



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Toryono Green, Fire Chief, Tacoma Fire Department
Laura Morris, TFD CARES Program Manager
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Designation of Special Projects for Designated Co-Responder Program – December 3, 2019
DATE: November 14, 2019

SUMMARY:

A resolution designating the Co-Responder Program, managed as part of TFD CARES (Community, Assistance, Referral, and Education Service), as a special project of limited duration and designating general salary classifications and benefits for persons employed on the project.

STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITY:

- Strengthen and support a safe city with healthy residents.
- Ensure all Tacoma residents are valued and have access to resources to meet their needs.

Tacoma Fire and Tacoma Police Department’s collaboration on the DCR (Designated Co-Responder) Program, with services managed by TFD CARES, will provide more opportunity for residents suffering from behavioral health, mental health and substance use disorder to receive crisis response and intervention. It also will enable the department to more flexibly and effectively employ behavioral health personnel to support the program.

BACKGROUND:

The Tacoma Fire Department (TFD) requests the City Council’s approval to designate certain current and anticipated activities of the DCR program. The activity proposed for special project designation is to create a City Managed Co-Responder Program.

City Managed Co-Responder Program

The City of Tacoma will create an internally operated co-responder program that will add a mental health team into police and fire operations. This program will employ designated crisis responder professionals who are certified to assist officers with citizens suffering from severe behavioral health, mental health, and substance abuse disorders. Classifications include Designated Crisis Responder Supervisor and Designated Crisis Responder.

All positions are proposed to continue for a term of up to five years from the date of designation unless community needs change or are otherwise satisfied or the City determines other priorities for TFD.

The project designations will not affect the two currently budgeted permanent full-time TFD CARES positions with the working titles of Program Manager and Program Analyst or any previously approved project positions associated with the TFD CARES program.



ISSUE:

Shall the City designate certain activities of the Designated Co-Responder program special projects of limited duration and authorize the hiring of project personnel.

ALTERNATIVES:

The City could contract for services to staff the various current or anticipated DCR activities. However, contracting increases turnover and the administrative cost to provide the services. Bringing the activities in-house will reduce administrative costs charged by contracted agencies, improve personnel turnover and enable TFD CARES to employ the staff more flexibly across the program, increasing program effectiveness.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Fire Department recommends that the City designate certain current and anticipated activities of the DCR program special projects of limited duration and authorize the hiring of special project personnel.



FISCAL IMPACT: (Estimated 2019-2020)

EXPENDITURES:

FUND NUMBER & FUND NAME	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	COST ELEMENT	TOTAL AMOUNT
Mental Health & Chemical Dependency Tax (Fund 1185)	853120	5110XXX – Various Personnel Costs	\$495,800
TOTAL			\$495,800

REVENUES:

FUNDING SOURCE	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	COST ELEMENT	TOTAL AMOUNT
Mental Health & Chemical Dependency Tax (Fund 1185)	853120	4313250 - Sales Tax 0.1%	\$495,800
TOTAL			\$495,800

POTENTIAL POSITION IMPACT:

POSITION TITLE	PERMANENT/ PROJECT TEMPORARY POSITION	FTE IMPACT	POSITION END DATE
Designated Crisis Responder, Supervisor	Project	1.0	Approx. 11/30/2024
Designated Crisis Responder	Project	2.0	Approx. 11/30/2024
Behavioral Health Case Mgr.	Project	1.0	Approx. 11/30/2024
Legal Assistant	Project	0.5	Approx. 11/30/2024
TOTAL		4.5	

FISCAL IMPACT TO CURRENT BIENNIAL BUDGET: \$495,800

ARE THE EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES PLANNED AND BUDGETED? Yes, funds are budgeted for 2020 in the Mental Health & Chemical Dependency Fund (Fund 1185). Future budgets will include the continued funding through Fund 1185 and will be subject to Council approval.

IF EXPENSE IS NOT BUDGETED, PLEASE EXPLAIN HOW THEY ARE TO BE COVERED. N/A