas

BRAZORIA COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Kristin Bulanek
Elizabeth Day
Tommy King
John Luquette
Patrick O'Day
Gail Robinson
George Sandars
Susan Spoor
Robert York-Westbrook

CHIEF APPRAISER

Marcel Pierel III
500 N. Chenango
Angleton, Texas 77515
979-849-7792
Fax 979-849-7984

September 3, 2025

Ms. Betty Wells
City Secretary of Freeport
1201 N. Ave. H
Freeport, TX 77541

Dear Ms. Wells,

In reference to the appointment of the Appraisal District Board of Directors, each voting taxing unit in Brazoria County nominates **by resolution**, up to two candidate(s) to fill the two (2) appointed positions on the Board of Directors that expire on December 31, 2025. These nominations (names and addresses) must be submitted to the Chief Appraiser before **October 15, 2025**. (See Step 1 on Calendar)

Enclosed is a list of the two current appointed board members with space to add different nominees if your board chooses to. (**Nominate up to a total of two candidates**)

Your 2024 total tax levy was **\$ 4,147,085**. This tax levy has entitled your taxing unit to **8** votes for the two (2) directors to be appointed.

The **voting process will begin before October 30, 2025** once all nominations have been received.

Please address all submissions to Marcel Pierel, Chief Appraiser, at the above address, or you may email submissions to mpierel@brazoriacad.org or fax to 979-849-7984.

Sincerely,



Marcel Pierel III
Chief Appraiser

MP/td
Enclosure

BRAZORIA COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
2025 APPOINTED BOARD OF DIRECTORS CALENDAR

Before Oct. 1
(September 3, 2025)

The chief appraiser notifies each voting taxing unit of the process for the election of the Board of Directors and the number of votes it is entitled to cast.

Each voting unit may nominate one candidate for the two appointed positions to be filled. Since two appointed director positions expire on December 31, 2025, **the unit may nominate up to two candidates.**

Before Oct. 15

The presiding officer of the unit submits the **names and addresses** of the **two** nominees **by written resolution** to the chief appraiser.

For director's eligibility, visit the link below.

<https://comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax/docs/96-301.pdf>

Before Oct. 30

The chief appraiser prepares and submits to each voting taxing unit a ballot listing the nominees alphabetically by each candidate's last name and provides the number of votes it may cast, with a resolution sample.

Before Dec. 15

Each voting unit cast votes for any of the candidates on the ballot and submits it to the chief appraiser **by written resolution.** The unit may cast all its votes for one candidate or may distribute the votes among any number of candidates.

Before Dec. 31

The chief appraiser counts the votes and certifies the two candidates who receive the largest vote totals. The chief appraiser notifies all taxing units (voting and non-voting) and all nominated candidates of the outcome.

If a tie occurs, the Chief Appraiser must resolve it through any method of chance.

**BRAZORIA COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
APPOINTED BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2025**

NOMINATIONS

PLEASE CHECK THE BOX NEXT TO YOUR NOMINEES

**YOU MAY CHOOSE A TOTAL OF TWO NOMINEES
FROM CURRENT MEMBERS AND/OR NEW NOMINEES**

CURRENT MEMBERS TERM ENDING

1. ☐ Susan Spoor _____
2. ☐ Gail Robinson _____

NEW NOMINEES/CANDIDATES IF YOU CHOOSE TO
Please provide name and address for new nominees

3. ☐ _____

4. ☐ _____

PLEASE ATTACH YOUR RESOLUTION TO THIS FORM

SUBMITTED BY: _____

VOTES ENTITLED TO: _____

VOTES CAST: _____



City Council Agenda Item #[5.K]

Title: Consideration and possible action on TML Region 14 Director Ballot.

Date: October 6, 2025

From: Dan Pennington, Interim City Manager

Staff Recommendation: Authorize the Mayor, as the primary contact for the City of Freeport, to cast the city's official vote on the TML Region 14 Director Ballot and submit the signed ballot to the Texas Municipal League (TML) by the October 23, 2025 deadline.

Item Summary: The Texas Municipal League (TML) has distributed the official ballot for the Region 14 Director election to its member cities. Freeport, as a TML member city, is entitled to one vote. The elected Region 14 Director will serve a one-year term on the TML Board of Directors beginning October 31, 2025.

Background Information: TML revised its Constitution in 2023 to centralize the administration of regional director elections. Previously, these elections were held during regional meetings. The ballot includes six nominees:

1. Sally Branson, Councilmember, Friendswood (Incumbent)
2. Robin Collins, Mayor, Kemah
3. Tom Crews, Councilmember, League City
4. Emmanuel Guerrero, Councilmember, Pasadena
5. Josh Pratt, Councilmember, Bunker Hill Village
6. Frank W. Robinson, Councilmember, Shenandoah

Ballots must be properly signed and either mailed or scanned/mailed to TML by 5:00 p.m. CT on October 23, 2025.

Special Considerations: The ballot must reflect the will of the majority of the City Council as required by TML election rules. Failure to sign and return the ballot by the deadline will result in Freeport not being represented in this election.

Financial Impact: There is no direct financial impact to the City of Freeport. Participation ensures the city's representation and voice in TML governance, which indirectly benefits member cities through advocacy and policy support.

Board or 3rd Party Recommendation: N/A

Supporting Documentation:

979.233.3526 Fax 979.233.8867



1201 North Avenue H. Freeport, TX 77541

1. copier@freeport.tx.us_20250923_152422



TEXAS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

Empowering Texas cities to serve their citizens

President **Allison Heyward**, Councilmember, Schertz
Executive Director **Bennett Sandlin**

September 8, 2025

To: Primary Contacts in TML Region 14

From: Bennett Sandlin, Executive Director, Texas Municipal League

Subject: Region 14 Director Ballot

Attached are the official ballot and candidate biographies for the TML Region 14 Director of the TML Board of Directors. Previously, elections for region directors were held at region meetings. After changes to the TML Constitution were approved in 2023, these elections are now administered by TML centrally.

The officials listed on this ballot have been nominated to serve a one-year term on the TML Board of Directors that will begin on October 31, 2025, upon adjournment of the TML Annual Conference and Exhibition.

The attached ballot includes instructions for filling it out. If you have any questions, please contact Rachael Pitts at rpitts@tml.org or 512-231-7472.

Thank you in advance for your city's participation in the election.



OFFICIAL BALLOT

Texas Municipal League (TML) Region 14 Director Election

This is the official ballot for the election of the Region 14 director of the TML Board of Directors. You received this ballot because you are the city's primary contact person with TML. Each TML member city is entitled to one vote, which vote must be cast by a majority vote of the city's governing body. Please record your city's choice by placing an "X" in the square beside the candidate's name or writing in the name of an eligible person in the space provided. You can only vote for one candidate.

The officials listed on this ballot have been nominated to serve a one-year term on the TML Board of Directors. A brief biography for each candidate is included after the ballot.

Ballots must reach the TML office by 5:00 p.m. Central Time on October 23, 2025. Ballots received after this date cannot be counted. **The ballot must be properly signed and mailed to: Rachael Pitts, Texas Municipal League, 1821 Rutherford Lane, Suite 400, Austin, TX 78754, or scanned and emailed to rpitts@tml.org. If the ballot is not signed, it will not be counted.**

Region 14 Director (select one)

☐

Sally Branson, Councilmember, Friendswood (Incumbent)

☐

Robin Collins, Mayor, Kemah

☐

Tom Crews, Councilmember, League City

☐

Emmanuel Guerrero, Councilmember, Pasadena

☐

Josh Pratt, Councilmember, Bunker Hill Village

☐

Frank W. Robinson, Councilmember, Shenandoah

Certificate

I certify that the vote cast above has been cast in accordance with the will of the majority of the governing body of the city named below.

Witness my hand, this _____ day of _____, 2025.

Signature of Authorized Official

Title

Printed Name of Authorized Official

Printed Name of City

Region 14 Director Candidate Biographies



Sally Branson, Councilmember, Friendswood (Incumbent)

Sally Branson is a lifelong Friendswoodian. After graduating from Friendswood High School in 1976, she briefly moved away to attend The University of Texas at Austin receiving her BBA. She returned to Friendswood where she met and married her husband of 35 years, Jon. They raised three children, all of whom graduated from Friendswood High School. She is now the proud grandmother of three grandchildren currently making their way through the Friendswood school system as Sally and her children did. She began her career at NASA Johnson Space Center in the Chief Financial Officers Directorate in 1989, prior to joining the financial services industry in 2000. Unsurprisingly, she chose downtown Friendswood as the location for her business that she manages with her oldest son. Councilmember Branson believes in giving back to her community and is currently serving as chair of the

Galveston County Historical Commission and is on the board of the Friendswood Historical Society. She is also an active member of the Friendswood Rotary Club. She also served on the board for the Friendswood Education Foundation for over 18 years and participated in the establishment of the Friends of Downtown Friendswood Association. Branson currently serves as liaison to the Houston-Galveston Area Council and the Community Economic Develop Committee. She is also serving as the current president of Texas Municipal League Region 14. Prior to being elected to Friendswood City Council in 2017, she served on the Planning and Zoning Commission for three years.



Robin Collins, Mayor, Kemah

Robin Collins proudly serves the City of Kemah with a deep commitment to preserving the charm, character, and coastal heritage that define her hometown. Elected as mayor in 2023 and now serving her second term, she brings experienced, steady leadership rooted in tradition, accountability, and a strong belief in the power of local government to improve everyday life. Collins has prioritized community engagement, economic development, and public safety. Under her leadership, Kemah continues to thrive as both a welcoming community for residents and a sought-after destination for visitors. Her focus on infrastructure, transparency, and regional partnerships has helped Kemah grow responsibly while preserving its unique identity.

Her service in public office began in 2009 when she was elected to the Kemah City Council. She served through 2023, including time as mayor pro tem and Kemah's representative to the Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC). She currently serves as president of the Galveston County Mayor and Councilmember Association, where she continues to build consensus and foster collaboration across city lines. With years of experience in municipal government and regional leadership, Collins understands the challenges of cities in Region 14, particularly smaller and coastal communities. She is committed to making sure those voices are heard at the state level. She is a firm believer in servant leadership and strives to lead with humility, consistency, and a commitment to listening. Collins is passionate about fostering collaboration among municipal leaders and ensuring that every community—regardless of size—has a seat at the table.



Tom Crews, Councilmember, League City

Tom Crews is a Certified Public Accountant and the owner of a family-run CPA firm based in League City. He and his wife, Chrissy, founded the practice in 2015, and it has since become a trusted business in the community. Their children are also involved in the firm, making it a true family operation. Crews currently serves on the League City Council in Position 3. First elected in 2022 and re-elected in 2024, he brings over a decade of financial experience to his role in local government. Before joining the council, he served as chair of both the League City Finance Committee and the Charter Review Committee, gaining a strong foundation in municipal budgeting and policy. To further strengthen his public service skills, Crews is currently enrolled in the Texas Municipal League's Certified Municipal Official (CMO)

program. His dual roles as a business owner and public servant allow him to effectively represent both residents and local entrepreneurs. He is committed to fiscal responsibility, efficient city services, and sustainable growth for League City. In addition to his professional and civic work, Crews and his family are active volunteers in the community. They support several local nonprofits and regularly participate in service projects, reflecting their strong belief in giving back to the city they call home.



Emmanuel Guerrero, Councilmember, Pasadena

Emmanuel Guerrero grew up in a blue-collar family, raised by a single mother. He is the eldest brother of five siblings. He is a first-generation college graduate from the University of Houston's Bauer Business School obtaining a double Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) in finance and marketing in three years. He worked many sales jobs and services jobs while obtaining his bachelor's degree at the University of Houston from 2015-2018, maintaining two jobs and attending school full time. His professional career and experience have been in two Fortune 100 food companies, a Fortune 100 oil and gas company, and a Fortune 100 food company. Currently, he works for a consulting firm specializing in disaster relief, emergency response, economic development, grant management, and compliance and review. At 24,

he was promoted to be the youngest manager in the firm's history, helping to oversee \$400 million through CARES, ARPA, and ERA federal funds. Guerrero was elected as Pasadena City councilman of District C at age 26, making history as the youngest councilman in the City's history. Since being in office, he has led initiatives resulting in \$5.9 million in waterline improvements, \$9.9 million in sewer rehabilitations, \$7.3 million in reconstruction projects, \$150,000 in water well improvements, and has created various scholarships opportunities for the lowest income school in Pasadena. His commitment to his community is unparalleled.



Josh Pratt, Councilmember, Bunker Hill Village

Councilmember Josh Pratt grew up in Houston and relocated his family to the Memorial Villages in 2014. With a focus on secure families, financials, and small-town community feel, he was elected to the Bunker Hill Village City Council in 2025. Pratt served on the City's Zoning Board of Adjustment as well as various boards and committees in local government, business, and church. He is a certified public accountant working in the private sector. He and his wife have one child.



Frank W. Robinson, Councilmember, Shenandoah

Frank W. Robinson, BA, MPA, ICMA-CM (Retired) is an elected member of the City of Shenandoah City Council and an accomplished public administrator. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of North Texas and a Master of Public Administration from Sam Houston State University. After 38 years of public service, 29 of those years as a chief administrative officer and city manager in Texas and California, Robinson retired in 2017. He began his public service career as a police officer in Denton, eventually receiving an appointment as chief of police in the City of West University Place before transitioning to city management. He is best known for his role in the development of the downtown of The Woodlands. Robinson served 14 years as president and township manager for The

Woodlands Township (formerly known as the Town Center Improvement District of Montgomery County). He led the organization through visioning and goal setting to define the Township's vision and mission as a local government focused on creating public benefit. In 2020, he came out of retirement to assist the City of Conroe in the position of downtown manager and implemented the newly adopted Downtown Conroe Development Plan and promote the historical preservation and economic development of downtown Conroe. Robinson successfully attracted new entertainment and dining venues to the downtown's Central Business District, brought in an estimated \$54 million in new development investment, and facilitated the recertification of Conroe as a Texas Main Street Community and receiving the coveted Cultural District designation by the Texas Commission on the Arts. In January 2023, Robinson retired once again and was elected to the City of Shenandoah's City Council in May 2024. He remains an active member of the Texas City Management Association.



City Council Agenda Item #[5.L]

Title: Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2025-2981 approving a Facility Use and Rental Policy.

Date: October 6, 2025

From: Rudy Ragle, Public Works Director

Staff Recommendation: : Staff recommends that the City Council approve the proposed Facility Use and Rental Policy. The policy provides a clear, equitable framework for the use of City facilities by Councilmembers, non-profit organizations, governmental entities, City employees, and the general public. It promotes fair access, accountability, and responsible stewardship of City-owned property.

Item Summary: This item proposes the adoption of a standardized policy for renting and using City of Freeport facilities. It outlines defined procedures and fee structures for various groups, including Councilmembers, non-profits, government entities, City employees, and the general public. The policy includes provisions for deposits, refunds, fee reductions, and administrative oversight.

Background Information: Currently, the City does not have a formally adopted policy governing the rental and use of its facilities. This has led to inconsistent practices and confusion regarding eligibility, fees, and responsibilities. The proposed policy addresses these issues by establishing uniform guidelines that ensure fairness, protect City assets, and provide staff with clear procedures to follow.

Special Considerations: Councilmember Privileges

Each Councilmember is entitled to one complimentary use of a City facility per calendar year. Alternatively, a Councilmember may sponsor one free event annually on behalf of a non-profit organization or governmental entity. Unused privileges do not carry over to the following year.

Support for Non-Profit and Governmental Entities

Eligible non-profit organizations and governmental agencies may rent City facilities at a discounted rate. Partial deposit refunds may be issued if the facility is returned in good condition.

City Employees

City employees may rent City facilities at a discounted rate. Partial deposit refunds may be issued if the facility is returned in good condition.

Financial Impact: Revenue Generation: The policy maintains a revenue stream from public and partially discounted rentals while supporting community access.

Cost Recovery: Deposits (full or partial) and rental fees help recover costs related to facility maintenance, cleaning, and wear-and-tear.



Board or 3rd Party Recommendation: n/a

Supporting Documentation:

1. RESOLUTION FACILITY RENTAL DISCOUNTS 2025-2026 (1) (2)
2. Facility Rental Policy

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-2981

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT
MODIFYING THE POLICY REGARDING RENTAL OF CITY FACILITIES;
PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

WHEREAS, the City of Freeport operates a number of facilities in the city that are available to be rented by members of the public; and

WHEREAS, the city maintains a specific fee schedule for each facility setting forth prices for both rental deposits and rental fees; and

WHEREAS, the city would like to provide special benefits and cost reductions for non-profit organizations, city employees, and council members; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that making certain cost reductions referenced above is cost-effective and will not materially diminish the financial position of the city regarding operation of said facilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT THAT:

Section 1. The City Council hereby finds that the facts set forth in the above preamble are true and correct.

Section 2. The City Council hereby adopts the fee schedule for the rental of city facilities by non-profit organizations, city employees and council members attached to this resolution as Exhibit A and incorporates said exhibit herein for all purposes.

Section 3. The fee schedule contained in Exhibit A shall be effective beginning October 1, 2025.

PASSED AND APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2025.

Jerry Cain, Mayor
City of Freeport, Texas

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Clarisa Fernandez, City Secretary
City of Freeport

Chris Duncan, Interim City Attorney
City of Freeport

City of Freeport Facility Rental Policy

Purpose

To establish consistent guidelines for the use and rental of City of Freeport facilities by Councilmembers, non-profit organizations, governmental entities, and the general public, while ensuring fairness, accountability, and proper care of City property.

Section 1. Councilmember Use

1. Each Councilmember shall be entitled to **one free event per calendar year**, or may instead choose to **sponsor one event annually for a non-profit or other governmental entity**.
 2. “Free” means that **all fees and deposits are waived**.
 3. Councilmembers may not transfer unused free events to future years.
-

Section 2. City Employee Use

1. Each employee is entitled to reserve the facility for one event per calendar year. The employee will be responsible for paying the full deposit amount, but no rental fees will be charged. If the facility is left in good condition and properly maintained, **50% of the deposit will be refunded**.
-

Section 3. Non-Profit and Governmental Entities

1. Non-profit organizations and other governmental entities are eligible to rent City facilities at a **reduced cost**.
 2. Such renters shall:
 - Pay a **deposit** as established in the City’s fee schedule.
 - Pay **50% of all applicable rental fees**.
 3. Upon conclusion of the event:
 - The City will retain **50% of the deposit** and all fees paid.
 - The remaining **50% of the deposit will be refunded** if the facility is left in good condition and properly maintained.
-

Section 4. General Public and All Other Renters

1. All other renters must pay the **full deposit** and **100% of all applicable fees**.
 2. Refunds of deposits will be made in accordance with standard facility inspection and damage policies.
-

Section 5. Administration

1. The City Manager, or designee, shall administer this policy, including collection of deposits, enforcement of facility rules, and determination of any refund amounts.
 2. A **standard facility use agreement** shall be signed by all renters, including non-profits and governmental entities, prior to use.
 3. Council retains the authority to amend the City fee schedule as necessary to implement this policy.
-

Section 6. Priority of City Events

1. City-sponsored events shall take scheduling priority over all other requests.
 2. City events will be scheduled first, and facility availability for other users will be determined based on the remaining open dates.
 3. The City reserves the right to block out dates for City events before accepting rental requests from Councilmembers, employees, non-profits, governmental entities, or the general public.
-

Section 7. Effective Date

This policy shall take effect immediately upon adoption by the Freeport City Council and shall apply to all new rental requests thereafter.



City Council Agenda Item #[5.M]

Title: Consideration and possible action approving FEMA American Firefighter Grant for Self-Contain Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) in the amount of \$108,900.00.

Date: October 6, 2025

From: Christopher Motley, Fire Chief

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends the approval of accepting FEMA American Firefighter Equipment Grant program in the amount of \$108,900.00.

Item Summary: The FEMA AFG Equipment grant was applied for in December 2024. On September 24, 2025, the department was notified by email that it has been awarded a FEMA AFG Equipment grant. This grant covers eleven self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) with an award amount \$108,900.00. The awarded entity is responsible for a cost share amount of \$9,900.00

Background Information: The purpose of the AFG Program is to enhance the safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire and fire-related hazards. The program provides direct financial assistance to eligible fire departments.

The funds provide critically needed resources that equip and train emergency personnel to recognized standards, enhance operational efficiencies, foster interoperability, and support community resilience.

This FEMA AFG program addresses the department's strategic plan for personal protective equipment for fire/EMS personnel.

Special Considerations: N/A

Financial Impact: No impact. The Cost share portion can be addressed in the existing budget line in SCBA (482). The cost share is \$9,900.00.

Board or 3rd Party Recommendation:

Supporting Documentation:

1. Award Notification (Application Number_ EMW-2024-FG-06315) AFG Equipment Email

From: [FEMA GO](#)
To: [Christopher Motley](#)
Cc: [Mike Praslicka](#); [Christopher Motley](#); srussell@freeport.tx.us; vcs2020afg@vickersconsultingservices.com; cezell@freeport.tx.us; [Ashlee Hurst](#)
Subject: Award Notification (Application Number: EMW-2024-FG-06315)
Date: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 2:35:36 PM

Dear Chris,

Congratulations! Your grant application submitted under the Grant Programs Directorate's Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Assistance to Firefighters Grant has been approved for award.

Please use the FEMA GO system at <https://go.fema.gov> to accept or decline your award. Please note that you will have thirty (30) days from the date of this award notification to either accept or decline the award, and that the award must be accepted or declined by an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) within the FEMA GO system. Instructions for registering within the system and becoming an AOR are available at <https://www.fema.gov/gmm-training-resources>.

Once you are in the system and made an AOR for your organization, your home page will be the first screen you see. You will see a section entitled My Grants. In this section, please select the award acceptance link for EMW-2024-FG-06315 under Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Assistance to Firefighters Grant. View your award package and indicate your acceptance or declination of award. If you wish to accept your grant, you should do so immediately. When you have finished, we recommend printing your award package for your records.

If you have questions on using the FEMA GO system, please reach out to the FEMA GO Help Desk (1-877-585-3242). For programmatic questions about your grant, please reach out to the AFG Helpdesk (firegrants@fema.dhs.gov / 1-866-274-0960).

All recipients are required to comply with FEMA EHP Policy Guidance. This EHP Policy Guidance can be found in [FEMA Policy \(FP\) 108-023-1, Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation Policy Guidance](#).

Sincerely,

Grants Management Branch

Assistance to Firefighters Grants

Department of Homeland Security / FEMA



City Council Agenda Item #[5.N]

Title: Consideration and possible action approving FEMA S.A.F.E.R. Program grant for personnel for the amount of \$964,434.95.

Date: October 6, 2025

From: Christopher Motley, Fire Chief

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends the approval of accepting FEMA American Firefighter S.A.F.E.R Grant program in the amount of \$964,345.95 for three Firefighter/EMT salaries and fringe benefits.

Item Summary: The FEMA SAFER Program grant was applied for in December 2024. On September 24, 2025, the department was notified by email that it has been awarded a FEMA SAFER Program grant for three additional firefighter/EMT for the amount total of \$964,345.95. The Program funds are provided over three years for its total amount in salaries and fringe benefits. The awarded entity is responsible for its portion of its cost share: Year 1 — \$80,362.16 (25%), Year 2—\$80,362.16 (25%) and Year 3 — \$208,941.62 (65%) with a grand total of \$369,665.94 (38.33%).

FEMA SAFER Program

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Federal Share	\$241,086.49	\$241,086.49	\$112,507.03	\$594,680,.01
Local Share	\$80,362.16	\$80,362.16	\$208,941.62	\$369,665.94
Total	\$321,448.65	\$321,448.65	321,448.65	\$964,345.95
Local Percentage	25%	25%	65%	38.33%

Background Information: The FY 2024 SAFER Program is one of three grant programs that constitute the Department of Homeland Security. (DHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) focus on enhancing the safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire and related hazards. Since FY 2005, the SAFER Program has awarded approximately \$5.8 billion in grant funding to provide critically needed resources to hire new, additional firefighters (or to change the status of part-time or paid-on-call firefighters to full-time firefighters). The FY 2024 SAFER Program will award another \$324 million to an estimated 300 eligible fire departments and volunteer firefighter interest organizations to assist fire departments in increasing the number of firefighters to meet industry minimum standards and attain 24-hour staffing to provide adequate fire protection from fire and fire-related hazards. This FEMA AFG program addresses the department strategic plan for staffing and structure of personnel. Freeport Fire & EMS staffing and structure has evolved overtime from an all-volunteer fire department to a career fire department. Along with the times the mission and responsibilities has greatly changed from putting fires out to rescue, EMS, and all hazards preparedness. The Department has not evolved in its staffing and structure to accommodate these changes by addressing the division of labor as it has been accomplished in other city



departments.

The combination type (career/call) system that we have utilized to deliver these services has performed adequately for many years. However, at this time, a decline in the availability of our career/volunteer personnel coupled with increasing requests for services has adversely impacted the ability of our organization to meet the demands of the community and maintain the incident scene safety of our personnel.

Currently, in order to maintain the comprehensive programs of public education, fire inspection, emergency response, facility maintenance, training, and apparatus maintenance that we have established, all career personnel have multiple responsibilities assigned to them outside of their primary job duties. This is a less than adequate situation that reduces our ability to complete tasks in a timely manner, and limits overall productivity of our personnel. This undesirable situation promotes ineffective operations.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) sets national fire service response and staffing standards. While these standards are not law, they are considered compliance documents for fire departments. Several of these standards have been adopted by Texas Commission on Fire Protection, and Texas Department Health and State Health Services. NFPA 1710 (Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Departments) is a guiding document that specifies the minimum requirements for the operation and deployment of fire suppression, emergency medical services, and special operation responses. This document is split into the categories of fire and EMS response. The fire response directive requires the minimum response and on scene arrival of one engine company staffed by four (4) firefighters within four (4) minutes and a full first alarm of (14) personnel within eight (8) minutes 90% of the time.

Special Considerations: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Fiscal Year 2024 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program. **Additional Restrictions:**

a. **Period of Performance Restrictions:** 1. Hiring Activity: The period of performance for applications funded under the Hiring Activity will be 36 months. A default 180-day recruitment period begins when FEMA approves an application for an award under this activity. The 36-month period of performance automatically starts after the 180-day recruitment period, regardless of whether the recipient has successfully hired the requested firefighters. The period of performance cannot start later than 180 days after the award date.

If a recipient can hire all SAFER Program-funded firefighters during the 180-day recruitment period, the period of performance may begin at that time. In these instances, recipients must submit an amendment requesting that the period of performance start before the end of the 180-day recruitment period if they wish to begin the period early. The period of performance for applications funded under the R&R Activity will be 12, 24, 36, or 48 months.

A default 90-day recruitment period begins when FEMA approves the application for award. This period allows each recipient time to gather resources, initiate processes, and finalize contracts needed to implement SAFER Program activities before the start of the period of performance to maximize the funding's availability. However, the recipient can only expend funds within the period of performance.

The period of performance automatically starts after the 90-day recruitment period ends, regardless of whether the recipient has begun implementing its grant award. The period of performance cannot start later than 90 days after the award date.

If a recipient can begin its recruitment or retention activities during the 90-day recruitment



period, the period of performance may begin at that time. In these instances, recipients must submit an amendment requesting that the period of performance start before the end of the 90-day recruitment period if they wish to begin the period early.

Required information for verifying Cost Share: Minimum Budget Requirement:

In accordance with 15 U.S.C. § 2229a(c)(2), in order to be eligible for SAFER Program funding, applicants are required to certify that their annual budget for fire-related programs and emergency response has not been reduced below 80 percent of the applicant's average funding level in the three years prior to the application date.

Financial Impact: No impact. The cost-share portion can be addressed in the existing salary/wages and fringe benefits in the adopted budget 2025/26. The awarded entity is responsible for its portion of its cost share: Year 1 — \$80,362.16 (25%), Year 2—\$80,362.16 (25%) and Year 3 — \$208,941.62 (65%) with a grand total of \$369,665.94 (38.33%).

Board or 3rd Party Recommendation: Cook and Associates: An Analysis of the management and organizational structure of Freeport Fire & EMS. Freeport Fire & EMS Strategic Plan topic #3 Staffing / Structure.

Supporting Documentation:

1. Award Notification (Application Number_ EMW-2024-FF-01594) email
2. fema_gpd_safer-fact-sheet_fy24
3. fema_gpd_safer-nofo_fy24

From: [FEMA GO](#)
To: [Christopher Motley](#)
Cc: [Mike Praslicka](#); [Christopher Motley](#); srussell@freeport.tx.us; vcs2020afg@vickersconsultingservices.com; cezell@freeport.tx.us; [Ashlee Hurst](#)
Subject: Award Notification (Application Number: EMW-2024-FF-01594)
Date: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 2:52:04 PM

Dear Chris,

Congratulations! Your grant application submitted under the Grant Programs Directorate's Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant has been approved for award.

Please use the FEMA GO system at <https://go.fema.gov> to accept or decline your award. Please note that you will have thirty (30) days from the date of this award notification to either accept or decline the award, and that the award must be accepted or declined by an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) within the FEMA GO system. Instructions for registering within the system and becoming an AOR are available at <https://www.fema.gov/gmm-training-resources>.

Once you are in the system and made an AOR for your organization, your home page will be the first screen you see. You will see a section entitled My Grants. In this section, please select the award acceptance link for EMW-2024-FF-01594 under Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant. View your award package and indicate your acceptance or declination of award. If you wish to accept your grant, you should do so immediately. When you have finished, we recommend printing your award package for your records.

If you have questions on using the FEMA GO system, please reach out to the FEMA GO Help Desk (1-877-585-3242). For programmatic questions about your grant, please reach out to the AFG Helpdesk (firegrants@fema.dhs.gov / 1-866-274-0960).

Sincerely,

Grants Management Branch

Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER)

Department of Homeland Security / FEMA

FY 2024 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Program

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Program will make available \$324 million to fire departments and volunteer firefighter interest organizations to assist fire departments in increasing the number of frontline firefighters.

Overview

The FY 2024 SAFER Program is one of three grant programs that constitute the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) focus on enhancing the safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire and related hazards. Since FY 2005, the SAFER Program has awarded approximately \$5.8 billion in grant funding to provide critically needed resources to hire new, additional firefighters (or to change the status of part-time or paid-on-call firefighters to full-time firefighters). The FY 2024 SAFER Program will award another \$324 million to an estimated 300 eligible fire departments and volunteer firefighter interest organizations to assist fire departments in increasing the number of firefighters to meet industry minimum standards and attain 24-hour staffing to provide adequate fire protection from fire and fire-related hazards. For more information, see pages 6 - 14 of the FY 2024 SAFER Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

Purpose

The purpose of the SAFER Program is to award grants directly to eligible fire departments and volunteer firefighter interest organizations to assist local fire departments with staffing and deployment capabilities to respond to emergencies. Using a competitive process that is informed by fire service subject-matter experts, grants are awarded to applicants whose requests best address the priorities of the SAFER Program.

Funding

The DHS Appropriations Act, 2024 (Pub. L. No. 118-47) appropriated \$324 million to carry out the activities of the SAFER Program. The statute, 15 U.S.C. § 2229a, authorizes the SAFER Program to make competitive grants to fire departments and national, state, local, federally recognized tribal, and non-profit interest organizations representing the interests of volunteer firefighters. No less than 10% of the funding must be awarded to projects under the Recruitment and Retention (R&R) Activity, and 10% of the funding is set aside for awards to volunteer or mostly



FEMA

volunteer fire departments under the Hiring of Firefighters (Hiring) Activity. For more information, see page 56 - 57 of the FY 2024 SAFER Program NOFO.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants for the FY 2024 SAFER Program include fire departments and national, regional, state, local, federally recognized tribal, and non-profit interest organizations representing the interests of volunteer firefighters operating in any of the 50 states, as well as fire departments in the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico¹, or any federally recognized Indian tribe or tribal organization. For more information, see page 9 of the FY 2024 SAFER Program NOFO.

Definitions

- A fire department is an agency or organization that has a formally recognized arrangement with a state, territory, local government, or tribal authority (city, county, parish, fire district, township, town, village or other governing body) to provide fire suppression on a first-due basis to a fixed geographical area.
- A national, state, local, federally recognized tribal, and non-profit interest organization is an organization that supports or represents the interests of firefighters in front of legislative bodies at the local, state, tribal and/or federal level. Such organizations include state or local firefighter and/or fire chiefs' associations, and volunteer firefighter relief organizations and associations.
- A career fire department is a fire department that has an all-paid force of firefighting personnel other than paid-on-call firefighters (fire departments that provide reimbursement on a paid-on-call basis are considered to be a “combination fire department” for the purposes of the FY 2024 SAFER Program).
- A combination fire department is a fire department that has paid firefighting personnel and volunteer firefighting personnel. A combination fire department must have at least one active firefighter who receives financial compensation for their services (including paid-on-call) and at least one active firefighter who does not receive financial compensation for services, other than life, health, and workers' compensation insurance.
 - FEMA considers a department to be majority volunteer if more than 50% of its membership is made up of personnel who do not receive financial compensation for their services.
 - FEMA considers a department to be majority career if more than 50% of the active firefighting membership is salaried staff.
- A volunteer fire department is a fire department that has an all-volunteer force of firefighting personnel. To be an all-volunteer force, no member may receive financial compensation (in the form of salary or wages) for their services other than life and health insurance, workers' compensation insurance, and/or a nominal stipend per call.

¹ The District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico are all defined as “States” in the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974.

Program Highlights

Under the FY 2024 SAFER Program, eligible organizations may apply for grants for the following activities:

R&R Activity

- Assist fire departments with the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters who are involved with or trained in the operations of firefighting and emergency response.

Hiring Activity

- Hire new, additional firefighters (or to change the status of part-time or paid-on-call firefighters to full-time firefighters).

Application Process and Evaluation Criteria

SAFER Program applications are reviewed through a multi-phase process. All complete and eligible applications are electronically pre-scored and ranked based on the substance of the application relative to the established funding priorities. Applications will then undergo further evaluation by a peer review panel, composed of individuals from the fire service and volunteer firefighter interest organizations.

A minimum of three peer review panelists evaluate the applications using the narrative statement, answers to general questions, and answers to activity-specific questions. Each application is judged on its own merits against established criteria and is not compared to other applications.

Applications most consistent with the established SAFER Program funding priorities that score the highest and are determined to be in the “competitive range” will undergo a Technical Review by the FEMA Program Office, which will assess the request with respect to costs, quantities, feasibility, eligibility, and recipient responsibility. For more information, see pages 24 - 32 of the FY 2024 SAFER Program NOFO.

Program Coordination

The following entities were involved in developing the FY 2024 SAFER Program guidance:

DHS

- FEMA
- U.S. Fire Administration

Major Fire Service Organizations

- International Association of Fire Chiefs
- International Association of Fire Fighters

Learn more at [fema.gov](https://www.fema.gov)

- National Volunteer Fire Council
- National Fire Protection Association
- National Association of State Fire Marshals
- International Association of Arson Investigators
- International Society of Fire Service Instructors
- North American Fire Training Directors
- Congressional Fire Services Institute

SAFER Program Resources

For additional information on the FY 2024 SAFER Program, please visit our website at:

<https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/firefighters/safer>.

You may also contact the SAFER Program Help Desk at (866) 274-0960 or firegrants@fema.dhs.gov. The SAFER Program Help Desk is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. E.T.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Fiscal Year 2024 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program

Fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement, and other criminal or noncriminal misconduct related to this program may be reported to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) Hotline. The toll-free numbers to call are 1 (800) 323-8603 and TTY 1 (844) 889-4357.

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1. Basic Information

A. Agency Name	Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Resilience/Grant Programs Directorate (GPD)
B. NOFO Title	Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant
C. Announcement Type	Initial
D. Funding Opportunity Number	DHS-24-GPD-083-00-99
E. Assistance Listing Number	97.083
F. Expected Total Funding	\$324,000,000
G. Anticipated Number of Awards	300 awards
H. Expected Award Range	N/A
I. Projected Application Start Date	05/23/2025 9:00 a.m. Eastern Time (ET)
J. Projected Application End Date	07/03/2025 5:00 p.m. ET
K. Anticipated Funding Selection Date	No later than 08/18/2025
L. Anticipated Award Date	Beginning on approximately Aug 18, 2025, and continuing thereafter until all FY 2024 SAFER Program grant awards are issued (but no later than September 30, 2025).
M. Projected Period of Performance Start Date	N/A ¹
N. Projected Period of Performance End Date	N/A

¹ FEMA funds SAFER Program awards on a rolling basis; as such, the date the FEMA Assistant Administrator for the Grant Programs Directorate signs the obligating document dictates the unique Period of Performance start and end dates for each award.

O. Executive Summary	The Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program (hereafter referred to as the SAFER Program) is one of three grant programs that constitute the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) focus on enhancing the safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire and fire-related hazards. The SAFER Program provides funding directly to fire departments and volunteer firefighter interest organizations to assist in increasing the number of firefighters to help communities meet industry minimum standards and attain 24-hour staffing to provide adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards, and to fulfill traditional missions of fire departments. Since 2005, the SAFER Program has awarded approximately \$5.8 billion in grant funding to provide critically needed resources to hire new, additional firefighters (or to change the status of part-time or paid-on-call firefighters to full-time firefighters), as well as recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters. Information about success stories for this program can be found at Assistance to Firefighters Grants Program FEMA.gov.
P. Agency Contact	a. <i>SAFER Program Office Contact</i> The SAFER Program Help Desk provides technical assistance to applicants for the online completion and submission of applications into FEMA Grants Outcomes (FEMA GO), answers questions concerning applicant eligibility, recipient responsibilities, and helps in the programmatic administration of awards. The SAFER Program Help Desk can be contacted at (866) 274-0960 or by email at FireGrants@fema.dhs.gov. Normal hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ET. Guidance documents such as application tutorials, Self-Evaluation Guides, and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are also provided to further explain the current SAFER Program, assist with the online grant application, and highlight lessons learned and changes for FY 2024. For more details, please visit the SAFER Program website. b. <i>FEMA Grants News</i> This channel provides general information on all FEMA grant programs and maintains a comprehensive database containing key personnel contact information at the federal, state, and local levels. FEMA Grants News Team is reachable at fema-grants-news@fema.dhs.gov or (800) 368-6498, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. ET. c. <i>Grant Programs Directorate (GPD) Award Administration Division</i>

	GPD's Award Administration Division (AAD) provides support regarding financial matters and budgetary technical assistance. AAD can be contacted at ASK-GMD@fema.dhs.gov. d. FEMA Regional Offices Assistance to Firefighters Grants Regional Contacts also may provide fiscal support, including pre- and post-award administration and technical assistance. Assistance to Firefighters Grants Regional Office contacts are available at Assistance to Firefighters Grants Regional Contacts FEMA.gov. e. Civil Rights The FEMA Office of Civil Rights is responsible for ensuring compliance with and enforcement of federal civil rights obligations in connection with programs and services conducted by FEMA. They are reachable at FEMA-CivilRightsOffice@fema.dhs.gov. f. Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation The FEMA Office of Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation (OEHP) provides guidance and information about the EHP review process to FEMA programs and recipients and subrecipients. Send any inquiries regarding compliance for FEMA grant projects under this NOFO to FEMA-OEHP-NOFOQuestions@fema.dhs.gov. g. Payment and Reporting System Payments are requested through FEMA GO. The Direct Deposit/Electronic Funds Transfer (DD/EFT) method of payment is used for recipients. For any questions about the system, contact the Customer Service Center at (866) 927-5646 or ask-GMD@fema.dhs.gov. h. FEMA GO For technical assistance with the FEMA GO system, please contact the FEMA GO Helpdesk at femago@fema.dhs.gov or (877) 585-3242, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. ET.
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2. Eligibility

A. Eligible Entities/Entity Types	Only the following entities or entity types are eligible to apply. a. Applicants • Fire departments; and • National, regional, state, local, tribal, and nonprofit interest organizations representing the interests of volunteer
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	firefighters are eligible to receive a SAFER Program award under the R&R Activity. See Section A of Appendix B – Programmatic Information and Priorities for additional information on ineligible applications and organizations. b. Subapplicants Subapplicants and subawards are not allowed.
B. Project Type Eligibility	Applicants and recipients should actively coordinate and collaborate with their local and state authorities to help ensure and prioritize the commitment of future non-federal investments in order to sustain staffing capabilities once an award’s period of performance ends. a. Allowable Project Types 1. Hiring Activity The Hiring Activity offers grants to support applications to hire new, additional firefighters (or to change the status of part-time or paid-on-call firefighters to full-time firefighters). National, regional, state, local, Tribal Nation, and nonprofit interest organizations representing the interests of volunteer firefighters are not eligible to receive a SAFER Program award under the Hiring Activity. 2. R&R Activity The R&R Activity offers grants to support applications to assist fire departments with the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters who are involved with or trained in the operations of firefighting and emergency response. Career fire departments are not eligible to apply for funding under the R&R Activity. Each activity has its own application and eligibility requirements, as further outlined in Appendix B – Programmatic Information and Priorities of this NOFO. b. Unallowable Project Types • Under the R&R Activity, applications that request a Staffing Needs Assessment or Risk Assessment project are precluded from applying for additional R&R- related activities. • FEMA will not fund any projects, activities, or line items that are covered under a department's normal operating budget. Federal funding may not be used to supplant (i.e., replace) an existing activity or program.

	• Applicants may not use award funds for matching funds for any other federal grants or cooperative agreements, for lobbying, or for intervention in federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. • Applicants may not use federal funds to sue the Federal Government or any other government entity.
C. Requirements for Personnel, Partners, and Other Parties	An application submitted by an otherwise eligible non-federal entity (i.e., the applicant) may be deemed ineligible when the person that submitted the application is not: 1) a current employee, personnel, official, staff, or leadership of the non-federal entity; and 2) duly authorized to apply for an award on behalf of the non-federal entity at the time of application. Further, the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) must be a duly authorized current employee, personnel, official, staff, or leadership of the recipient and provide an email address unique to the recipient at the time of application and upon any change in assignment during the period of performance. Consultants or contractors of the recipient are not permitted to be the AOR of the recipient. Information on ineligible applications and organizations is in Appendix B of this NOFO.
D. Maximum Number of Applications	The maximum number of applications that can be submitted is one application per activity.
E. Additional Restrictions	a. <i>Period of Performance Restrictions</i> 1. Hiring Activity The period of performance for applications funded under the Hiring Activity will be 36 months. A default 180-day recruitment period begins when FEMA approves an application for an award under this activity. The 36-month period of performance automatically starts after the 180-day recruitment period, regardless of whether the recipient has successfully hired the requested firefighters. The period of performance cannot start later than 180 days after the award date. If a recipient can hire all SAFER Program-funded firefighters during the 180-day recruitment period, the period of performance may begin at that time. In these instances, recipients must submit an amendment requesting that the period of performance start before the end of the 180-day recruitment period if they wish to begin the period early.

	2. R&R Activity The period of performance for applications funded under the R&R Activity will be 12, 24, 36, or 48 months. A default 90-day recruitment period begins when FEMA approves the application for award. This period allows each recipient time to gather resources, initiate processes, and finalize contracts needed to implement SAFER Program activities before the start of the period of performance to maximize the funding's availability. However, the recipient can only expend funds within the period of performance. The period of performance automatically starts after the 90-day recruitment period ends, regardless of whether the recipient has begun implementing its grant award. The period of performance cannot start later than 90 days after the award date. If a recipient can begin its recruitment or retention activities during the 90-day recruitment period, the period of performance may begin at that time. In these instances, recipients must submit an amendment requesting that the period of performance start before the end of the 90-day recruitment period if they wish to begin the period early. Extensions to the period of performance are allowed for R&R Activity grants only. For additional information on period of performance extensions, please refer to Section 10.A. b. National Incident Management System (NIMS) Implementation SAFER Program applicants are not required to comply with NIMS to apply for SAFER Program funding or to receive a SAFER Program award. Any applicant who receives an FY 2024 SAFER Program award must achieve the level of NIMS compliance required by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) over the applicant's emergency service operations (e.g., a local government), prior to the end of the grant's period of performance.
F. References for Eligibility Factors within the NOFO	Please see the following references provided below: 1. Subsection 7.A. Threshold Criteria 2. Subsection 7.B. Application Criteria 3. Subsection 7.C. Financial Integrity Criteria 4. Subsection 7.D. Supplemental Financial Integrity Criteria and Review 5. Appendix B – Programmatic Information and Priorities

G. Cost Sharing Requirement	For Hiring Activity grants, recipients are required to contribute non-federal funds as a cost share. For R&R Activity grants, there is no cost share requirement.
H. Cost Share Description, Type and Restrictions	For Hiring Activity grants, recipients are required to contribute 25 percent of the actual costs incurred in each of the first and second years of the grant; and 65 percent of the actual costs incurred in the third year of the grant. In the first and second years of the grant, the amount of federal funding may not exceed 75 percent of the usual annual cost of a first-year firefighter in that department at the time the grant application was submitted; and in the third year of the grant the amount of federal funding may not exceed 35 percent of the usual annual cost of a first-year firefighter in that department. The “usual annual cost” includes a firefighter’s base salary (excluding non-FLSA overtime) and standard benefits package (including the average annual cost of health, dental, and vision insurance; FICA; life insurance; retirement and/or pension contributions; etc.) offered by the fire department to first-year firefighters. FEMA does not require recipients to demonstrate availability of cost share funds at the time of application. However, before FEMA issues an award it may contact potential awardees to determine whether the recipient possesses the necessary non-federal funding. For R&R Activity grants, there is no cost share requirement.
I. Cost Sharing Calculation Example	Assuming that the usual annual cost of a first-year firefighter in a department at the time of the grant application is \$120,000 per year and the department actually incurred \$100,000 per year in each year of the grant, the following cost share requirements and position cost limits would apply: 1. Cost Share Requirement: The grant recipient is required to contribute \$25,000 in Year 1; \$25,000 in Year 2; and \$65,000 in Year 3. 2. Position Cost Limit: The amount of federal funding cannot exceed \$90,000 in Year 1; \$90,000 in Year 2; and \$42,000 in Year 3.
J. Required information for verifying Cost Share	a. <i>Minimum Budget Requirement</i>

	In accordance with 15 U.S.C. § 2229a(c)(2) , in order to be eligible for SAFER Program funding, applicants are required to certify that their annual budget for fire-related programs and emergency response has not been reduced below 80 percent of the applicant's average funding level in the three years prior to the application date.
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3. Program Description

A. Background, Program Purpose, and Program History

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program (hereafter referred to as the SAFER Program) is one of three grant programs that constitute the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) focus on enhancing the safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire and fire-related hazards. The SAFER Program provides funding directly to fire departments and volunteer firefighter interest organizations to assist in increasing the number of firefighters to help communities meet industry minimum standards and attain 24-hour staffing to provide adequate fire protection from fire and fire-related hazards, and to fulfill traditional missions of fire departments. Since 2005, the SAFER Program has awarded approximately \$5.8 billion in grant funding to provide critically needed resources to hire new, additional firefighters (or to change the status of part-time or paid-on-call firefighters to full-time firefighters), as well as recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters. Information about success stories for this program can be found at [Assistance to Firefighters Grants Program | FEMA.gov](#).

The SAFER Program is part of a comprehensive set of measures authorized by Congress and implemented by DHS. In awarding grants, the FEMA Administrator is required to consider:

- The findings and recommendations of the Technical Evaluation Panel;
- The degree to which an award will reduce deaths, injuries, and property damage by reducing the risks associated with fire-related and other hazards;
- The extent of an applicant's need for a SAFER Program grant and the need to protect the United States as a whole; and
- The number of calls requesting or requiring a firefighting or emergency medical response received by an applicant.

B. Goals, Objectives, and Priorities

Goal: To enhance local fire departments' abilities to comply with staffing, response and operational standards established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA 1710 or NFPA 1720²).

² NFPA 1710 and 1720 are lapsing in 2026 and will be consolidated under the proposed NFPA 1750. FEMA is working with the NFPA Standards Council to evaluate deployment of fire suppression operations. No decisions have been made and FEMA will issue additional guidance when more information becomes available. While the goal of the grant is to increase compliance with NFPA 1710 or 1720, 24-hour staffing is not a requirement of the SAFER Program.

Objectives: The objectives of the SAFER Program are to are to provide funding to communities so they may:

- Increase the number of firefighters to meet industry minimum standards;
- Increase the number of trained personnel assembled at the incident scene;
- Attain 24-hour staffing to improve deployment capabilities; and
- Fulfill traditional missions of fire departments (respond to emergencies and provide adequate fire protection from fire and fire-related hazards).

Priorities: Information on program priorities and objectives for the FY 2024 SAFER Program can be found in [Appendix B – Programmatic Information and Priorities](#) of this NOFO.

C. Program Rationale

The SAFER Program represents part of a comprehensive set of measures authorized by Congress and implemented by DHS. Among the six DHS Missions noted in the [Department of Homeland Security's Strategic Plan](#), the SAFER Program supports Mission Five: Build a Resilient Nation and Respond to Incidents. By increasing the number of trained firefighters, the SAFER Program improves deployment capabilities to respond to emergencies and provide adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards. The SAFER Program also aims to support objectives outlined under Mission Five in the Strategic Plan including:

- Objective 5.1: Coordinate Federal Response to Incidents
- Objective 5.2: Strengthen National Resilience
- Objective 5.4: Enhance Training and Readiness of First Responders

Through these objectives, FEMA creates a vision for the field of emergency management and sets an ambitious, yet achievable, path forward to unify and further professionalize emergency management across the country. We invite all our stakeholders and partners to join us in building a more prepared and resilient nation.

D. Federal Assistance Type Grant

E. Performance Measures and Targets

The grant recipient is required to collect data to allow FEMA to measure performance of the awarded grant in support of the SAFER Program metrics, which are tied to the programmatic objectives and priorities. To measure performance, FEMA may request information throughout the period of performance. In its final performance report submitted at closeout, the recipient must submit sufficient information to demonstrate it has met the performance goal as stated in its award. FEMA will measure the recipient's performance of the grant by comparing the number of items, supplies, projects, and activities needed and requested in its application with the number of items, supplies, projects, and activities acquired and delivered by the end of the period of performance using the following programmatic metrics:

- Percentage of “majority career” SAFER Program recipients who reported and provided evidence that the grant funding increased compliance with structural fire responses that complied with NFPA 1710 structural response standards;
- Percentage of “majority volunteer” SAFER Program recipients who reported and provided evidence that the grant funding increased compliance with structural fire responses that complied with NFPA 1720 structural response standards; and
- Percentage of SAFER Program recipients who reported and provided evidence that the grant funding increased compliance with NFPA 1710 or 1720 assembly and deployment standards.

The target for these measures is the number of firefighters hired and the structural fire responses that complied with NFPA 1710 structural response standards. The measure will be assessed by how the addition of new firefighters has resulted in a percentage increase in compliance with the relevant section of the NFPA standards.

F. Program-Specific Unallowable Costs

Construction costs are not allowable under the SAFER Program. Construction includes major alterations to a building that changes the profile or footprint of the structure.

Modifications to facilities described in Appendix B – Programmatic Information and Priorities are not considered construction costs for purposes of general award cost categorization and may be eligible. However, modifications to facilities activities might be considered “construction” for purposes of procurement or environmental protection and historic preservation purposes.

G. General Funding Requirements

Costs charged to federal awards (including federal and non-federal cost share funds) must comply with applicable statutes, rules and regulations, policies, this NOFO, and the terms and conditions of the federal award. This includes, among other requirements, that costs must be incurred, and products and services must be delivered within the budget period. [2 C.F.R. § 200.403\(h\)](#).

Recipients may not use federal funds or any cost share funds for the following activities:

1. Matching or cost sharing requirements for other federal grants and cooperative agreements (see [2 C.F.R. § 200.306](#)).
2. Lobbying or other prohibited activities under [18 U.S.C. § 1913](#) or [2 C.F.R. § 200.450](#).
3. Prosecuting claims against the federal government or any other government entity (see [2 C.F.R. § 200.435](#)).

H. Indirect Costs (Facilities and Administrative Costs)

Indirect costs are allowed for recipients and subrecipients.

Indirect costs (IDC) are costs incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective and not readily assignable to specific cost objectives without disproportionate effort. Indirect costs are allowable only under R&R Activity for this program as described in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, including [2 C.F.R. § 200.414](#). Applicants with a current negotiated IDC rate agreement who desire to charge indirect costs to a federal award must provide a copy of their

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IDC rate agreement with their applications. Not all applicants are required to have a current negotiated IDC rate agreement. Applicants that are not required to have a negotiated IDC rate agreement, but are required to develop an IDC rate proposal, must provide a copy of their proposal with their applications. Applicants without a current negotiated IDC rate agreement (including a provisional rate) and wish to charge the de minimis rate must reach out via email to FireGrants@fema.dhs.gov for further instructions. Applicants who wish to use a cost allocation plan in lieu of an IDC rate proposal must also reach out via email to FireGrants@fema.dhs.gov for further instructions. As it relates to the IDC for subrecipients, a recipient must follow the requirements of [2 C.F.R. §§ 200.332](#) and [200.414](#) in approving the IDC rate for subawards.

I. Management and Administration (M&A) Costs

M&A costs are allowed under the R&R Activity only. M&A costs are not eligible under the Hiring Activity.

No more than 3% of the federal share of SAFER Program funds awarded may be expended by the recipient for M&A for purposes associated with the SAFER Program award. M&A activities are those directly related to the management and administration of the SAFER award funds, such as financial management and monitoring. M&A expenses should be based only on actual expenses or known contractual costs; requests that are simple percentages of the award or estimates, without supporting justification or adequate documentation will not be allowed or considered for reimbursement. Salaries and fringe benefits for personnel directly supporting the grant are not required to be included in the M&A budget line item.

M&A are not overhead costs but are necessary direct costs incurred in direct support of the federal award or as a consequence of it, such as travel, meeting-related expenses, and salaries of full/part-time staff in direct support of the program. As such, M&A costs can be itemized in financial reports.

J. Pre-Award Costs

The following pre-award costs are allowable:

1. Fees for grant writers.

Generally, grant funds cannot be used to pay for products and services contracted for or obligated prior to the effective date of the award.

See [Appendix C – Award Administration Information](#) for further information regarding grant writer fees and [Section 10.B. Other Information](#) for general procurement under grants requirements.

K. Beneficiary Eligibility

To be an eligible beneficiary, there are no program requirements. This NOFO and any subsequent federal awards create no rights or causes of action for any beneficiary.

L. Participant Eligibility

To be an eligible participant, there are no program requirements. This NOFO and any subsequent federal awards create no rights or causes of action for any participant.

M. Authorizing Authority

Section 34 of the *Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974*, [Pub. L. No. 93-498](#), as amended ([15 U.S.C. § 2229a](#)).

N. Appropriation Authority

Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2024, [Pub. L. No. 118-47](#), Title III, Protection, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Financial Assistance (2024 DHS Appropriations Act).

O. Budget Period

There will be only a single budget period with the same start and end dates as the period of performance.

P. Prohibition on Covered Equipment or Services

Recipients, subrecipients, and their contractors or subcontractors must comply with the prohibitions set forth in Section 889 of the [John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019](#), which restricts the purchase of covered telecommunications and surveillance equipment and services. Please see 2 C.F.R. §§ [200.216](#), [200.327](#), [200.471](#), and [Appendix II to 2 C.F.R. Part 200](#), and [FEMA Policy #405-143-1 - Prohibitions on Expending FEMA Award Funds for Covered Telecommunications Equipment or Services](#) for more information.

4. Application Contents and Format

A. Pre-Application, Letter of Intent, and Whitepapers

Pre-applications, letters of intent, and whitepapers are not required to be eligible to apply.

B. Application Content and Format

Applications are processed through the FEMA GO system. To access the system, go to <https://go.fema.gov/>. Additional application and program guidance documents are available at the [SAFER Program website](#). Applicants will be prompted to submit the standard application information and any program-specific information required as described in Sections [4.C. Application Components](#) and [4.D. Program-Specific Required Documents and Information](#) of this NOFO. The Standard Forms (SF) may be accessed in the Forms tab at [Forms | Grants.gov](#). Applicants should review these forms before applying to ensure they have all the information required.

After submitting the final application, FEMA GO will provide either an error message or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the AOR that submitted the application. Applicants using slow internet connections, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before FEMA GO receives your application.

For additional application submission requirements, including program-specific requirements, please refer to the [Section 4.C. Application Components](#) of this NOFO.

C. Application Components

The following forms or information are required to be submitted via FEMA GO. The Standard Forms (SF) are also available at [Forms | Grants.gov](#).

- SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance
- Grants.gov Lobbying Form, Certification Regarding Lobbying
- SF-424A, Budget Information (Non-Construction)
- SF-424B, Standard Assurances (Non-Construction)
- SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

D. Program-Specific Required Documents and Information

For program-specific updates and information, please see the [Appendix A – FY 2024 SAFER Program Updates](#), [Appendix B – Programmatic Information and Priorities](#), and [Appendix C – Award Administration Information](#).

E. Post-Application Requirements for Successful Applicants

Applicants likely to be funded may receive a request for additional information by email prior to award. Applicants must respond to the request to move forward with the grant review process.

5. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

A. Address to Request Application Package

Applications are processed through the FEMA GO system. To access the system, go to [FEMA GO](#).

Steps Required to Apply for An Award Under This Program and Submit an Application:

To apply for an award under this program, all applicants must:

- a. Apply for, update, or verify their Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number and Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service;
- b. In the application, provide an UEI number;
- c. Have an account with [login.gov](#);
- d. Register for, update, or verify their SAM account and ensure the account is active before submitting the application;
- e. Register in FEMA GO, add the organization to the system, and establish the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR). The organization's electronic business point of contact (eBiz POC) from the SAM registration may need to be involved in this step. For step-by-step instructions, see the [FEMA GO Startup Guide](#);
- f. Submit the complete application in FEMA GO; and
- g. Always maintain an active SAM registration with current information when the applicant has an active federal award or an application under consideration by a federal awarding agency. As part of this, applicants must also provide information on an applicant's immediate and highest-level owner and subsidiaries, as well as on all predecessors that have been awarded federal contracts or federal financial assistance within the last three years, if applicable.

Per [2 C.F.R. § 25.110](#), if an applicant is experiencing exigent circumstances that prevents it from obtaining an UEI number and completing SAM registration prior to receiving a federal award, the applicant must notify FEMA as soon as possible. Contact fema-grants-news@fema.dhs.gov and provide the details of the exigent circumstances.

How to Register to Apply:

General Instructions:

Registering and applying for an award under this program is a multi-step process and requires time to complete. Below are instructions for registering to apply for FEMA funds. Read the instructions carefully and prepare the requested information before beginning the registration process. Gathering the required information before starting the process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

The registration process can take up to four weeks to complete. To ensure an application meets the deadline, applicants are advised to start the required steps well in advance of their submission.

Organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number, Employer Identification Number (EIN), and an active System for Award Management (SAM) registration.

Obtain a UEI Number:

All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a UEI number. Applicants must enter the UEI number in the applicable data entry field on the SF-424 form. For more detailed instructions for obtaining a UEI number, refer to [SAM.gov](#).

Obtain Employer Identification Number:

In addition to having a UEI number, all entities applying for funding must provide an Employer Identification Number (EIN). The EIN can be obtained from the IRS by visiting <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-online>.

Create a login.gov account:

Applicants must have a login.gov account to register with SAM or update their SAM registration. Applicants can create a login.gov account at: https://secure.login.gov/sign_up/enter_email?request_id=34f19fa8-14a2-438c-8323-a62b99571fd.

Applicants only must create a login.gov account once. For existing SAM users, use the same email address for both login.gov and SAM.gov so that the two accounts can be linked.

For more information on the login.gov requirements for SAM registration, refer to <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/pages/public/loginFAQ.jsf>.

Register with SAM:

In addition to having a UEI number, all organizations must register with SAM. Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through FEMA GO. SAM registration must be renewed annually and must remain active throughout the entire grant life cycle.³

For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to: [Register with SAM](#).

Register in FEMA GO, Add the Organization to the System, and Establish the AOR:

Applicants must register in FEMA GO and add their organization to the system. The organization's electronic business point of contact (eBiz POC) from the SAM registration may need to be involved in this step. For step-by-step instructions, see [FEMA GO Startup Guide](#).

Note: FEMA GO will support only the most recent major release of the following browsers: Google Chrome; Mozilla Firefox; Apple Safari; and Microsoft Edge.

Applicants using tablet type devices or other browsers may encounter issues with using FEMA GO.

Submitting the Final Application:

Applicants will be prompted to submit the standard application information and any program-specific information required. Standard Forms (SF) may be accessed at [Forms | Grants.gov](#). Applicants should review these forms before applying to ensure they are providing all required information.

After submitting the final application, FEMA GO will provide either an error message, or an email to the submitting AOR confirming the transmission was successfully received.

B. Application Deadline

07/03/2025 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time

C. Pre-Application Requirements Deadline

Not applicable.

D. Post-Application Requirements Deadline

Not applicable.

E. Effects of Missing the Deadline

All applications must be completed in FEMA GO by the application deadline. FEMA GO automatically records proof of timely submission and generates an electronic date/time stamp when FEMA GO successfully receives an application. The submitting AOR will receive via email the official date and time stamp and a FEMA GO tracking number to serve as proof of timely submission prior to the application deadline.

³ Per [2 C.F.R. § 25.200](#), , applicants must also provide the applicant's immediate and highest-level owner, subsidiaries, and predecessors that have been awarded federal contracts or federal financial assistance within the past three years, if applicable.

Applicants experiencing system-related issues have until 3:00 p.m. ET on the date applications are due to notify FEMA. No new system-related issues will be addressed after this deadline. Applications not received by the application submission deadline will not be accepted.

6. Intergovernmental Review

A. Requirement Description and State Single Point of Contact

An intergovernmental review is not required.

7. Application Review Information

A. Threshold Criteria

FEMA conducts reviews of a random sampling of applications to compare them for duplication including the narrative statements and statistical data. Therefore, all elements of the narrative statements must be specific and unique to the applying entity, and all statistical data must be accurate. Applications with narrative statements that have substantial duplication of statements, sentences, or paragraphs to other submitted applications, or inaccurate data that may mislead reviewers may be disqualified. Discovery of falsification, fabrication, or plagiarism of other grant proposals will disqualify the application(s).

Note: FEMA evaluates each application on its merit, veracity, and accuracy to ascertain how the narrative statement(s) outlined within the application depicts the applicant's and their community's uniqueness, their particular risks, and how selecting them over a similarly situated applicant advances the objectives of the SAFER program to assist local fire departments with staffing and deployment capabilities to respond to emergencies and assure that communities have adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards. At any time during application review process, including the technical review stage, FEMA may request additional documentation from applicants, including but not limited to:

- Copies of official or certified documents demonstrating the claimed financial need;
- Copies of the applicant's needs assessment report, survey, or any documented other efforts undertaken to identify the applicant's unique project objectives;
- Copies of the risk analysis conducted to ascertain how said project will address the applicant's unique needs in alignment with their mission and SAFER Program grant purpose;
- Additional information or evidence detailing the applicant's particular risks; and
- Any other information deemed necessary to adequately weigh the applicant's assistance request for funding under this discretionary-competitive grant program. No applicant is guaranteed funding.

B. Application Criteria

Funding priorities and programmatic criteria for evaluating SAFER Program applications are established by FEMA based on the recommendations from the Criteria Development Panel (CDP). Each year, FEMA convenes a panel of fire service professionals to develop funding priorities for the SAFER Program. The panel makes recommendations about funding priorities as well as developing criteria for awarding grants.

The **nine major fire service organizations** represented on the panel are:

- International Association of Fire Chiefs

- International Association of Fire Fighters
- National Volunteer Fire Council
- National Fire Protection Association
- National Association of State Fire Marshals
- International Association of Arson Investigators
- International Society of Fire Service Instructors
- North American Fire Training Directors
- Congressional Fire Service Institute

The CDP is charged with making recommendations to FEMA regarding the creation or modification of previously established funding priorities as well as developing criteria for awarding grants. The content of this NOFO reflects implementation of the CDP's recommendations with respect to the priorities, direction, and criteria for awards.

FEMA will rank all complete and submitted applications based on how well they align with the program priorities for the activity. Answers to the application's activity specific questions provide information used to determine each application's ranking relative to the stated program priorities.

The Narrative Statements of the application must provide specific details about the activity for which applicants seek funding, including budget details. The weighted evaluation criteria used by the peer reviewers in the determination of the grant award, as described below, make up the elements of the narrative statement score.

C. Financial Integrity Criteria

Before making an award, FEMA is required to review OMB-designated databases for applicants' eligibility and financial integrity information. This is required by [the *Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019* \(Pub. L. No. 116-117, § 2 \(2020\)\)](#), [41 U.S.C. § 2313](#), and [the "Do Not Pay Initiative" \(31 U.S.C. 3354\)](#). For more details, please see [2 C.F.R. § 200.206](#).

Thus, the Financial Integrity Criteria may include the following risk-based considerations of the applicant:

1. Financial stability.
2. Quality of management systems and ability to meet management standards.
3. History of performance in managing federal award.
4. Reports and findings from audits.
5. Ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

D. Supplemental Financial Integrity Criteria and Review

Before making an award expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently a total federal share of \$250,000) over the period of performance:

1. FEMA is required by [41 U.S.C. § 2313](#) to review or consider certain information found in SAM.gov. For details, please see [2 C.F.R. § 200.206\(a\)\(2\)](#).
2. An applicant may review and comment on any information in the responsibility/qualification records available in SAM.gov.

3. Before making decisions in the risk review required by [2 C.F.R. § 200.206](#), FEMA will consider any comments by the applicant.

E. Reviewers and Reviewer Selection

A panel of peer reviewers is comprised of fire service representatives recommended by the Criteria Development Panel. Peer reviewers are subject matter experts recommended by the nine major fire service organizations. In their role as Special Government Employees, peer reviewers must certify and observe Federal Conflict of Interests rules.

F. Merit Review Process

SAFER Program applications are reviewed through a multi-phase process. All applications are electronically pre-scored and ranked based on how well they align with the funding priorities outlined in this NOFO.

Applications with the highest pre-score rankings per activity are then scored competitively by no less than three members of a Peer Review Panel.

Applications will also be evaluated through a series of internal FEMA review processes for completeness, adherence to programmatic guidelines, technical feasibility, costs/quantities, and anticipated effectiveness of the proposed project(s). Below is the process by which applications will be reviewed:

1. Pre-Scoring Process

The application undergoes an electronic pre-scoring process based on established program priorities listed in [Appendix B – Programmatic Information and Priorities](#) and answers to activity-specific questions within the online application. Application Narratives are not reviewed during the pre-score process. “Request Details” and “Budget” information should comply with program guidance and statutory funding limitations. The pre-score is 50% of the total application score under the Hiring Activity, and 30% of the total application score under the R&R Activity.

2. Peer Review Panel Process

Applications with the highest rankings from the pre-scoring process will undergo a Peer Review Panel process. A panel of peer reviewers is comprised of fire service representatives recommended by the CDP. Peer reviewers will assess the merits of each application based on the narrative statement on the requested activity. The evaluation elements listed in the “Narrative Evaluation Criteria” below will be used to calculate the narrative’s score for each activity requested. Panelists will independently score each requested activity within the application, discuss the merits and shortcomings of the application with their peers, and document the findings. A consensus is not required. The panel score is 50% of the total application score under the Hiring Activity, and 70% of the total application score under the R&R Activity.

Peer Review Panelists will evaluate and score each activity based on the following narrative elements within each activity.

a. Hiring Activity

The panel score is 50% of the total application score.

1. Project Description (30%):

- Why does the department need the positions requested in this application?
- How will the positions requested in this application be used within the department (e.g., fourth firefighter on engine, open a new station, eliminate browned out stations, reduce overtime)?
- What unique and specific services will the requested positions provide to the fire department and community?
- How will funds awarded through this grant enhance the department's ability to protect critical infrastructure within the primary response area?

2. Impact on Daily Operations (30%):

- How are the community and the current firefighters employed by the department at risk without the positions requested in this application?
- How will that risk be unequivocally reduced if awarded?

3. Financial Need (30%):

- Provide an income versus expenses breakdown of the department's current annual budget.
- Describe the department's precise budget shortfalls and inability to address financial needs without federal assistance.
- Describe what other actions the department has taken to obtain funding elsewhere (e.g., state assistance programs, other grant programs).
- Discuss how the critical functions of the department are uniquely affected without this funding.

4. Cost Benefit (10%):

- Describe the unique and specific benefits (e.g., quantifying the anticipated savings and efficiencies) the department and community will realize if awarded the positions requested in this application.

b. R&R Activity (Fire Departments)

The panel score is 70% of the total application score.

1. Project Description (30%):

- Describe the unique problems and issues the department is experiencing in recruiting new volunteer firefighters.

- Describe the problems and issues the department is experiencing in retaining current members.
- Describe the precise implementation plan, including the goals, objectives, methods, specific steps, and timelines to directly address the identified problems or issues.
- Describe the current marketing plan already in place, or the marketing program to be put in place with or without grant funds.
- Describe how the program will be uniquely evaluated for its impact on identified recruitment and retention problems and issues. Describe how the overall effectiveness of the grant will be measured.
- Describe the unique and specific services the new volunteer firefighters, retention of current volunteer firefighters, or both, will provide for the fire department(s) and community.
- If the grant request will have a regional impact, discuss how the regional partners will benefit and which activities they will benefit from.
- If the grant request includes executive or management positions, define the purpose of all requested positions and personnel expenditures.

2. Impact on Daily Operations (30%):

- Describe with particularity and discreteness how the community and current volunteer firefighters in the department are at risk without the items or activities requested in this application.
- Describe how that risk will be unequivocally reduced if awarded funding.
- Explain the definitive impact the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters, the retention of current volunteer firefighters, or both, will have on the department's NFPA compliance.

3. Financial Need (30%):

- Provide an income versus expenses breakdown of the department's current annual budget.
- Describe the department's precise budget shortfalls and its inability to address financial needs without federal assistance.
- Describe what other actions the department has taken to obtain funding elsewhere (e.g., state assistance programs, other grant programs), and how similar projects have been funded in the past.
- Discuss how the critical functions of the department are uniquely affected without this funding.

4. Cost Benefit (10%):

- Describe the unique and specific benefits (e.g., quantifying the anticipated savings and efficiencies) the department and community will realize if awarded the items or activities requested in this application.

c. *R&R Activity (National, state, local, or federally recognized tribal volunteer firefighters interest organizations)*

The panel score is 70% of the total application score.

1. Project Description (30%):

- Describe the problems and issues the fire departments that the organization will be reaching with this grant are experiencing in recruiting new volunteer firefighters.
- Describe the problems and issues the same departments are experiencing in retaining current members.
- Describe the organization's implementation plan, including the goals, objectives, methods, specific steps, and timelines to directly address the problems or issues identified.
- Describe the current marketing plan already in place, or the marketing program to be put in place with or without grant funds.
- Describe how the program will be evaluated for its impact on the identified recruitment and retention problems and issues of the fire departments participating in this grant. Describe how the overall effectiveness of the grant will be measured.
- Describe the specific services the new volunteer firefighters, retention of current volunteer firefighters, or both, will provide for the fire departments participating in this application and their respective communities.
- Describe the organization's procurement practices and the timelines outlining the chronological steps to complete the activities requested.

2. Impact on Daily Operations (30%):

- Describe how the fire departments participating in this application and their current volunteer firefighters and communities are at risk without the items or activities requested in this application.
- Explain how that risk will be reduced if awarded funding.
- Describe the impact that the recruitment of new volunteer firefighters, the retention of current volunteer firefighters, or both, will have on the NFPA compliance of the fire departments participating in this application.

3. Financial Need (30%):

- Provide an income versus expenses breakdown of the organization's current annual budget.
- Describe the organization's particular budget shortfalls and the inability to address the financial needs without federal assistance.
- Describe the other actions the organization has taken to obtain funding elsewhere (e.g., state assistance programs, other grant programs), and how similar projects have been funded in the past.
- Discuss how the critical functions of the organization are affected without this funding.

4. Cost Benefit (10%):

- Describe the specific benefits (e.g., quantifying the anticipated savings and efficiencies) the fire departments participating in this application and their communities will realize if awarded the items or activities requested in this application.

The Narrative Statement blocks do not allow for formatting. Do not type the Narrative Statements using only capital letters. Additionally, do not include tables, special characters, or fonts (e.g., quotation marks, bullets), or graphs. Space for the Narrative Statement is limited. While each element must have a minimum of 200 characters, the maximum number of characters varies based on the questions being asked.

G. Final Selection

a. Technical Evaluation Process (TEP)

The highest-ranking applications from both activities will be considered within the fundable range. Applications that are in the fundable range will undergo both a Technical Review by a subject-matter expert as well as a FEMA Program Office review before being recommended for award. The FEMA Program Office will assess the request with respect to costs, quantities, feasibility, eligibility, and recipient responsibility prior to recommending any application for award.

During the TEP information in [Appendix B - Programmatic Information and Priorities](#) is used to make final corrections to any request not meeting program eligibility requirements. This is not a scored phase of the application process. Requests may be recommended for partial funding or disqualification based on findings made during this assessment.

8. Award Notices

A. Notice of Award

The Authorized Organization Representative should carefully read the federal award package before accepting the federal award. The federal award package includes instructions on administering the federal award as well as terms and conditions for the award.

By applying, applicants agree to comply with the prerequisites stated in this NOFO and the material terms and conditions of the federal award, should they receive an award.

FEMA will provide the federal award package to the applicant electronically via FEMA GO. Award packages include an Award Letter, Summary Award Memo, Agreement Articles, and Obligating Document. An award package notification email is sent via the grant application system to the submitting AOR.

Recipients must accept their awards no later than 30 days from the award date. Recipients shall notify FEMA of their intent to accept the award and proceed with work via the FEMA GO system.

Funds will remain on hold until the recipient accepts the award via FEMA GO and all other conditions of the award have been satisfied, or until the award is otherwise rescinded. Failure to accept a grant award within the specified timeframe may result in a loss of funds.

During the review process for a SAFER Program award, FEMA may have modified the application request(s). These modifications will be identified in the award package provided upon the offer of an award. If the awarded activities, scope of work, or requested dollar amount(s) do not match the application as submitted, the recipient shall only be responsible for completing the activities funded by FEMA. The recipient is under no obligation to start, modify, or complete any activities requested but not funded by the award. The award package will identify any differences under the approved scope of work section.

B. Pass-Through Requirements

Standard pass-through requirements in 2 C.F.R. Part 200 apply.

C. Note Regarding Pre-Award Costs

Even if pre-award costs are allowed, beginning performance is at the applicant or sub-applicant's own risk.

D. Obligation of Funds

Grant funds are obligated upon the offer of grant award in the FEMA GO system. Recipients must accept their awards no later than 30 days from the award date. Acceptance of the award is confirmation of the obligation. The recipient shall notify FEMA of its intent to accept and proceed with work under the award through the FEMA GO system.

Funds will remain on hold until the recipient accepts the award through the FEMA GO system and all other conditions of the award have been satisfied or until the award is otherwise rescinded. Failure to accept a grant award within the specified timeframe may result in a loss of funds. Recipients may request additional time to accept the award if needed.

E. Notification to Unsuccessful Applicants

FEMA GO will provide all applicants who do not receive a FY 2024 SAFER Program award with a turndown notification after September 30, 2025.

9. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

A. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

In addition to the requirements of this section, FEMA may place specific terms and conditions on an individual award in accordance with 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

B. DHS Standard Terms and Conditions

A recipient of a federal award under this funding opportunity is required to comply with DHS Standard Terms and Conditions in effect at the time the award is issued. The DHS Standard Terms and Conditions are available [online](#). For continuation awards, the terms and conditions for the initial federal award will apply unless otherwise specified in the terms and conditions of the continuation award. The specific version of the DHS Standard Terms and Conditions applicable to the federal award will be in the federal award package. NOTE: Although not a requirement in

the DHS Standard Terms and Conditions, as a best practice entities receiving funds through this program should ensure that cybersecurity is integrated into the design, development, operation, and maintenance of investments that impact information technology (IT) and/ or operational technology (OT) systems.

a. Ensuring the Protection of Civil Rights

As the Nation works towards achieving the [National Preparedness Goal](#), it is important to continue to protect the civil rights of individuals. Recipients and subrecipients must carry out their programs and activities, including those related to the building, sustaining and delivering of core capabilities, in a manner that respects and ensures the protection of civil rights for protected populations.

The DHS Standard Terms and Conditions include a fuller list of the civil rights provisions that apply to recipients. They can be found in the [DHS Standard Terms and Conditions](#). Additional information on civil rights provisions is available at <https://www.fema.gov/about/offices/equal-rights/civil-rights>.

C. Financial Reporting Requirements

1. Recipients must report obligations and expenditures through a federal financial report. The Federal Financial Report (FFR) form, also known as Standard Form 425 (SF-425), is available online at: [SF-425 OMB #4040-0014](#).
2. Recipients must submit the FFR semi-annually throughout the period of performance (POP) as detailed below:
 - No later than July 30 (for the period Jan. 1 – June 30)
 - No later than January 30 (for the period July 1 – Dec. 31)
3. The final FFR is due within 120 calendar days after the end of the POP.
4. FEMA may withhold future federal awards and cash payments if the recipient does not submit timely financial reports, or the financial reports submitted demonstrate lack of progress or provide insufficient detail.

D. Programmatic Performance Reporting Requirements

1. A Performance Report must be submitted semi-annually throughout the POP.
2. A Performance Report must include:
 - A brief narrative of overall project(s) status;
 - A summary of project expenditures; and
 - A description of any potential issues that may affect project completion.
3. The Progress Report must be submitted through FEMA GO.
4. Performance Report Due Dates
 - No later than July 30 (for the period Jan. 1 – June 30)
 - No later than January 30 (for the period July 1 – Dec. 31)

E. Closeout Reporting Requirements

Within 120 days after the end of the period of performance, or after an amendment has been issued to close out a federal award, recipients must submit the following:

1. The final request for payment, if applicable.
2. The final FFR.

3. The final progress report detailing all accomplishments. The recipient must include with the final progress report an inventory of all construction projects.
4. A qualitative narrative summary of the impact of those accomplishments throughout the period of performance.
5. Other documents required by this NOFO, terms and conditions of the federal award, or other DHS Component guidance.

After FEMA approves these reports, it will issue a closeout notice. The notice will indicate the period of performance as closed, list any remaining funds to be de-obligated, and address the record maintenance requirement. Unless a longer period applies, such as due to an audit or litigation, for equipment or real property used beyond the period of performance, or due to other circumstances outlined in [2 C.F.R. § 200.334](#), this maintenance requirement is three years from the date of the final FFR.

Also, pass-through entities are responsible for closing out those subawards as described in [2 C.F.R. § 200.344](#); subrecipients are still required to submit closeout materials within 90 calendar days of the subaward period of performance end date. When a subrecipient completes all closeout requirements, pass-through entities must promptly complete all closeout actions in time for the recipient to submit all necessary documentation and information to FEMA during the closeout of their prime award. The recipient is responsible for returning any balances of unobligated or unliquidated funds that have been drawn down that are not authorized to be retained per [2 C.F.R. § 200.344\(e\)](#).

Administrative Closeout

Administrative closeout is a mechanism for FEMA to unilaterally execute closeout of an award. FEMA will use available award information in lieu of final recipient reports, per [2 C.F.R. § 200.344\(h\)-\(i\)](#). It is an activity of last resort, and if FEMA administratively closes an award, this may negatively impact a recipient's ability to obtain future funding.

F. Disclosing Information per 2 C.F.R. § 180.335

Before entering into a federal award, the applicant must notify FEMA if it knows that the applicant or any of the principals (as defined at [2 C.F.R. § 180.995](#)) for the federal award:

1. Are presently excluded or disqualified;
2. Have been convicted within the preceding three years of any of the offenses listed in § 180.800(a) or had a civil judgment rendered against you for one of those offenses within that time period;
3. Are presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (federal, state, or local) with the commission of any of the offenses listed in § 180.800(a); or
4. Have had one or more public transactions (federal, state, or local) terminated within the preceding three years for cause or default.

This requirement is fully described in [2 C.F.R. § 180.335](#).

Additionally, [2 C.F.R. § 180.350](#) requires recipients to provide immediate notice to FEMA at any time after entering a federal award if:

1. The recipient learns that either it failed to earlier disclose information as required by 2 C.F.R. § 180.335;
2. Due to changed circumstances, the applicant or any of the principals for the federal award now meet the criteria at 2 C.F.R. § 180.335 listed above.

G. Reporting of Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance

[Appendix XII to 2 C.F.R. Part 200](#) states the terms and conditions for recipient integrity and performance matters used for this funding opportunity.

If the total value of all active federal grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts for a recipient exceeds \$10,000,000 at any time during the period of performance:

1. The recipient must maintain the currency of information reported in SAM.gov about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings described in paragraph 2 of Appendix XII;
2. The required reporting frequency is described in paragraph 4 of Appendix XII.

H. Single Audit Report

A recipient expending \$1,000,000 or more in federal awards (as defined by [2 C.F.R. § 200.1](#)) during its fiscal year must undergo an audit. This may be either a single audit complying with [2 C.F.R. § 200.514](#) or a program-specific audit complying with [2 C.F.R. §§ 200.501](#) and [200.507](#). Audits must follow [2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart F](#), 2 C.F.R. § 200.501, and the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) [Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards](#).

I. Monitoring and Oversight

Per [2 C.F.R. § 200.337](#), DHS and its authorized representatives have the right of access to any records of the recipient or subrecipient pertinent to a federal award to perform audits, site visits, and any other official use. The right also includes timely and reasonable access to the recipient's or subrecipient's personnel for the purpose of interview and discussion related to such documents or the federal award in general.

Pursuant to this right and per [2 C.F.R. § 200.329](#), DHS may conduct desk reviews and make site visits to review and evaluate project accomplishments and management control systems as well as provide any required technical assistance. Recipients and subrecipients must respond in a timely and accurate manner to DHS requests for information relating to a federal award.

FEMA staff will periodically monitor recipients to ensure that administrative processes, policies and procedures, budgets, and other related award criteria are meeting federal Government-wide and FEMA regulations. Aside from reviewing quarterly financial and programmatic reports, FEMA may also conduct enhanced monitoring through either a desk-based review, an onsite monitoring visit, or both. Enhanced monitoring will involve the review and analysis of the financial compliance and administrative processes, policies, activities, and other attributes of each federal assistance award, and it will identify areas where the recipient may need technical assistance, corrective actions, or other support.

Financial and programmatic monitoring are complementary processes within FEMA's overarching monitoring strategy that function together to ensure effective grants management, accountability, and transparency; validate progress against grant and program goals; and safeguard federal funds against fraud, waste, and abuse. Financial monitoring primarily focuses

on statutory and regulatory compliance with administrative grant requirements, while programmatic monitoring seeks to validate and assist in grant progress, targeting issues that may be hindering achievement of project goals and ensuring compliance with the purpose of the grant and grant program. Both monitoring processes are similar in that they feature initial reviews of all open awards, and additional, in-depth monitoring of grants requiring additional attention.

In terms of overall award management, recipient and subrecipient responsibilities include, but are not limited to: accounting of receipts and expenditures, cash management, maintaining adequate financial records, reporting and refunding expenditures disallowed by audits, monitoring if acting as a pass-through entity, or other assessments and reviews, and ensuring overall compliance with the terms and conditions of the award or subaward, as applicable, including the terms of 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

J. Program Evaluation

Federal agencies are required to structure NOFOs that incorporate program evaluation activities from the outset of their program design and implementation to meaningfully document and measure their progress towards meeting agency priority goal(s) and program outcomes. [OMB Memorandum M-21-27](#), Evidence-Based Policymaking: Learning Agendas and Annual Evaluation Plans, implementing Title I of the *Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018*, [Pub. L. No. 115-435](#) (2019) (Evidence Act), urges federal awarding agencies to use program evaluation as a critical tool to learn, improve delivery, and elevate program service and delivery across the program lifecycle. Evaluation means “an assessment using systematic data collection and analysis of one or more programs, policies, and organizations intended to assess their effectiveness and efficiency.” Evidence Act, § 101 (codified at 5 U.S.C. § 311).

As such, recipients and subrecipients are required to participate in a Program Office (PO) or a DHS Component-led evaluation, if selected. This may be carried out by a third-party on behalf of the PO or the DHS Component. Such an evaluation may involve information collections including but not limited to, records of the recipients; surveys, interviews, or discussions with individuals who benefit from the federal award, program operating personnel, and award recipients; and site visits or other observation of recipient activities, as specified in a DHS Component or PO-approved evaluation plan. More details about evaluation requirements may be provided in the federal award, if available at that time, or following the award as evaluation requirements are finalized. Evaluation costs incurred during the period of performance are allowable costs (either as direct or indirect) in accordance with [2 C.F.R. § 200.413](#). Recipients and subrecipients are also encouraged, but not required, to participate in any additional evaluations after the period of performance ends, although any costs incurred to participate in such evaluations are not allowable and may not be charged to the federal award.

K. Additional Performance Reporting Requirements Not Applicable.

10. Other Information

A. Period of Performance Extension

Extensions to the period of performance are allowed for R&R Activity grants only.

Recipients should consult with their FEMA point of contact for requirements related to a performance period extension.

Extension requests will be granted only due to compelling legal, policy, or operational challenges. Extension requests will only be considered for the following reasons:

1. Contractual commitments by the recipient or subrecipient with vendors that prevent completion of the project, including delivery of equipment or services, within the existing period of performance;
2. The project must undergo a complex environmental review that cannot be completed within the existing period of performance;
3. Projects are long-term by design, and therefore acceleration would compromise core programmatic goals; or
4. Where other special or extenuating circumstances exist.

Recipients should submit all proposed extension requests to FEMA for review and approval at least 60 days prior to the end of the period of performance to allow sufficient processing time. Extensions are typically granted for no more than a six-month period.

All extension requests must address the following:

1. The grant program, fiscal year, and award number;
2. The reason for delay – including details of the legal, policy, or operational challenges that prevent final outlay of awarded funds by the deadline;
3. Status of the activity or activities;
4. Approved period of performance termination date and requested extension;
5. Amount of funds drawn down to date;
6. Remaining available funds, both federal and non-federal, if applicable;
7. A budget outlining how remaining federal and non-federal funds will be expended;
8. A plan for completion, including milestones and timeframes for achieving each milestone and the individual responsible for completing the plan;
9. Certification that the activity or activities will be completed within the extended period of performance without any modification to the original statement of work, as described in the original statement of work and as approved by FEMA.

B. Other Information

a. *Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation (EHP) Compliance*

FEMA is required to consider effects of its actions on the environment and historic properties to ensure that activities, grants, and programs funded by FEMA, comply with federal EHP laws, Executive Orders, regulations, and policies.

Recipients and subrecipients proposing projects with the potential to impact the environment or cultural resources, such as the modification or renovation of existing buildings, structures, and facilities, new construction, or replacement of buildings, structures, and facilities, must participate in the FEMA EHP review process. This includes conducting early engagement to help identify EHP resources, such as threatened or endangered species, or historic properties; submitting a detailed project description with supporting documentation to determine whether the proposed project has the potential to impact EHP resources; and, identifying mitigation measures or alternative courses of action that may lessen impacts to those resources.

FEMA is sometimes required to consult with other regulatory agencies and the public to complete the review process. Federal law requires EHP review to be completed before federal funds are released to carry out proposed projects. FEMA may not be able to fund projects that are not in compliance with applicable EHP laws, Executive Orders, regulations, and policies. FEMA may recommend mitigation measures or alternative courses of action to lessen impacts to EHP resources and bring the project into EHP compliance.

EHP guidance is found at [Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation](#). The site contains links to documents identifying agency EHP responsibilities and program requirements, such as implementation of the *National Environmental Policy Act* and other EHP laws, regulations, and Executive Orders. DHS and FEMA EHP policy is also found in the [EHP Directive & Instruction](#).

All FEMA actions, including grants, must comply with National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) criteria or any more restrictive federal, state, or local floodplain management standards or building code ([44 C.F.R. § 9.11\(d\)\(6\)](#)). For actions located within or that may affect a floodplain or wetland, the following alternatives must be considered: a) no action; b) alternative locations; and c) alternative actions, including alternative actions that use natural features or nature-based solutions. Where possible, natural features and nature-based solutions shall be used. If not practicable as an alternative on their own, natural features and nature-based solutions may be incorporated into actions as minimization measures.

The GPD EHP screening form is located at https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_ehp-screening_form_ff-207-fy-21-100_5-26-2021.pdf. SAFER Program applications that involve the installation of supplies/equipment not specifically excluded from a FEMA EHP review, per the GPD Programmatic Environmental Assessment, such as ground-disturbing activities, or modification/renovation of existing buildings or structures, will require an EHP review. Some equipment will require an EHP review as well. Such activities include, but are not limited to:

- Building renovations such as removal of a wall or installation of electrical or waterlines;
- Training/exercises in natural settings such as rope or swift water;
- Installing LED signs; and
- Any scope of work that involves ground disturbances.

The following activities would not require the submission of the FEMA EHP Screening Form:

- Planning and development of policies or processes;
- Management, administrative, or personnel actions;
- Classroom-based training;
- Acquisition of mobile and portable equipment (not involving installation) on or in a building that does not require a storage area to be constructed; and
- Purchase of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

b. Procurement Integrity

When purchasing under a FEMA award, recipients and subrecipients must comply with the federal procurement standards in [2 C.F.R. §§ 200.317 – 200.327](#). To assist with determining whether an action is a procurement or instead a subaward, please consult [2 C.F.R. § 200.331](#).

For detailed guidance on the federal procurement standards, recipients and subrecipients should refer to various materials issued by FEMA's Procurement Disaster Assistance Team (PDAT). These resources, including an upcoming trainings schedule can be found on the PDAT Website: <https://www.fema.gov/grants/procurement>.

Under [2 C.F.R. § 200.317](#), when procuring property and services under a federal award, states (including territories) and Indian tribes, must follow the same policies and procedures they use for procurements from their non-federal funds; additionally, states and Indian tribes must now follow [2 C.F.R. § 200.321](#) regarding socioeconomic steps, [200.322](#) regarding domestic preferences for Procurements and [2 C.F.R. § 200.327](#) regarding required contract provisions. States, but not Indian tribes, must also follow [200.323](#) regarding procurement of recovered materials.

Local government and nonprofit recipients or subrecipients must have and use their own documented procurement procedures that reflect applicable state, local, Tribal Nation, and territorial (SLTT) laws and regulations, provided that the procurements conform to applicable federal law and the standards identified in 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

1. Important Changes to Procurement Standards in 2 C.F.R. Part 200

On April 22, 2024, OMB updated various parts of Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations, among them the procurement standards. These revisions apply to all FEMA awards with a federal award date or disaster declaration date on or after October 1, 2024, unless specified otherwise. The changes include updates to the federal procurement standards, which govern how FEMA award recipients and subrecipients must purchase under a FEMA award.

More information on OMB's revisions to the federal procurement standards can be found in [Purchasing Under a FEMA Award: 2024 OMB Revisions Fact Sheet](#).

2. Competition and Conflicts of Interest

[2 C.F.R. § 200.319\(b\)](#), applicable to local government and nonprofit recipients or subrecipients, requires that contractors that develop or draft specifications, requirements statements of work, or invitations for bids or requests for proposals must be excluded from competing for such procurements. FEMA considers these actions to be an organizational conflict of interest and interprets this restriction as applying to contractors that help a recipient or subrecipient develop its grant application, project plans, or project budget. This prohibition also applies to the use of former employees to manage the grant or carry out a contract when those former employees worked on such activities while they were employees of the recipient or subrecipient.

Under this prohibition, unless the recipient or subrecipient solicits for and awards a contract covering both development and execution of specifications (or similar elements as described above), and this contract was procured in compliance with [2 C.F.R. §§ 200.317 – 200.327](#), federal funds cannot be used to pay a contractor to carry out the work if that contractor also worked on the development of those specifications. This rule applies to all contracts funded with federal grant funds, including pre-award costs, such as grant writer fees, as well as post- award costs, such as grant management fees.

In addition to organizational conflicts of interest, situations considered to be restrictive of competition include, but are not limited to:

- Placing unreasonable requirements on firms for them to qualify to do business;
- Requiring unnecessary experience and excessive bonding;
- Noncompetitive pricing practices between firms or between affiliated companies;
- Noncompetitive contracts to consultants that are on retainer contracts;
- Specifying only a “brand name” product instead of allowing “an equal” product to be offered and describing the performance or other relevant requirements of the procurement; and
- Any arbitrary action in the procurement process.

Under [2 C.F.R. § 200.318\(c\)\(1\)](#), local government and nonprofit recipients or subrecipients are required to maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of their employees engaged in the selection, award, and administration of contracts. No employee, officer, or agent may participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal award if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest. Such conflicts of interest would arise when the employee, officer or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization that employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract. The officers, employees, and agents of the recipient or subrecipient may neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors or parties to subcontracts. However, the recipient or subrecipient may set standards for situations in which the financial interest is not substantial, or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value. The recipient’s or subrecipient’s standards of conduct must provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations of such standards by officers, employees, or agents.

Under [2 C.F.R. 200.318\(c\)\(2\)](#), if the local government and nonprofit recipient or subrecipient has a parent, affiliate, or subsidiary organization that is not a SLTT government, the recipient or subrecipient must also maintain written standards of conduct covering organizational conflicts of interest. Organizational conflict of interest means that because of a relationship with a parent company, affiliate, or subsidiary organization, the recipient or subrecipient is unable or appears to be unable to be impartial in conducting a procurement action involving a related organization. The recipient or subrecipient must disclose in writing any potential conflicts of interest to FEMA or the pass-through entity in accordance with applicable FEMA policy.

3. Supply Schedules and Purchasing Programs

Generally, a recipient or subrecipient may seek to procure goods or services from a federal supply schedule, state supply schedule, or group purchasing agreement.

Information about GSA programs for states, Indian tribes, and local governments, and their instrumentalities, can be found at [Help for state, local, and tribal governments to make MAS buys | GSA](#) and <https://www.gsa.gov/buying-selling/purchasing-programs/gsa-schedules/schedule-buyers/state-and-local-governments>.

If a non-federal entity other than a state seeks to use a state supply schedule, cooperative purchasing program, or other similar type of arrangement, FEMA recommends the recipient discuss the procurement plans with its FEMA Preparedness Officer or Fire Program Specialist.

4. Procurement Documentation

Per [2 C.F.R. § 200.318\(i\)](#), local government and nonprofit recipients or subrecipients are required to maintain and retain records sufficient to detail the history of procurement covering at least the rationale for the procurement method, selection of contract type, contractor selection or rejection, and the basis for the contract price. States and Indian tribes are reminded that in order for any cost to be allowable, it must be adequately documented per [2 C.F.R. § 200.403\(g\)](#).

Examples of the types of documents that would cover this information include but are not limited to:

- Solicitation documentation, such as requests for quotes, invitations for bids, or requests for proposals;
- Responses to solicitations, such as quotes, bids, or proposals;
- Pre-solicitation independent cost estimates and post-solicitation cost/price analyses on file for review by federal personnel, if applicable;
- Contract documents and amendments, including required contract provisions; and
- Other documents required by federal regulations applicable at the time a grant is awarded to a recipient.
- Additional information on required procurement records can be found on pages 24-26 of the [PDAT Field Manual](#).

c. Financial Assistance Programs for Infrastructure

1. Build America, Buy America Act

Recipients and subrecipients must comply with FEMA's implementation requirements of the *Build America, Buy America Act (BABAA)*, which was enacted as part of the [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act §§ 70901-70927, Pub. L. No. 117-58 \(2021\)](#); and [Executive Order 14005, Ensuring the Future is Made in All of America by All of America's Workers](#). See also [2 C.F.R. Part 184, Buy America Preferences for Infrastructure Projects](#).

None of the funds provided under this program may be used for a project for infrastructure unless the iron and steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used in that infrastructure are produced in the United States.

The Buy America preference only applies to articles, materials, and supplies that are consumed in, incorporated into, or affixed to an infrastructure project. As such, it does not apply to tools, equipment, and supplies, such as temporary scaffolding, brought to the construction site and removed at or before the completion of the infrastructure project. Nor does a Buy America preference apply to equipment and furnishings, such as movable chairs, desks, and portable computer equipment, that are used at or within the finished infrastructure project but are not an integral part of the structure or permanently affixed to the infrastructure project.

To see whether a particular FEMA federal financial assistance program is considered an infrastructure program and thus required to implement FEMA's Build America, Buy America requirements, please see [Programs and Definitions: Build America, Buy America Act | FEMA.gov](#).

2. Waivers

When necessary, recipients (and subrecipients through their pass-through entity) may apply for, and FEMA may grant, a waiver from these requirements.

A waiver of the domestic content procurement preference may be granted by the agency awarding official if FEMA determines that:

- Applying the domestic content procurement preference would be inconsistent with the public interest, or
- The types of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities or of a satisfactory quality, or
- The inclusion of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials produced in the United States will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25%.

The process for requesting a waiver from the Buy America preference requirements can be found on FEMA's website at: ["Buy America" Preference in FEMA Financial Assistance Programs for Infrastructure | FEMA.gov](#).

3. Definitions

For definitions of the key terms of the Build America, Buy America Act, please visit [Programs and Definitions: Build America, Buy America Act | FEMA.gov](#).

d. *Mandatory Disclosures*

The non-federal entity or applicant for a federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award. ([2 C.F.R. § 200.113](#))

e. *Termination Provisions*

FEMA may terminate a federal award in whole or in part for one of the following reasons. FEMA and the recipient must still comply with closeout requirements at [2 C.F.R. §§ 200.344-200.345](#) even if an award is terminated in whole or in part. To the extent that subawards are permitted under this NOFO, pass-through entities should refer to 2 C.F.R. § 200.340 for additional information on termination regarding subawards. Either party will provide written notice of intent to terminate to the other party no less than 30 days prior to the effective date of the termination.

1. Noncompliance

If a recipient fails to comply with the terms and conditions of a federal award, FEMA may terminate the award in whole or in part. Any action to terminate based on noncompliance will follow the requirements of [2 C.F.R. §§ 200.341-200.342](#).

2. With the Consent of the Recipient

FEMA may also terminate an award in whole or in part with the consent of the recipient, in which case the parties must agree upon the termination conditions, including the effective date, and in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated.

3. Notification by the Recipient

The recipient may terminate the award, in whole or in part, by sending written notification to FEMA setting forth the reasons for such termination, the effective date, and in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated. In the case of partial termination, FEMA may determine that a partially terminated award will not accomplish the purpose of the federal award, so FEMA may terminate the award in its entirety. If that occurs, FEMA will follow the requirements of [2 C.F.R. §§ 200.341-200.342](#) in deciding to fully terminate the award.

4. Change in Program Goals or Agency Priorities

Pursuant to the terms and conditions of the award and to the extent authorized by law, FEMA may terminate the award if it no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities.

f. Disability Integration

Pursuant to Section 504 of the [Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#), recipients of FEMA financial assistance must ensure that their programs and activities do not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities.

g. Record Retention

1. Record Retention Period

Financial records, supporting documents, statistical records, and all other non-federal entity records pertinent to a federal award generally must be maintained for at least three years from the date the final FFR is submitted. See [2 C.F.R. § 200.334](#). Further, if the recipient does not submit a final FFR and the award is administratively closed, FEMA uses the date of administrative closeout as the start of the general record retention period.

The record retention period **may be longer than three years or have a different start date** in certain cases.

2. Types of Records to Retain

FEMA requires that recipients and subrecipients maintain the following documentation for federally funded purchases:

- Specifications
- Solicitations
- Competitive quotes or proposals

- Basis for selection decisions
- Purchase orders
- Contracts
- Invoices
- Canceled checks

h. Actions to Address Noncompliance

Non-federal entities receiving financial assistance funding from FEMA are required to comply with requirements in the terms and conditions of their awards or subawards, including the terms set forth in applicable federal statutes, regulations, NOFOs, and policies. Throughout the award lifecycle or even after an award has been closed, FEMA or the pass-through entity may discover potential or actual noncompliance on the part of a recipient or subrecipient.

In the case of any potential or actual noncompliance, FEMA may place special conditions on an award per [2 C.F.R. §§ 200.208](#) and [200.339](#). FEMA may place a hold on funds until the matter is corrected, or additional information is provided per 2 C.F.R. [§ 200.339](#), or it may do both. Similar remedies for noncompliance with certain federal civil rights laws are authorized pursuant to 44 C.F.R. Parts 7 and 19 or other applicable regulations.

If the noncompliance is not able to be corrected by imposing additional conditions or the recipient or subrecipient refuses to correct the matter, FEMA may take other remedies allowed under [2 C.F.R. § 200.339](#).

i. Audits

FEMA grant recipients are subject to audit oversight from multiple entities including the DHS OIG, the GAO, the pass-through entity, or independent auditing firms for single audits, and may cover activities and costs incurred under the award. Auditing agencies such as the DHS OIG, the GAO, and the pass-through entity (if applicable), and FEMA in its oversight capacity, must have access to records pertaining to the FEMA award.

j. Hazard-Resistant Building Codes

Hazard-resistant building codes are a foundational element of a more resilient nation, safeguarding communities, and lives against natural disasters, with an estimated \$11:1 return on investment. The adoption, enforcement and application of modern building codes mitigates community vulnerabilities, reduces disaster recovery costs, and strengthens nationwide capability. FEMA is working to promote and support building codes in all areas of its work. In the interest of building a stronger, more resilient nation, FEMA encourages all grant recipients and subrecipients to meet current published editions of relevant consensus-based building codes, specifications, and standards, and to exceed them where feasible.

11. Appendix A – FY 2024 SAFER Program Updates

Appendix A contains a brief list of changes between FY 2023 and FY 2024 to the SAFER Program. The FY 2024 SAFER Program NOFO contains some changes to definitions, descriptions, and priority categories. Changes include:

- Under Eligibility – Allowable Project Types
 - The Hiring Activity offers grants to support applications to hire new, additional

firefighters

- Under Eligibility – Unallowable Project Types
 - FEMA will not fund any projects, activities, or line items that are covered under a department's normal operating budget
- Under Eligibility – Cost Sharing Requirement
 - Hiring Activity grant recipients are required to contribute non-federal funds as a cost share
- Under Eligibility – Cost Share Description, Type and Restrictions
 - In the first and second years of the grant, the amount of federal funding may not exceed 75 percent of the usual annual cost of a first-year firefighter and in the third year of the grant, the amount of federal funding may not exceed 35 percent of the usual annual cost of a first-year firefighter
- Under Eligibility – Required information for verifying Cost Share
 - Applicants are required to certify that their annual budget for fire-related programs and emergency response has not been reduced below 80 percent of the applicant's average funding level in the three years prior to the application date
- Under Register in FEMA GO:
 - FEMA GO will no longer support Internet Explorer.
- Under Additional Information
 - Inclusion of Hazard-Resistant Building Codes.
- Under R&R Activity – Eligible Costs
 - New Member Costs – eligible physical exam costs for new members include: initial medical exams; annual physicals; job-related immunizations; behavioral health; and Cancer Screening Programs to meet NFPA 1582.
 - Wellness and Fitness for Existing Members – eligible subcategories of physical exams for existing members
 - Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to provide behavioral health training for coping with fire service duties.
- Under Other Information
 - Extensions to the period of performance are allowed for R&R Activity grants only
-

12. Appendix B – Programmatic Information and Priorities

Appendix B contains details on SAFER Program information and priorities. Reviewing this information may help applicants make their application(s) more competitive.

A. Ineligible Applications and Organizations

Volunteer and combination fire departments may apply for funding under both the Hiring Activity and the R&R Activity; however, departments must complete separate applications for each activity. Applicants are limited to one application per activity, per application period. If an applicant submits two applications for the same activity during a single application period, FEMA will disqualify both applications.

If two or more of the following entities have different funding streams, personnel rosters, and EINs but share the same facilities, FEMA considers them as being separate organizations for the purposes of FY 2024 SAFER Program eligibility:

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- Fire departments; and
- National, state, local, federally recognized Tribal Nation, and nonprofit interest organizations.

However, if two or more organizations share facilities and each applies for the same activity (e.g., Hiring of Firefighters), FEMA reserves the right to review and compare all those program area applications to determine eligibility and review for potential overlap to avoid duplication of benefits.

Additionally, federal employees are prohibited from serving in any capacity (paid or unpaid) on the development of any application submitted under this program.

Examples of ineligible applications and organizations include:

- For-profit organizations, federal agencies, and individuals;
- Fire departments that are a Federal Government entity, or contracted by the federal government, and are solely responsible under a formally recognized agreement for suppression of fires on federal installations or land;
- Fire departments that are not independent entities but are part of, controlled by, or under the day-to-day operational command and control of a larger department, agency or AHJ;
 - However, if a fire department is the same legal entity as a municipality or other governmental organization, and otherwise meets the eligibility criteria, that municipality or other governmental organization may apply on behalf of that fire department if the application clearly states that the fire department is considered part of the same legal entity.
- State or local agencies, or subsets of any governmental entities, or any authorities that do not meet the requirements as defined by 15 U.S.C. § 2229a(a)(1)(A) and (a)(2);
- Ambulance services, emergency medical service organizations, rescue squads, auxiliaries, dive teams, and urban search and rescue teams; and,
- Non-federal airport or port authority fire departments whose sole responsibility is the suppression of fires on the airport grounds or port facilities unless the airport/port fire department has a formally recognized arrangement with the local jurisdiction to provide fire suppression on a first-due basis outside the confines of the airport or port facilities.
- Eligible applicants may submit only one application for each eligible activity (Hiring Activity and R&R Activity); all submissions of duplicate applications may be disqualified.
- If an applicant submits two or more applications for the same activity, both applications may be disqualified.
 - This is different from when where an entity is applying on behalf of other organizations that are agencies or instrumentalities of the applicant (e.g., multiple fire departments under the same county, city, borough, parish, or other municipality). In that situation, the applicant may request similar or the same costs if the application clearly states which costs (including quantities) are for which agency/instrumentality. This is permissible even if that entity submits multiple applications across regional versus direct applications.

B. Supporting Definitions for this NOFO

Attrition is a gradual reduction in work force without laying off personnel, e.g., when workers resign or retire and are not replaced.

Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) is that person or office charged with enforcing the NFPA codes (Per NFPA101-2015 Edition: Life Safety Code).

Automatic Aid is a plan developed between two or more fire departments for immediate joint response on first alarms (Per NFPA 1710 – 2020 edition and NFPA 1720 – 2020).

Benefits, as defined in 2 C.F.R. § 200.431, means the regular compensation paid to employees during periods of authorized absences from the job, e.g., vacation leave, sick leave, military leave. Benefits may include employer contributions or expenses for social security, employee insurance, workmen’s compensation, and pension plan costs, and the like, whether treated as indirect costs or as direct costs, and are also eligible and shall be distributed to awards and other activities in a manner consistent with the pattern of benefits accruing to the individuals or group of employees whose salaries and wages are chargeable.

Career Fire Department, as defined in 15 U.S.C. § 2229, means a fire department that has an all-paid force of firefighting personnel other than paid-on-call firefighters.

Combination Fire Department, as defined in 15 U.S.C. § 2229, means a fire department that has paid firefighting personnel and volunteer firefighting personnel. FEMA considers a fire department with firefighting personnel paid a stipend, regardless of the amount, on a per event basis, or paid on-call, to be a combination fire department. This includes non-fire emergency medical service personnel of the department.

Emergency Medical Services Organization is a public or private organization that provides direct emergency medical services, including medical transport.

Fire Department is an agency or organization that has a formally recognized arrangement with a state, territory, local government, or Tribal Nation authority (city, county, parish, fire district, township, town, village, or other governing body) to provide fire suppression on a first-due basis to a fixed geographical area. Fire departments may be comprised of members who are volunteer, career, or a combination of volunteer and career.

Firefighter is an individual having the legal authority and responsibility to engage in fire suppression; employed by a fire department of a municipality, county, fire district, or state, engaged in the prevention, control, and extinguishing of fires; and responding to emergency situations in which life, property, or the environment is at risk. This individual must be trained in fire suppression, but may also be trained in emergency medical care, hazardous materials awareness, rescue techniques, and any other related duties provided by the fire department.

Initial Full Alarm Assignment is the personnel, equipment, and resources ordinarily dispatched upon notification of a structural fire.

Majority Career departments are considered majority career if more than 50% of the active firefighting membership is salaried staff.

Majority Volunteer departments are considered majority volunteer if more than 50% of the active firefighting membership is NOT compensated for service other than a nominal stipend and insurance.

Mutual Aid is a written intergovernmental agreement between agencies or jurisdictions stating that they will assist one another on request by furnishing personnel, equipment, or expertise in a specified manner (NFPA 1710 Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments, 2020 edition; and NFPA 1720 Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments, 2020 Edition).

National, State, Local, or Federally Recognized Tribal Organizations that Represent the Interests of Volunteer Firefighters are organizations that support or represent the interests of firefighters in front of legislative bodies at the local, state, tribal, or federal level. Such organizations include, but are not limited to, state or local firefighter or fire chiefs' associations, and volunteer firefighter relief organizations and associations. FEMA shall make the final determination as to whether an applicant is an appropriate volunteer firefighter interest group.

New Recruit is a volunteer that joins the department with the intent to serve as a firefighter, after the recipient is notified of the grant award (the date of the award notification email in the FEMA GO mail center).

Nominal Stipend is a stipend that does not exceed 20% of what the fire department would otherwise pay to hire a full-time firefighter to perform the services for which the stipend is provided. Whether a stipend falls above or below the 20% threshold may be determined in one of two ways. Departments that maintain paid full-time firefighters on their payrolls may compare the stipend to the salary they pay a full-time firefighter who performs similar services to determine whether the stipend is more or less than 20% of that salary.

Departments that do not maintain full time firefighters on their payrolls may make the determination based on a comparison to the salary paid to a full-time firefighter in a neighboring jurisdiction, elsewhere in the state or ultimately the nation, and may also utilize data from the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. A nominal stipend may also include reimbursements to volunteer firefighters for approximate out-of-pocket expenses they incur.

If a stipend paid exceeds 20% of the prevailing wage calculated as described above, then the firefighter receiving compensation would not qualify as a volunteer and is considered an employee who may be covered by the *Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)* minimum wage and overtime provisions.

Operational Budget is the funding supporting fire-related programs or emergency response activities (e.g., salaries, maintenance, equipment, apparatus).

Operational Position is a position with a primary assignment (more than 50% of time) on a fire suppression vehicle, regardless of collateral duties, in support of the department's NFPA 1710 or NFPA 1720 compliance.

Paid-on-Call is defined as firefighters who are paid a stipend for each event to which they respond. Paid-on-call firefighters may be considered paid firefighters or volunteer firefighters, depending on whether the stipend they receive is a nominal stipend. For the purposes of this SAFER Program, a department whose membership is composed of all volunteer firefighters, including any paid-on-call firefighters who receive only a nominal stipend, will be considered a volunteer fire department. Also, for the purposes of this SAFER Program, a department whose membership is composed of any paid-on-call firefighters who receive more than a nominal stipend will be considered a combination fire department. Also refer to the definition of a nominal stipend.

Part-Time Firefighter is a firefighter who works less than 40 hours per week. When more than one part-time firefighter shares a position that results in work in excess of 40 hours per week, FEMA considers that shared assignment to be a Full-Time Equivalent position that must be accounted for in the staffing information provided in the application.

Primary First Due is a geographic area surrounding a fire station in which a company from that station is projected to be first to arrive on the scene of an incident.

Salary is a fixed payment made by an employer to an employee to compensate for a regular work schedule. Typically, the payment is made on a monthly, biweekly, or weekly basis but often expressed as an annual sum. The salary structure should be documented in writing by the employer. Note: Only costs for overtime that an employer routinely pays as a part of a firefighter's regularly scheduled and contracted shift hours to comply with FLSA are eligible salary costs under the Hiring Activity.

State is defined as any of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Staffing and Deployment is the minimum staffing requirements to ensure a sufficient number of members are available to operate safely and effectively as defined in NFPA 1710 and 1720.

Supplanting is to replace or take place of funds that would otherwise be available from state or local sources, or the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Tuition Assistance is only eligible for reimbursement of undergraduate and graduate studies, vocational/technical training, certification, and job training programs for the member of the department and not a spouse nor a dependent.

Volunteer Fire Department, as defined in 15 U.S.C. § 2229, means a fire department that has an all-volunteer force of firefighting personnel.

C. Application Tips

The following information may be useful when preparing a competitive application:

- NFPA – “FREE ACCESS”: as part of its commitment to enhancing public safety and supporting the emergency responder, the NFPA makes its codes and standards available online for free. Please visit <http://www.nfpa.org/freeaccess>.
- For the most competitive applications, select those local need(s) that most closely align with one or more SAFER Program funding priorities.
- Applications differ based on the applicant type. For example, the Hiring Activity application will be different from the fire department application for the R&R Activity; the R&R application will be different for a fire department than an interest organization. Be sure to select the appropriate applicant type when applying.
- When filling out the online application, applicants are required to provide basic demographic information regarding their organization and the community served and must provide detailed information regarding the items or activities for which they are seeking funding.
- If awarded, the application request(s) may be modified during the award review process; if the awarded activities, Scope of Work, or amount(s) do not match the application as submitted, the grant recipient shall only be responsible for completing the activities funded. The grant recipient is under no obligation to start, modify, or complete any activities requested, but not funded by this award. Please review the Award Package.

D. Funding Limitation

Specific funding parameters are either required by law or are the outcome of recommendations from the CDP. Each requirement is identified below, followed by the source of the requirement noted in parentheses:

- A total of 10% of the funding appropriated for FY 2024 SAFER Program awards is set aside for the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters (15 U.S.C. § 2229a(a)(2)).
 - No more than 33% of the total amount allocated for the recruitment and retention of volunteers can be awarded to national, state, local, territorial, or federally recognized tribal organizations that represent the interests of volunteer firefighters (CDP).
- A total of 10% of funding appropriated for FY 2024 SAFER Program awards is set aside for grants awarded to all volunteer or majority volunteer departments for hiring of firefighters (15 U.S.C. § 2229a(a)(1)(H)).
 - A majority volunteer fire department is one that more than half its personnel do not receive financial compensation for their services, other than life, health, and worker’s compensation insurance, or a nominal stipend payment, including certain paid-on-call personnel. Although applications are normally awarded based on total score (high to low), to meet this 10% statutory set aside, the SAFER Program Office may be required to fund an application that meets the criteria for the set aside instead of a higher-scoring application that does not meet the set aside criteria (15 U.S.C. § 2229a(a)(1)(H)).
 - If FEMA awards less than 10% of the funds available for the hiring of firefighters to volunteer and majority volunteer fire departments, it must transfer the remaining

funds to provide grants for the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters (15 U.S.C. § 2229a(a)(1)(H)).

E. Funding Priorities

a. *Meeting the National Standards*

FEMA prioritizes bringing non-compliant (NFPA 1710 or 1720) departments into compliance in the most cost-effective manner.

FEMA will ask applicants general questions about the NFPA standard they are attempting to meet as well as their current ability to meet that standard (without the use of overtime).

FEMA will also ask applicants to indicate what their ability will be to meet that same standard if awarded grant funds. Having additional firefighters on staff should improve a local fire department's ability to comply with the staffing, response, and operational standards that enhance community and firefighter safety.

Applications resulting in the largest percentage increases in compliance with the relevant section of NFPA 1710 (for career departments) or 1720 (for volunteer departments) receive higher pre-scores than applications resulting in smaller percentage increases in compliance.

Note: SAFER Program grants focus only on the Deployment, or Staffing and Deployment sections of these two standards, respectively.

- NFPA 1710 Assembly Requirements – Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Department (Section 5.2.4.1 – Single-Family Dwelling Initial Full Alarm Assignment Capability, Section 5.2.3.1 – Engine Companies, 3.3.53 Rapid Intervention Crew). This standard applies primarily to career fire departments and combination departments if the combination department chooses it.
- NFPA 1720 Assembly Requirements – Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments (Section 4.3 – Staffing and Deployment, Section 4.6 Initial Firefighting Operations). This standard applies primarily to all-volunteer fire departments, but it may also apply to combination departments if the combination department does not choose to comply with the NFPA 1710 standard.

F. Hiring Activity Overview

Grants awarded under the Hiring Activity enable volunteer, combination, and career fire departments to improve or restore staffing levels to attain a more effective level of response and a safer incident scene. FEMA awards Hiring Activity grants directly to volunteer, combination, and career fire departments to help fire departments increase their cadre of frontline firefighters by providing financial assistance to hire new, additional firefighters (**New Hire**).

All the following are considerations in pre-scoring and peer review determinations: High (H), Medium (M), Low (L)

a. Compliance with NFPA Standards

The tables below identify the priority levels for current and new compliance with the NFPA 1710/1720 standards discussed in [Appendix B Section E. Funding Priorities](#) of this NOFO.

Current (Pre-Award) 1710/1720 Compliance Priorities	
H Never or 0%	M Half of the time or 40-59%
H Rarely or 1-19%	L Very often or 60-79%
M Sometimes or 20-39%	L Most of the time or 80-100%

New (Post-Award) 1710/1720 Compliance Priorities	
H Always or 91-100%	M Half of the time or 40-59%
H Most of the time or 80-90%	L Sometimes or 20-39%
M Very often or 60-79%	L Rarely or 0-19%

b. Call Volume and Population Served

Department call volume and population served are both factors in the initial application evaluation. Departments responding to a higher number of incidents and departments that protect a larger jurisdiction will receive higher consideration than those departments responding to fewer incidents and protecting smaller jurisdictions.

c. Firefighter Health Measures

The health and well-being of firefighters is of paramount importance. Therefore, applicants who indicate newly hired firefighters will undergo an entry-level physical and receive immunizations and who indicate they will provide annual medical exams receive higher consideration than applicants who do not specify that these benefits will be provided. To qualify for this higher consideration, the physicals must be consistent with those required under NFPA 1580 Chapter 13, Occupational Medical: Evaluations (NFPA 1582).

Applicants should note that FEMA is working with the NFPA Technical Committee on Fire Service Occupational Safety and Health to evaluate whether the NFPA 1582 standard complies with applicable federal civil rights laws. No decisions have been made and FEMA will issue additional guidance when more information becomes available.

Entry-Level Medical Exams	
H NFPA 1582-compliant physicals	M Non-NFPA 1582-compliant physicals

Annual Medical Exams	
H NFPA 1582-compliant physicals	M Non-NFPA 1582-compliant physicals

d. Training Requirements

Applicants will receive higher pre-scores if the personnel funded under the grant will meet the minimum EMS training and certification requirements prescribed by the AHJ.

G. R&R Activity – Fire Departments Overview

Grants awarded under this R&R Activity are to fire departments to assist with the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters who are involved with or trained in the operations of firefighting and emergency response. The grants are intended to create a net increase in the number of trained, certified, and competent firefighters capable of safely responding to emergencies within the recipient's response area.

All the following are considerations in pre-scoring and peer review determinations. Program priorities are listed as: **High (H)**, **Medium (M)**, **Low (L)**

a. Compliance with NFPA Standards

The highest priority is to assist departments experiencing a high rate of turnover and that have staffing levels significantly below the ideal staffing level required to comply with NFPA standard 1710 or 1720 as discussed in [Appendix B – Programmatic Information and Priorities, Funding Priorities](#) of this NOFO.

b. Volunteer Membership

Departments or organizations with the highest percentage of volunteers should benefit the most from the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters. Therefore, applicants whose membership is comprised of mostly volunteer members, or have a significant number of volunteer firefighters, receive higher consideration.

Percentage of Volunteer Firefighters	
H 91-100%	M 41-50%
H 81-91%	M 31-40%
H 71-80%	L 21-30%
H 61-70%	L 11-20%
M 51-60%	L 1-10%

c. Call Volume

Department call volume is a factor in the initial evaluation. Departments responding to a higher number of incidents receive higher consideration.

d. Firefighter Health Measures

Applicants who indicate the newly recruited firefighters will undergo an entry-level physical and receive immunizations, and who indicate they will provide annual medical exams receive higher consideration. To qualify for this higher consideration, the physicals must be consistent with those required under NFPA 1580, Chapter 13, Occupational Medical: Evaluations (NFPA 1582). Applicants who provide worker's compensation/Accidental Death & Dismemberment (AD&D) benefits to their members receive higher consideration than applicants who do not specify these benefits will be provided.

Entry-Level Medical Exams	
H NFPA 1582-compliant physicals	M Non-NFPA 1582-compliant physicals
Annual Medical Exams	
H NFPA 1582-compliant physicals	M Non-NFPA 1582-compliant physicals

e. Firefighter Training and Certification Requirements

Firefighter	
H Both Firefighter (FF) II/Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)	M FF I
H FF II	L First Responder
M Both FF I/EMT	

f. R&R Coordinator/Program Manager/Grant Administrator

R&R Coordinator
H Applicants who currently have a coordinator, program manager, or grant administrator in place
M Applicants who request grant funding for a coordinator, program manager, or grant administrator's position
L Applicants who do not have, or are not requesting, a coordinator, program manager, or grant administrator

g. Regional Requests

Applications that will have a direct regional or local benefit beyond the immediate boundaries of the applicant's first-due area will receive higher consideration.

A regional request is an opportunity for an eligible R&R Activity organization to act as a host and apply for funding on behalf of itself and any number of other participating R&R Activity eligible organizations. Regional activities should achieve cost effectiveness, support regional efficiency and resilience, and have a direct regional or local benefit to more than one local jurisdiction (county, parish, town, township, city, or village). Direct regional or local benefit means that other eligible organizations will receive a portion of the grant-awarded funds, will receive items purchased with the grant funds, or share an item purchased with grant funds.

The community identification characteristic, the organizational status of the applicant, and the permanent resident population should be entered for the host entity, regardless of the composition of the participating partners.

Regional populations served are the aggregate of the geographically fixed areas of the host and participating partner organizations.

Neither the regional host nor any participating partner is prevented from also applying on behalf of their own organization for any SAFER Program Activity. However, it cannot be for the same item.

In completing the application, the host applicant must include a list of all participating organizations, including a point of contact and phone number for each organization that will directly benefit from the regional project if they receive the grant. The organizations that will

benefit from the R&R Activity may also apply for funding under the SAFER Program if the organizations do not apply for a project or activity that could conflict with or duplicate the host applicant's project. Applicants must also certify that they will ensure the organizations participating in this application have not received grants for similar items/activities.

To apply for a regional project, the host organization must agree, if awarded, to be responsible for all aspects of the grant. This includes, but is not limited to, cost share, accountability for the assets, and all reporting requirements in the regional application.

All participants of a regional application must be compliant with SAFER Program requirements, including being current with past grants, closeouts, and other reporting requirements. Upon notification by the SAFER Program Office, the host agency shall not distribute grant-funded assets or provide grant-funded contractual services to non-compliant partner organizations. The host and the delinquent partners will be notified by the SAFER Program Office of their specific deficiency.

Regional host applicants and participating partner agencies must execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), or equivalent document signed by the host and all participating organizations participating in the award. The MOU must specify the individual and mutual responsibilities of the host and participating partners, the host's and participants' level of involvement in the project(s), the participating partners' EINs, and the proposed distribution of all grant-funded assets or contracted services. Any entity named in the application as benefiting from the award must be an eligible SAFER Program organization and must be a party to the MOU or equivalent document. **Copies of the MOU or equivalent document should be submitted as an attachment in the application.**

H. R&R Activity – National, State, Local, Territorial, or Federally Recognized Tribal Nation Volunteer Firefighter Interest Organizations (Interest Organizations) Overview

Grants awarded under this R&R Activity are to applicants who identify as an Interest Organization. These grants are intended to create an aggregate increase in the number of trained, certified, and competent firefighters capable of safely responding to emergencies on behalf of the fire departments being represented. For this reason, projects that are comprehensive in nature and based on a clear needs assessment, implementation plan, evaluation plan, and have, or will establish, fire service partnerships will receive higher consideration.

In completing the application, the applicant must include data that approximates the characteristics of the entire region and all fire departments affected by the grant. If awarded, recipients may be required to provide documentation of each fire department's consent to participate in the application. Applicants must also certify that they will ensure the fire departments participating in this application have not received grants for similar items/activities. The following identifies the elements that the applications will be evaluated on during the pre-scoring process. Automated (pre-score) evaluation scores represent 30% of the total application score.

All the following are considerations in pre-scoring and peer review determinations. Program priorities are listed as: **High (H), Medium (M), Low (L)**

a. Compliance with NFPA Standards

The highest priority is to assist departments experiencing a high rate of turnover that have staffing levels significantly below the ideal staffing level required to comply with NFPA standards 1710 or 1720 as discussed in [Appendix B – Programmatic Information and Priorities, Funding Priorities](#) of this NOFO. Interest Organizations that currently have the lowest recruitment and retention rates among the entire region and all fire departments benefitting from the grant funds receive higher consideration for funding.

b. R&R Coordinator/Program Manager/Grant Administrator

R&R Coordinator	
H Applicants who currently have a coordinator, program manager, or grant administrator in place	
M Applicants who request grant funding for a coordinator, program manager, or grant administrator's position	
L Applicants who do not have, nor are not requesting, a coordinator, program manager, or grant administrator	

c. Needs Assessment

Needs Assessment	
H Applicants with projects based on a needs assessment	L Applicants with projects that are not based on a needs assessment

d. Fire Service Partnerships

Fire Service Partnerships	
H Applicants who have, or will establish, fire service partnerships as part of this project	L Applicants who will not have, nor establish, fire service partnerships as part of this project

I. Eligible and Ineligible Costs and Requirements

Regardless of the eligibility of any costs requested or the results of the review of the application conducted in accordance with [Section 7 Application Review Information](#) of this NOFO, FEMA reserves the right to approve the activities requested in an application in whole or in part.

Hiring Activity – Eligible Costs and Requirements
Eligible Costs: Salary and associated benefits (actual payroll expenses) for the positions funded under the SAFER Program grant are eligible. Costs are reimbursable if they are included as part of the standard package, available to all operational firefighter positions, contractually obligated, and reimbursed via payroll. Refer also to the definitions in Appendix B – Programmatic Information and Priorities, Supporting Definitions for this NOFO or this NOFO.

Hiring Activity – Eligible Costs and Requirements

- Compensation for a firefighter's normal, contracted work schedule is reimbursable, but overtime costs are not eligible for reimbursement by the SAFER Program grant award (including overtime for holdovers, extra shifts, to attend training, etc.). Only costs for overtime that the fire department routinely pays as a part of the base salary or a firefighter's regularly scheduled and contracted shift hours, to comply with FLSA, are eligible. For more information on FLSA, please visit the [U.S. Department of Labor](https://www.dol.gov).
- Salaries and benefits of firefighters hired with SAFER Program funding while they are engaged in initial recruit training are eligible.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Only firefighters hired (**New Hire category**) after the SAFER Program grant offer of award are eligible for grant funding.
- Only full-time positions are eligible for funding. A full-time position is one position that is funded for at least 2,080 hours per year, e.g., 40 hours per week, 52 weeks per year.
- SAFER Program grant funds will only pay for operational positions, whose primary assignment (more than half the time) is on a fire suppression vehicle, regardless of collateral duties.
- Volunteer and mostly volunteer fire departments may also hire individuals to fill officer-level positions (e.g., chief, fire inspector, training officer, safety officer) in addition to their primary operational assignment.
- Funds received under the SAFER Program must not be used to replace funds that would be available from state or local sources, or from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, but shall be used to increase the amount of funding that would, in the absence of Federal funds received, be made available from state or local sources, or funds supplied by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Hiring Activity - Ineligible Costs

- The salaries and benefits of full-time firefighters who are employees at the time of grant award are ineligible to be funded under this grant.
- Job-sharing positions (e.g., utilizing more than one person to fill a full-time SAFER Program-funded position) are ineligible.
- The SAFER Program may not be used to fund promotions (e.g., to pay a current member a higher salary by placing him/her in a new SAFER Program-funded position).
- Pre-application costs, such as grant writer fees, administrative costs (e.g., physicals/medical exams, background checks, etc.), and indirect costs associated with hiring firefighters are ineligible.
- Costs to train and equip firefighters (e.g., PPE/Turnout Gear) are ineligible (this does not include the salaries and benefits of firefighters hired under the SAFER Program while they are engaged in training).
- Costs for additional benefits such as uniform allowances, education stipends, meal allowance, etc., that are not contractually obligated, included as part of the standard benefits package for all employees, and reimbursed via payroll are ineligible.

- Costs of annual physicals/medical exams are ineligible.
- Overtime costs (including overtime for holdovers, extra shifts, to attend training, etc.) are ineligible (except as noted in “eligible costs” above).
- M&A costs.
- Indirect costs.

R&R Activity – Eligibility Requirements

- Applicants must correlate the activities for which funding is requested and the identified recruitment or retention problems or issues to be addressed. FEMA will not fund a budget line item if an applicant does not provide sufficient information detailing how it will enhance recruitment and retention. Allowable costs may be limited to reasonable amounts, as determined by FEMA.
- Applicants who propose to focus on retention of volunteers will receive equal consideration as applicants focusing on recruitment of volunteers. A focus on retention may include providing incentives for volunteer firefighter members to continue service in a fire department.
- SAFER Program grant funds may only be used for volunteer firefighters who are involved with, or trained in, the operations of firefighting and emergency response.
- FEMA recommends that departments consult their AHJ or the department’s legal counsel to understand the full legal and financial implications involved with implementing or sustaining programs that offer benefits or financial awards to firefighters (e.g., stipends, Length of Service Award Program [LOSAP]/Retirement Program).
- All grant-related purchases and activities must be incurred, received, and completed within the period of performance. The period of coverage or service delivery on all contracts and agreements may not begin prior to or extend beyond the period of performance of the grant. FEMA may permit prorated costs to be charged to the grant for training courses that begin during the period of performance but end after the period of performance ends.
- All funded activities under the R&R Activity must be governed by formally adopted Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Minimally, these SOPs should specify who qualifies for each of the incentives, specific requirements for earning the incentives, and the disposition of the awarded incentives if an individual fails to fulfill the stipulations. FEMA may ask for copies of SOPs before or after being awarded.
- Funds received under the SAFER Program must not be used to replace funds that would be available from state or local sources, or from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, but shall be used to increase the amount of funding that would, in the absence of Federal funds received, be made available from state or local sources, or funds supplied by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

R&R Activity – Eligible Costs: High Priority

- Costs to support a staffing needs assessment identifying the operational staff and support that are required to carry out fire department responsibilities safely and effectively (e.g., supplies for data collection, contractors, or personnel to collect and analyze data, software programs, etc.).
 - **Note:** If a staffing needs assessment is requested and the application is selected for funding, the staffing needs assessment will be the only activity that will be funded.
- Costs to support a R&R Coordinator, a Program Manager, and/or a Grant Administrator (including reasonable salary, fringe benefits, contract support, supplies, travel, etc.).
 - **Note:** Computers for these positions are low priority items.
- Marketing Program to recruit new volunteer firefighters, such as:
 - Media advertising (e.g., television, radio, social media);
 - Print advertising (e.g., newspapers, billboards, signs, banners, brochures, flyers); and,
 - LED/electronic sign. **Note:** this is a high priority item only when included as part of a comprehensive marketing program. Only one LED/electronic sign is allowed per applicant and 75% of usage must be dedicated to R&R activities. Allowable costs may be limited to reasonable amounts as determined by FEMA. Additional restrictions apply (for details see [Section 10.B.a. Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation \(EHP\) Compliance](#) of this NOFO).
 - **Note:** If requesting funds to recruit new members, a marketing plan must be in place, or the application must show a marketing plan will be implemented either with grant funds (requested as a line item) or that the applicant will implement a marketing plan using existing department resources.
- New Member Costs may include:
 - Entry-level physical exam for each new recruit;
 - Annual physicals for newly recruited members⁴; and
 - Station duty uniforms.
- Wellness and Fitness for Existing Members. Wellness and Fitness costs of an annual exam may include:
 - Physical exams;
 - Job-related immunization;
 - Periodic Physical Exam/Health Screening;
 - Behavioral health; and
 - Cancer Screening Program to meet NFPA 1582.
 - All grant-funded physicals (except those for explorers/cadets) must meet NFPA 1582 standards (Chapter 9, Occupational Medical Evaluation).
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to provide behavioral health training for coping with fire service duties.
- New recruit basic training that is not covered under a department's normal operating budget, and as required by the AHJ to meet minimum firefighter certification (e.g., cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), First Responder, EMT, FF1, FF2).

⁴ The cost of physicals should be based on local physician or health center prices. Detailed information on implementing NFPA 1582 physicals can be found at <https://www.fstaresearch.org>.

R&R Activity – Eligible Costs: High Priority

- Reimbursement to members for lost wages, mileage and transportation costs, lodging costs, and per diem while attending required basic training is also eligible.
- **Note:** costs for mileage/transportation, lodging, and per diem must comply with the department's written travel policies and procedures. If policies are not established, costs will only be reimbursed at the federal government rate.
- Leadership or career development training when used as a retention incentive that is not covered under a department's normal operating budget.
 - Reimbursement to members for lost wages, mileage and transportation costs, lodging costs and per diem while attending leadership/career development training or conferences are also eligible.
 - **Note:** costs for mileage/transportation, lodging and meals must comply with the department's written travel policies and procedures. If policies are not established, costs will only be reimbursed at the federal government rate.
 - Courses must provide Continuing Education Units (CEU) or certificates of completion to be eligible.
- Instructor/train-the-trainer training that is not covered under a department's normal operating budget.
 - Reimbursement to members for lost wages, mileage and transportation costs, lodging costs, and per diem while attending instructor/train-the-trainer training are also eligible.
 - **Note:** Costs for mileage/transportation, lodging, and per diem must comply with the department's written travel policies and procedures. If policies are not established, costs will only be reimbursed at the federal government rate.
- Tuition assistance for higher education (including books, lab fees and student fees).
 - Coursework or certifications in this category should be more advanced than what departments typically fund for required minimum-staffing requirements and specific to an accredited university or trade school program.
 - Courses are not limited to firefighter training or education.
 - Only tuition payments for classes offered and taken during the period of performance are allowable.
 - Computers for individual students are not eligible for funding.
 - Payments for student loans are not eligible for funding.
 - Recipients must provide internal policies that explain how funding is administered.
 - Allowable costs may be limited to reasonable amounts, as determined by FEMA.
- PPE/Turnout Gear.
 - PPE may only be funded for new firefighters that join the department after the date of grant award, that successfully pass an NFPA 1582-compliant physical, and that are certified as "fit for duty." PPE purchased with SAFER Program funding must be utilized by adequately trained staff.
 - Funds are available to acquire Occupational Safety and Health Administration-required and NFPA-compliant PPE for firefighting personnel. In addition, PPE must meet any national or state standards and increase firefighter safety. Failure to meet these requirements may result in ineligibility for PPE funding. Copies of NFPA standards may be reviewed at <http://www.nfpa.org/freeaccess>.
 - Only actual costs for PPE are allowed.

R&R Activity – Eligible Costs: High Priority

- Allowable costs may be limited to reasonable amounts, as determined by FEMA.
- To receive payment, recipients must provide the following documentation to support the purchase of PPE:
 - Invoices/proof of payment (e.g., canceled checks, bank statements, electronic funds transfers) for PPE.
 - Proof that the firefighter(s) have passed an NFPA 1582-compliant physical and are certified as “fit for duty.”
- Eligible PPE Expenditures:
 - Only one set of PPE for structural and wildland firefighting per each new recruit.
 - The SAFER Program considers a complete set of structural PPE to be comprised of one self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) mask/face piece, one pair of pants, one coat, one helmet, two hoods, one pair of boots, two pairs of gloves, one pair of suspenders, and one pair of goggles. In those jurisdictions where additional PPE, like Personal Safety/Rescue Bailout Systems are statutorily required, the SAFER Program will consider all statutorily required items to be part of a complete PPE set.
 - The SAFER Program considers a complete set of wildland PPE to be comprised of one pair of pants, one coat, one jumpsuit, one helmet, one pair of boots, one pair of gloves, one pair of suspenders, one pair of goggles, one fire shelter, one web gear, one backpack, and one canteen/hydration system.
- Traditional therapies and preventative care facilitated by a licensed mental health or physical healthcare provider.
- LOSAP or Retirement Program:
 - New LOSAP or Retirement Programs (meaning the department has never had a LOSAP or Retirement Program).
 - Increasing existing LOSAP or Retirement Program coverage to include newly recruited members (FEMA will only fund the increase portion of the program).

Note: FEMA will not fund LOSAP or Retirement Programs that were previously funded by a SAFER Program grant.

R&R Activity – Eligible Costs: Medium Priority

- Nominal stipends, as defined under [Appendix B – Programmatic Information and Priorities, Supporting Definitions for this NOFO](#) in this NOFO for volunteer firefighters who are involved with, or trained in, the operations of firefighting and emergency response (e.g., Pay-per-Call, Points Based System, etc.). Stipends may only be provided for participation in operational (firefighting) activities, such as duty shifts, operational training, or responding to incidents.
 - Food vouchers may be used for nominal stipends if the Narrative supports their use as an effective recruitment and retention tool for the department. However, food vouchers must be issued through formally adopted SOPs.
 - Award recipients must maintain records of all food vouchers including firefighter name, amount, date received, and signature of the receiving firefighter.
 - Gift cards may not be used for nominal stipends. For information on gift cards, see Low Priority – Awards/Incentives below.
 - Only actual costs for stipends are allowed.

R&R Activity – Eligible Costs: Medium Priority

- Allowable costs may be limited to reasonable amounts as determined by FEMA.
- Costs to support explorer/cadet, and mentoring programs, such as:
 - Only one set of station duty uniforms (the SAFER Program considers one set of station duty uniform as one pair of pants, one shirt, one hat, and one pair of boots) for each newly recruited cadet/explorer per the department's documented uniform policy.
 - Training (Non-Immediate Danger to Life and Health [IDLH]).
 - One set of structural or wildland PPE as defined above for each new cadet/explorer that joins the department after the date of grant award, with the following two exceptions: 1) SCBA mask/face pieces are not eligible because PPE for explorers/cadets may not be used in an IDLH atmosphere, and 2) physicals for explorers/cadets are not required to meet NFPA 1582.
 - One introductory physical exam per each newly recruited explorer/cadet.
- Insurance packages (e.g., AD&D, workers compensation, disability, health, dental, life).
- Exercise equipment is limited to no more than \$10,000 total per grant award.
- Wellness programs (e.g., group fitness led by health instructors that come to the department).

R&R Activity – Eligible Costs: Low Priority

- New Member Costs. Only one set of station duty uniforms (the SAFER Program considers one set of station duty uniforms as one pair of pants, one shirt, one hat, and one pair of boots) for new firefighters that join the department after the date of grant award, per the department's documented uniform policy.
 - **Note:** Class A or B uniforms (e.g., Dress Uniforms) and badges are not allowable costs under the SAFER Program.
- American National Standards Institute-approved retro-reflective highway apparel.
- PPE gear bags.
- Costs for advanced training not currently covered under the department's operating budget (e.g., extrication training, specialized equipment training, swift water rescue, etc.). Advanced training requests are only eligible for members who have already met the minimum firefighter certifications required by the AHJ and must closely correlate to the applicant's recruitment and retention goals.
 - Reimbursement to members for lost wages, mileage and transportation costs, lodging costs, and per diem while attending advanced training are also eligible.
 - **Note:** Costs for mileage and transportation costs, lodging costs, and per diem must comply with the department's written travel policies and procedures. If policies are not established, costs will only be reimbursed at the federal government rate.
- Two computers (including monitor, keyboard, mouse) and printer for grant-appointed R&R Coordinator, Program Manager, and/or Grant Administrator.
- Awards or Incentive program for participation in operational (firefighting) activities, such as operational training or responding to incidents (e.g., length of service plaques, gift cards for top responders, non-uniform clothing).

R&R Activity – Eligible Costs: Low Priority

- Non-uniform clothing (limited to a shirt, a jacket, or a pullover) as part of an award program only.
 - **Note:** Class A or B uniforms (e.g., Dress Uniforms) and badges are not allowable costs under the SAFER Program.
- Gift Cards: a logbook for the purchase and issuance of gift cards is required. The logbook should include name of recipient, date, amount of card, reason for issuance, and signature of recipient. Gift cards should be issued to operational firefighters who have completed the minimum firefighter training required by the AHJ.
- LED/electronic sign when it is not included as part of a comprehensive marketing program.
- Fire service association membership fees.
- Projector or screen to support classroom training.
- Payments for housing or rent for volunteers at or near the fire station.
- Other costs associated with new recruits (background checks, aptitude tests, etc.).
- Station modifications/remodeling/renovation of existing facilities.
 - Remodeling/renovations to an existing facility are allowable (e.g., converting space into bunkroom) and must correlate to the identified recruitment or retention problems or issues being addressed with the grant. The renovations must be minor interior alterations not to exceed \$10,000 total per grant award.
 - Remodeling/renovations may not change the footprint or profile of the building.
 - Any request for modifications to facilities may require EHP review (for details see [Section 10.B.a. Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation \(EHP\) Compliance](#) of this NOFO). Recipients are encouraged to have completed as many steps as possible for a successful EHP Review in support of their proposal for funding, including coordination with their State Historic Preservation Office to identify potential historic preservation issues and to discuss the potential for project effects, and compliance with all state and EHP laws and requirements. Preservation Office to identify potential historic preservation issues and to discuss the potential for project effects, and compliance with all state and EHP laws and requirements.
 - Written approval must be provided by FEMA before using any SAFER Program funds for remodeling or renovation. If awarded funds for remodeling or renovation, recipients may be required to submit evidence of approved zoning ordinances, architectural plans, any other locally required planning permits, and a notice of interest.

R&R Activity – Eligible Costs: Non-Prioritized Costs

- M&A costs up to 3% of the total awarded amount in accordance with 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. M&A costs must be identifiable and directly related to the implementation and management of the SAFER Program grant. Salaries and fringe benefits for personnel directly supporting the grant are not required to be included in the M&A budget line item.

R&R Activity – Eligible Costs: Non-Prioritized Costs

- Indirect costs for national, state, local, or federally recognized Tribal Nation volunteer firefighter interest organizations that are expended pursuant to [Section 3.H. Indirect Costs \(Facilities and Administrative Costs\)](#).
- Up to \$1,500 in grant writer fees for application preparation, but not grant administration. The fee must have been paid between 90 days before the publication date of this NOFO and up to 30 days of the end of the application period and prior to any contact with SAFER Program Office staff or an Offer of Award. For details see [Appendix C – Award Administration Information, Grant Writer/Preparation Fees](#).
- Audit costs proportional to the total SAFER Program award. Recipients of multiple federal funding sources can only charge a pro rata share of the audit cost(s) to the SAFER Program award, and they must be incurred during the period of performance.

R&R Activity – Ineligible Costs

This list is not exhaustive:

- Salary and benefits for firefighters.
- Retroactive payments or recognition for operational services rendered prior to the grant award.
- Costs incurred (including the delivery of goods or services) outside of the period of performance except for grant writer fees; see [Appendix C – Award Administration Information, Grant Writer/Preparation Fees](#).
- Fire suppression equipment.
- Vehicles.
- Fire simulators, fire evolution, or fire training props (e.g., burn trailers, forcible entry, rescue/smoke maze, flashover simulators).
- Supplies, expendables, or “onetime” use items such as foam, fuel/propane, breaching materials (e.g., wood or sheetrock).
- Sirens, warning lights for fire department or private vehicles, or other outdoor warning devices.
- Communication equipment and monthly expenses including cell phones, pagers, portable radios, or Computer- Aided Dispatch systems.
- Video cameras/recording equipment.
- Photographs/photographer unless part of a marketing contract for recruitment of new members.
- Intruder alerting systems and deployment notification systems.
- Retroactive payments or recognition for non-operational activities (including payments, gift cards, recruitment bonuses, or stipends for recruiting firefighters).
- Payments for travel to or participation in leisure or social activities such as theater tickets, entertainment tickets, and trips (e.g., professional sporting events).
- Costs associated with award banquets, such as food, photographers, refreshments, entertainment, or rental facilities. Reimbursement for actual awards (e.g., plaques and trophies) is eligible.

R&R Activity – Ineligible Costs

- Costs for food or refreshments that are not part of a conference or training hosted by the grant recipient (food vouchers can be requested as a nominal stipend but must be provided only under formally adopted SOPs).
- Costs for training currently covered under the department's operating budget (e.g., tuition or instructor fees for department-mandated, basic-level training).
- Tuition assistance for family members of the volunteer.
- Services at a member's personal residence (e.g., internet access, plowing of driveways).
- Furniture (except for newly converted bunkrooms), televisions, fixtures, appliances (e.g., refrigerators), and entertainment equipment.
- "Giveaways" for recruitment events, such as stickers, pencils, pens, t-shirts, cups, mugs, or balloons.
- Fees for courses and training that are available free of charge on the internet or at state/local training facilities (e.g., NIMS 100, 700, 800).
- Costs for fuel. Costs for travel to training or other eligible activities are reimbursed through mileage rates.
- Gym Memberships.
- Payments for student loans.
- Mileage reimbursement for responding to incidents or periodic operational training at the fire house (mileage reimbursement is allowed for other types of training as explained under eligible costs).
- Station internet access/user fees and equipment to install internet (such as routers).
- Continued funding of an existing (or previously funded through the SAFER Program) LOSAP or Retirement Program.
- Computers in common areas or individual computers for training/education.
- Copiers/printers.
- Incentives for career firefighters within the recipient's fire department.
- Ineligible explorer/cadet/mentoring program expenditures:
 - SCBAs, including masks/face pieces.
 - Anything involving the IDLH atmosphere.
 - Any activities precluded by the AHJ.
- Ineligible PPE expenditures:
 - Three-quarter length rubber boots.
 - SCBAs (not including SCBA masks/face pieces).
 - PASS Devices.
 - Spare cylinders.
 - Bomb disposal suits.
 - PPE for hazardous materials and other specialized incidents.
 - More than one set of structural or wildland PPE per newly recruited member (within the period of performance).
- PPE for existing members, R&R Coordinator, Program Manager, and/or Grant Administrator.

13. Appendix C – Award Administration Information

Appendix C contains detailed information on SAFER Program Award Administration. Reviewing this information may help recipients in the programmatic and financial administration of their award(s).

A. Help FEMA Prevent Fraud, Waste, and Abuse

If applicants or recipients have information about instances of fraud, waste, abuse, or mismanagement involving FEMA programs or operations, they should contact the DHS OIG Hotline at (800) 323-8603, by fax at (202) 254-4297, or email HOTLINE@oig.dhs.gov.

B. Grant Writer/Preparation Fees

Fees for grant writers may be included as a pre-award expenditure. For grant writer fees to be eligible as a pre-award expenditure, the services must be competitively sourced, specifically identified, and listed within the “Grant Request Details” section of the application and must satisfy the requirements under 2 C.F.R. § 200.458. FEMA will only consider reimbursements for application preparation, not administration, up to \$1,500 per annum. The allowability of grant writer fees as a pre-award expenditure must be paid between the 90 days before the publication date of this NOFO and up to 30 calendar days after the application period closes. For the grant writer fees held either on retainer or subscription basis to be an eligible pre-award cost, the claimed retainer or subscription must have been competitively secured, and the costs are limited to the start of the appropriation period for the underlying award and meet the requirements under 2 C.F.R. § 200.458. Fees payable on a contingency basis are not an eligible expense.

Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. Part 180, recipients may not use federal grant funds to reimburse any entity, including a grant writer or preparer, if that entity is presently suspended or debarred by the federal government from receiving funding under federally-funded grants or contracts. Recipients must verify that the contractor is not suspended or debarred from participating in specified federal procurement or non-procurement transactions pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 180.300.

Prior to submission of the application, please review all work produced by grant writers or other third parties for accuracy. By submitting the application, applicants are certifying all information contained therein is true and an accurate reflection of the organization, and that regardless of the applicant’s intent, the submission of information that is false or misleading may result in actions by FEMA. These actions include but are not limited to the submitted application not being considered for award, temporary withholding of funding under the existing award pending investigation, or referral to the DHS OIG.

The following documentation shall be provided to FEMA upon request:

1. A copy of the grant writer’s contract for services;
2. A copy of the invoice or purchase order;
3. A copy of the canceled check (front and back); and
4. Evidence that the services were competitively procured.

Failure to provide the requested documentation may result in the grant writer fee being deemed ineligible and the grant reduced accordingly.

Note: FEMA requires that all applicants identify the following as “Application Participants” in the “Contact Information” section of the application: Any individual or organization that assisted with the development, preparation, or review of the application to include drafting or writing the narrative and budget; whether that person, entity, or agent is compensated or not; and whether the assistance took place before submitting the application.

C. Maintenance and Sustainment

The use of FEMA preparedness grant funds for the costs of repairs or replacement, as well as maintenance contracts, warranties, and user fees may be allowable.

The intent of eligible Maintenance and Sustainment activities is to provide direct support to the critical capabilities developed using FEMA and other DHS grants and support activities. Routine upkeep and the supplies, expendables, or one-time use items that support routine upkeep (e.g., gasoline, tire replacement, routine oil changes, monthly inspections or grounds and facility maintenance) are the responsibility of the recipient and may not be funded with SAFER Program funding.

Generally, when purchasing a maintenance agreement, service contract, or extended warranty for systems or equipment, the period of coverage provided under such a plan may not extend beyond the period of performance of the grant with which the agreement, warranty or contract is purchased.

The duration of an extended warranty purchased incidental to the original purchase of the equipment may exceed the period of performance if the coverage purchased is consistent with that which is typically provided for, or available through, these types of agreements, warranties, or contracts. When purchasing a stand-alone warranty or extending an existing maintenance contract on an already-owned piece of equipment or system, coverage purchased may not exceed the period of performance of the award used to purchase the maintenance agreement or warranty. As with warranties and maintenance agreements, this policy extends to licenses and user fees as well.

Even if purchased incidental to the original purchase of the equipment, the duration of an extended maintenance agreement or warranty must also be reasonable for the type of equipment or system being purchased. For example, if a vendor offers a 10-year extended warranty incidental to the purchase of a piece of equipment, but the useful life of that equipment being purchased is five years, the purchase of a 10-year extended warranty would not be a reasonable cost and may not be charged to the grant.

D. Taxes, Fees, Levies, and Assessments

Taxes, fees, levies, or assessments that the recipient is legally required to pay and are directly related to any eligible SAFER Program acquisition activity may be charged to a SAFER Program award pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.470. These charges shall be identified and enumerated in the SAFER Program application narrative, as well as the “Grant Request Details” section of the acquisition activity.

Any avoidable and unreasonable costs that result from the action or inaction of a recipient (or recipient's agent) or that prevent that recipient from enjoying any lawful exemption, waiver, or reduction of any tax, fee, levy, or assessment directly related to any eligible SAFER Program acquisition activity are not chargeable to any SAFER Program award.

Example: Governmental entities and Public Safety Agencies are exempt from some Federal Communications Commission (FCC) fees*, but only if the eligible organization submits an exemption or waiver request to the FCC.

**Government entities are not required to pay FCC regulatory fees. Nonprofit entities (exempt under Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code) may also be exempt. The FCC requires that any entity claiming exempt status submit, or have on file with the FCC, a valid Internal Revenue Service Determination Letter documenting its nonprofit status, or certification from a governmental authority attesting to its exempt status. For more information, please visit <http://www.fcc.gov>.*

E. Excess Funds

After completing the initial project(s) proposed in the recipient's application, some recipients may have unexpended funds remaining in their budget. These excess funds may result from any combination of under-budget acquisition activities or competitive procurement processes.

These excess funds may be utilized to address an organization's local needs or to mitigate identified capability gaps. FEMA expects excess funds to be obligated concurrent with an award's period of performance to address a known or critical need. An amendment request must be submitted to document the expenditure of excess funds. As a reminder, all costs must be incurred, and all goods and services must be delivered or completed within the period of performance to be allowable.

F. Payments and Amendments

FEMA uses the Direct Deposit/Electronic Funds Transfer method of payment to recipients.

SAFER Program payment/drawdown requests are generated using FEMA GO. SAFER Program payment/drawdown requests from state or local government entities will be governed by applicable federal regulations in effect at the time a grant is awarded to the recipient and may be either advances or reimbursements. Recipients should not expend funds until all special conditions listed on the grant award document have been met, including completion of EHP review, and the request for payment in FEMA GO has been approved. Recipients should draw down funds based upon immediate disbursement requirements; however, FEMA strongly encourages recipients to draw down funds as close to disbursement or expenditure as possible to avoid accruing interest.

Non-federal entities should keep detailed records of all transactions involving the grant. FEMA may at any time, request copies of any relevant documentation and records, including purchasing documentation along with copies of cancelled checks for verification. See, e.g., 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.318(i), 200.334, 200.337.

a. *Advances*

Recipients shall be paid in advance, provided they maintain or demonstrate the willingness and ability to maintain procedures to minimize the time elapsing between the transfer of funds and disbursement by the recipient (not to exceed 30 days), and the financial management systems that meet the standards for fund control and accountability as established in 2 C.F.R. Part 200. The recipient shall include all applicable source documentation such as invoice(s), purchase orders, contracts, etc., to support the costs associated with the advance SAFER Program payment/drawdown requests. EHP review requirements must be met prior to advanced payments.

Although advance drawdown requests are permissible, recipients remain subject to applicable federal laws in effect at the time a grant is awarded to the recipient.

Governing interest requirements include the Uniform Administrative Requirements Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200 and the *Cash Management Improvement Act (CMIA)* and its implementing regulations at 31 C.F.R. Part 205. Interest under CMIA will accrue from the time federal funds are credited to a recipient's account until the time the recipient pays out the funds for program purposes. For the rate to use in calculating interest, please visit Treasury Current Value rate at https://www.fiscal.treasury.gov/fsreports/rpt/cvfr/cvfr_home.htm.

b. *Reimbursement*

Payment by reimbursement is the preferred method when the requirements to be paid in advance, pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.305, cannot be met. In accordance with U.S. Department of Treasury regulations at 31 C.F.R. Part 205, if applicable, the recipient shall maintain procedures to minimize the time elapsing between the transfer of funds and the disbursement of said funds. As a prerequisite of SAFER Program approval for reimbursement requests, recipients shall submit all applicable source documentation, such as payroll records, timecards, contracts, invoices, purchase orders, proof of payment (e.g., canceled checks, bank statements, electronic funds transfers) to support the costs associated with each payment/drawdown request.

c. *Rebates*

Recipients shall disburse program income, rebates, refunds, contract settlements, audit recoveries, and interest earned on such funds before requesting additional cash payments, in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.305. The reduction of federal financial participation via rebates/refunds may generate excess funds for the recipient if the recipient previously obligated their Cost Share match based upon the original award figures. If the recipient previously obligated their original Cost Share prior to the rebate, then the recipient may have minimum excess funds equal to the difference between the original Cost Share less the rebate-adjusted Cost Share.

d. *Payment Requests During Closeout*

A recipient may only submit reimbursement payment requests up to 120 calendar days after the expiration of the period of performance, during an award's closeout reconciliation per 2 C.F.R. § 200.344. Reimbursement payments are the only eligible type of requests to be submitted after a grant's period of performance has expired. The expenditure must have been obligated and received during the period of performance of the award. The recipient's request should contain

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clear and specific information certifying that the liquidation of federal funds is reimbursement for an obligation properly incurred during the active period of performance. FEMA may request documentation supporting the reimbursement for review at any time.

e. Amendments

FEMA may approve SAFER Program award amendments on a case-by-case basis for the following reasons:

- Extension of the period of performance to complete the scope of work under the R&R Activity;
- Changes to the activity, mission, retroactive approval (pre-award), closeout issues, and some excess funds requests;
- Budget changes (adding funds to award/non-closeout deobligation of funds); and
- Change of key personnel.

FEMA will only consider amendments submitted via FEMA GO. These requests must contain specific and compelling justifications for the requested change. Amendments or changes to the scope of work may require additional EHP review. FEMA strongly encourages recipients to expend grant funds in a timely manner to be consistent with SAFER Program goals and objectives.

Note: A recipient may deobligate or return unused funds (i.e., those remaining funds previously drawn down via payment request or remaining award funding that was never requested) to FEMA prior to the end of an award's period of performance. To exercise this option, a recipient must submit an amendment via FEMA GO and state in the amendment that the unliquidated funds (e.g., the funds to be returned) are not necessary for the fulfillment or success of the grant's obligations or mission. The recipient must also indicate in the amendment that it understands that the returned funds will be deobligated and unavailable for any future award expenses. Deobligation of funds will decrease the federal portion of the grant and the amount of the recipient's cost share obligation. FEMA will confirm deobligation amendments with all points of contact; after confirmation of the recipient's intent to deobligate, FEMA will hold the approved deobligation request for 14 calendar days as a period for recipient reconsideration before FEMA processes the deobligation request.

G. Disposition of Grant-Funded Equipment

A recipient must use, manage, and dispose of SAFER Program-funded equipment in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. § 200.313. Except for state governments, when original or replacement equipment acquired under a SAFER Program award is no longer needed for the original project, program, or other activities currently or previously supported by a federal awarding agency, the recipient must request disposition instructions from FEMA. FEMA strongly recommends contacting the SAFER Help Desk before disposing of SAFER Program-funded equipment.

H. Post-Award Recipient Responsibilities

Once awarded, recipients under the Hiring Activity must submit a pre-SAFER Program roster listing paid operational/firefighting personnel, in support of NFPA 1710 or NFPA 1720, who are employees at time of award. FEMA compares the pre-SAFER Program roster to names submitted for SAFER Program-funded positions to ensure that the SAFER Program-funded firefighters are new employees.

The SAFER Program Office will work with recipients to establish the correct staffing maintenance numbers, which combine the number of pre-SAFER Program and SAFER Program-funded operational positions. Once this is established, recipients must agree to maintain this number throughout the period of performance by taking active and timely steps to fill any vacancies.

Recipients under the Hiring Activity who lay off any operational personnel during the period of performance will be considered in default of their grant and the award will be terminated. In those situations, recipients may be required to return the federal funds disbursed under the grant award.

Recipients who are unable, due to documentable economic hardship, to backfill non-SAFER Program operational positions vacated through attrition (e.g., resignation, retirement) after receiving an award may petition FEMA to waive the staffing maintenance requirements.

Approved waivers allow recipients to decrease and reestablish the staffing maintenance numbers agreed to at the time of award by the number of positions that recipients are unable to fill. To qualify for this waiver, the economic hardship must affect the entire public safety sector in a recipient's jurisdiction, not just the fire department. FEMA will not grant waivers for SAFER Program-funded positions. Recipients who fail to maintain the required level of staffing risk losing federal funds awarded under this grant.

Recipients must agree that, notwithstanding any provision of other laws, firefighters hired under these grants will not be discriminated against or be prohibited from engaging in volunteer firefighting activities in another jurisdiction during off-duty hours.

FEMA strongly encourages applicants, to the extent practicable, to seek, recruit and hire military veterans to increase their ranks within their departments.



City Council Agenda Item #[5.0]

Title: Discussion and possible action regarding the recent ruling by the 14th Court of Appeals against Port Freeport in its attempt to acquire property in Freeport's East End through eminent domain.

Date: October 6, 2025

From: Councilman Pena

Staff Recommendation: N/A

Item Summary: City Council will discuss and consider possible action in response to the September 18, 2025 ruling by the 14th Court of Appeals reversing a lower court's decision that allowed Port Freeport to condemn and acquire property in Freeport's East End. The appellate court held that Port Freeport failed to identify a specific public use for the acquisition and ruled that the "take now, plan later" approach violates constitutional protections.

Background Information: Port Freeport filed a condemnation petition in November 2020 to acquire property in the 400 block of Sixth Street from the heirs of Lucille Marshall. The heirs challenged the taking, arguing the Port had not established a specific public use. On September 18, 2025, a three-justice panel of the 14th Court of Appeals reversed the trial court's ruling and remanded the case, giving Port Freeport an opportunity to amend its petition. If the Port cannot do so, the case may be dismissed and reasonable attorney's fees awarded to the landowners.

The ruling has implications for property rights, community planning, and public trust in eminent domain actions. City Council may wish to review the decision, consider adopting a resolution supporting residents affected by eminent domain actions, or prepare a communication to Port Freeport urging transparency and specificity in its land acquisition practices.

Special Considerations: This discussion may include sensitive legal issues surrounding property rights and eminent domain. Any Council action should be carefully crafted to respect the City's legal standing and avoid unintended liabilities. Council may also consider public outreach to inform residents of their rights and the City's position.

Financial Impact: No immediate fiscal impact to the City. However, future eminent domain actions within Freeport could affect tax bases, community redevelopment plans, and infrastructure spending. Proactive engagement may help mitigate unforeseen financial and legal exposure.

Board or 3rd Party Recommendation: N/A

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Supporting Documentation:

None



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