November 17, 2026

LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT

JAIME E. MOORE
FIRE CHIEF

October 29, 2026

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
FILE NO. 26-058

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners

FROM: Jaime E. Moore, Fire Chief

SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE OF FY 2026 FEMA URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE TASK FORCE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT GRANT FUNDS

FINAL ACTION: _____ Approved _____ Approved w/Corrections _____ Withdrawn
_____ Denied _____ Received & Filed _____ Other

SUMMARY
On April 4, 1993, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was executed between the City, the Governor's Office of Emergency Services and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), establishing the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) as a sponsoring agency of a FEMA Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Task Force, California Task Force 1 (CA-TF1). An Amendment to the MOA was executed in 2011 (C.F. 10-2283-S1). Since 1993, the City has been awarded annual FEMA Cooperative Agreement grants to fund equipment, supplies, training, contractual services, and LAFD personnel to administer and manage the US&R CA-TF1 program.

The LAFD was awarded $1,938,333 for the 2023 FEMA US&R program, with a period of performance from September 1, 2026 through August 31, 2029. No matching funds are required, but the grant is on a reimbursement basis requiring the LAFD to front-fund expenditures. Following submission of appropriate supporting documentation, FEMA reimburses the City for those expenditures.

The expenditure plan is as follows:

Personnel Costs:

- $753,772 – (direct costs) to fund continuing resolution authorities for one Fire Captain I (C.F. 08-2490), one Management Analyst (C.F. 08-2490) and one Storekeeper II (C.F. 16-0600) to administer and manage the US&R program. Continued employment authority for these positions from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027 are in included in the Personnel Authority Resolution (PAR) authorized by City Council (C.F. 26-1700) in anticipation of continued grant funding. If FEMA grant funding for the US&R program continues in subsequent years, employment authority for these three positions will continue to be effected through the PAR.

Personnel Training Costs:

- $213,000 – to fund back-fill of members assigned to specialized training on search and rescue activities in responding to emergency incidents.

Contractual Services/Expenses/Equipment:

- $971,561 – to fund various personal services contracts for specialized team members, travel expenses, supplies and equipment for program operations.

Sole source service contracts will be executed with three Canine Search Specialists, eight Medical Team Managers, eight Structural Engineering Specialists, five Task Force Leaders, two Safety Officers, two Rescue Managers, two Hazardous Material Managers, and two Plans Managers. The Canine Search Specialists, Medical Team Managers and Structural Engineering Specialist are currently contracted with the City under the 2023 and 2024 FEMA grant.

Due to the specialized nature of the work performed in responding to emergency incidents, sole source contracts have been approved by the City Attorney as set forth under the City Charter Section 371(e)(2), which states that competitive bidding shall not apply to, "Contracts, as determined by the contracting authority, for the performance of professional, scientific, expert, technical, or other special services of a temporary and occasional character for which the contracting authority finds that competitive bidding is not practicable or advantageous."

It should be noted that while expenditures to these contractors related to the 2023 and 2024 FEMA Cooperative Agreement grants will be within the funding allocations, each contract cites a maximum amount up to $99,000. This higher limit is necessary because these contractors are also subject to deployment by FEMA to nationally declared disasters outside the City. Under these circumstances, the City would be reimbursed by FEMA through a federal funding source separate from the 2023 and 2024 FEMA Cooperative Agreement grant.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Board:

1. Approve and transmit the report to the Mayor and the Office of the City Administrative Officer for Committee and City Council consideration.

It is also recommended the Board request that the Mayor and City Council:

2. Accept the 2026 FEMA Cooperative Agreement Grant for the Urban Search and Rescue CA-TF1 in the amount of $1,938,333 for the term of September 1, 2026 through August 31, 2029, and authorize the Fire Chief, or designee, to execute any documents or agreements necessary to accept the grant on the City's behalf.

3. Authorize the Fire Department to deposit 2026 FEMA grant funds received into Fund 335, Department 38, Account to be determined.

4. Authorize the Controller, for reimbursement purposes, to transfer 2026 FEMA grant funds from Fund 335, Department 38, Account to be determined, to various Fund 100, Department 38 salary accounts: Account 001012 (Salaries Sworn), Account 001010 (Salaries General), Account 001090 (Overtime General), and Account 001098 (Variable Staffing), upon submission of proper documentation by the Fire Department of direct staff costs incurred during the grant performance period.

5. Authorize the Controller to transfer 2026 FEMA grant funds from Fund 335, Department 38 to Fund 100, Department 38, Revenue Source 5346 (reimbursement of Grant Related Costs) for fringe benefits upon submission of proper documentation by the Fire Department of costs incurred during the grant performance period.

6. Find, in accordance with Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 4.133(a), that the following three positions will remain approved and authorized by Resolution as indicated in the Personnel Authority Resolution (PAR), for the grant period, and include the authority in future PARs:

No.	Code	Class Title
1	2142-1	Fire Captain I
1	9184	Management Analyst
1	1825-2	Storekeeper II

7. Authorize the Controller to transfer $971,561 from Fund 100, Department 38, Account 001012 (Salaries Sworn) to Fund 335, Department 38, Account to be determined, for the purchase of expense and equipment items, to be reimbursed by the FEMA grant during the period of September 1, 2026 through August 31, 2029, and any extensions granted by FEMA.

8. Authorize the Fire Department to prepare Controller instructions for any technical adjustments, subject to approval of the City Administrative Officer (CAO), and instruct the Controller to implement the instructions.

9. Based on the Fire Department submissions to the City Administrative Officer of grant budget modifications approved by FEMA, authorize the Fire Department and Controller to transfer funds, as needed between Fund 335, Department 38 and Fund 100, Department 38 for implementation of the 2026 FEMA Urban Search and Rescue Cooperative Agreement program through the end of the grant performance period.

10. Authorize the Fire Chief to negotiate and execute contracts with the following service providers, each not to exceed $99,000 for the 2026 FEMA grant performance period:

    Canine Search Specialist (three contracts)
    Deresa Kenney (Teller)
    Jeffrey Neu

Eric Darling

Medical Team Manager (eight contracts)
Dr. Francine Vogler
Dr. Peter Mikhail
Dr. Gabriel Campion
Dr. Michael Stone
To be determined
To be determined
To be determined
To be determined

Structural Engineering Specialist (eight contracts)
Essam Lobnan
Sean M. Hughes
Dorian Sulc
Neville Pereira
To be determined
To be determined
To be determined
To be determined

Task Force Leader (five contracts)
To be determined
To be determined
To be determined
To be determined
To be determined

Safety Officer (two contracts)
To be determined
To be determined

Plans Manager (two contracts)
To be determined
To be determined

Rescue Manager (two contracts)
John Terrusa
To be determined

Hazardous Material Manager (two contracts)
To be determined
To be determined

FISCAL IMPACT
There is no impact on the General Fund. The FEMA Urban Search and Rescue grant agreement does not require City matching funds. In accordance with the grant guidelines, project funds are disbursed on a reimbursement basis.

Board report prepared by Victoria Rodriguez, Management Analyst, Emergency Operations Bureau.