June 23, 2025
City Council Meeting

Mayor David Moore
Mayor Pro-Tem Lauren Shoemaker
Councilman Ivory Craig
Councilwoman Phyllis Harris
Councilman Bryan Hough
Councilman Jeff Meadows
Councilman Kenneth Reeves
Marie M. Anders, City Attorney
Jonathan Blanton, City Manager

City of Mount Holly
City Council
Regular Meeting

June 23, 2025 | 6:30 PM
Municipal Complex - Council Chambers
400 East Central Avenue
Mount Holly, NC 28120

CALL TO ORDER

INVOCATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

SET THE AGENDA

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of End of Year Budget Amendment 2024-2025
2. Fee Schedule and Position Allotment Approval
3. Call for a Public Hearing to Consider a Text Amendment to Update Chapter 153.049 of the Subdivision Ordinance to Provide Standards for Access & Fire Safety for Construction Sites. Case # TA-25-6.
4. Call for a Public Hearing to Update Section 7.1 Note 28 of the City's Zoning Ordinance to Update the standards for Solar Energy Systems. Case # TA-25-5.
5. Permission for the Fire Department to apply for 2024 SAFER Grant (Staffing)
6. Approval of Minutes - City Council Meeting from June 9, 2025
7. Approval of Minutes - Closed Session from June 9, 2025

PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation from the Mount Holly Community Development Foundation
   Julia Benfield
2. Update on the 2018 Strategic Vision Plan
   Greg Beal
3. Consideration of 131 S. Main Street, Request for Proposals
   Jonathan Blanton

NEW BUSINESS

1. City Manager Report — Jonathan Blanton

CLOSED SESSION

1. Closed Session Pursuant to N.C.G.S 143-318.11(a) (3 and 5)

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Regular Meeting
Agenda Action Form

Meeting Date	From
June 23, 2025	Michelle Wood, Finance Director Finance

CONSENT AGENDA Item # 1

Approval of End of Year Budget Amendment 2024-2025

Will this require a public hearing?

No

Background/Purpose of Request

Fiscal Impact

Will Item affect current budget?	Yes
Reviewed by Finance Director?	Yes
Preaudit Certification Required?	No
Capital Project Ordinance Required?	No
Budget Transfer Required?	No
Total City Dollars:	
Budget Code:	
Reviewed by City Attorney?	No

Manager/Staff Recommendation

Attachments

1. Final Budget Amendment

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
FY 24-25 Budget Amendment

Account Number	Description	Account Debit	Account Credit
10-00-4260-331	Utilities	$ 312,948.00	
10-00-4210-199	Contract Services	$ 30,000.00	
10-10-4310-439	Leases	$ 141,600.00	
10-10-4310-491	Dues and Subscriptions	$ 23,680.00	
10-10-4310-353	MR Maintenance	$ 14,000.00	
10-10-4340-122	Overtime	$ 265,000.00	
10-10-4340-353	MR Maintenance	$ 190,000.00	
10-30-4710-353	MR Maintenance	$ 115,000.00	
10-81-6130-553	PARTF Expenses	$ 300,000.00	
10-00-4120-489	Tourism	$ 79,000.00	
10-00-3831-800	Investment Earnings		$ 510,000.00
10-00-3330-330	Other Grants		$ 228,000.00
10-00-3110-100	Property Taxes		$ 225,228.00
10-00-3833-840	Contributions		$ 134,000.00
10-00-3302-230	Federal Grants		$ 45,000.00
10-00-3303-231	State Grants		$ 14,000.00
10-00-3841-482	Stop Loss Revenue		$ 315,000.00
24-00-4920-491	Subscriptions and Dues	$ 10,000.00	
24-00-4920-370	Advertising	$ 32,000.00	
24-00-3991-000	Fund Balance Appropriated		$ 42,000.00
62-91-3710-510	Water Sales		$ 310,372.00
62-91-7130-183	Group Insurance	$ 196,125.00	
62-91-7130-499	Misc.	$ 10,000.00	
62-91-7900-353	MR Maintenance	25,000.00	
62-91-7910-199	Contract Services	32,000.00	
62-91-7910-321	Telephone	5,747.00	
62-91-7960-331	Utilities	41,500.00	
	TOTAL	$1,823,600.00	$ 1,823,600.00

Date Submitted: June 23,2025

Finance Officer:

City Manager:

Department Comments:

Amendment to balance funds departmentally for year end balances

Regular Meeting
Agenda Action Form

Meeting Date	From
June 23, 2025	Michelle Wood, Finance Director Finance

CONSENT AGENDA Item # 2

Fee Schedule and Position Allotment Approval

Will this require a public hearing?

No

Background/Purpose of Request

Fiscal Impact

Will Item affect current budget?	No
Reviewed by Finance Director?	Yes
Preaudit Certification Required?	No
Capital Project Ordinance Required?	No
Budget Transfer Required?	No
Total City Dollars:	
Budget Code:	
Reviewed by City Attorney?	No

Manager/Staff Recommendation

Attachments

1. Proposed Fee Schedule 2025-2026
2. Draft Position Allotment 25-26

City of Mount Holly
Proposed Fee Schedule
Fiscal Year 2025-2026

Table of Contents

	2024-2025	Draft 2025-2026
Tax Rate	0.405	0.405
*Tax rate for the City of Mount Holly is forty point five cents($.0405)		
on each one hundred dollars ($100.00) valuation of taxable property situated,		
lying, and being within the confines and limits of the City of Mount Holly		
and as listed for taxes as of January 1, 2024		
Tag Fee	$15.00	$15.00
Copies	$0.20	$0.20
Late Payments (except Tax and Utility Bills)		
*annual interest rate componded monthly on any debt over 30 days		
overdue, withi the exception of Tax and Utility bills		
Interest on Delinquent Taxes	2%	2%
*Janaury 6th .75% each month thereafter		
Returned Check Penalty	$35.00	$35.00
Garnishment/Attachment Notice Fee	$30.00	$30.00
Golf Cart Application Fee	$35.00	$35.00
Golf Cart Registration Fee	$5.00	$5.00
Yard Sale Permit	$5.00	$5.00

	2024-2025	Draft 2025-2026
Sign Permits		
Signs	$50.00	$50.00
Lost Zoning Permit Replacement	$5.00	$5.00
Zoning Permits		
<u>Residential</u>		
New Single Family Home Construction	$125.00	$125.00
Additions	$50.00	$50.00
Renovations (no expansions)	$25.00	$25.00
Demolition	$10.00	$10.00
Accessory Structures (decks, garages, sheds, car ports, etc.) and pools	$50.00	$50.00
Roof Mounted Solar Panels	$50.00	$50.00
Fences & Retaining Walls	$25.00	$25.00
Zoning Compliance and Business Registration (Includes Home Occupations)	$110 ($100 permit + $10.00 Registration	$110 ($100 permit + $10.00 Registration
<u>Commercial</u>		
New		
Up to 1,000 sq. ft.	$150.00	$150.00
1,001 sq. ft. to 5,000 sq. ft	$300.00	$300.00
5,0001sq. ft. to 10,000 sq. ft.	$400.00	$400.00
Greater than 10,001 sq. ft.	$500.00 (plus $50.00 per additional 10,000 sq. ft.)	$500.00 (plus $50.00 per additional 10,000 sq. ft.)
<u>Existing</u>		
Renovations	$25.00	$25.00
Additions	$50.00	$50.00
<u>Other</u>		
Rollout Fee	$110.00	$110.00
Violation fee for work completed without a permit or without paying permit fees	Douple the adopted fee of the respective permit fee	Douple the adopted fee of the respective permit fee
Applications (Application Submittal Fees)		
Variance		
Residential	$250.00+$26.00 recording fee	$250.00+$26.00 recording fee
Commercial	$350.00+$26.00 recording fee	$350.00+$26.00 recording fee
Density Averaging Credit Certificate	$1,000.00 + $250.00 for each additional given lot over one + $26.00 recording fee	$1,000.00 + $250.00 for each additional given lot over one + $26.00 recording fee
Special Use Permit		
2 acres or less	$300.00+$26.00 recording fee	$300.00+$26.00 recording fee
2.01-10 acres	$500.00+$26.00 recording fee	$500.00+$26.00 recording fee
10.01 acres or more	$800.00+$26.00 recording fee	$800.00+$26.00 recording fee
Planned Unit Development (PUD)	$300.00	$300.00
Appeals	$300.00	$300.00
Text Amendment	$250.00 + $30.00 Page*	$250.00 + $30.00 Page*
<u>General Rezoning Application</u>		
2 acres or less	$300.00	$300.00
2.01-10 acres	$400.00	$400.00
10.01 acres or more	$600.00	$600.00
Conditional District Rezoning Application		
2 acres or less	$300.00	$300.00
2.01-10 acres	$500.00	$500.00
10.01 -25 acres	$800.00	$800.00
25.01-100	$1,000.00	$1,000.00
100 acres or more	$1,200.00	$1,200.00
Annexation Application		
< 10 acres	2,000.00	2,000.00
10-200 acres	5,000.00	5,000.00
>200 acres	8,000.00	8,000.00
Public Involvement Meeting	$500.00	$500.00
Rezoning Plan Reviews (for Conditional Rezonings and Annexations)	Included with the Rezoning Fee	Included with the Rezoning Fee
Rezoning Plan Resubmittal	$250.00 (After 3rd submission)	$250.00 (After 3rd submission)
Rural Fire Department Assessment **	**Additional fees may apply if annexation involves a rural fire department or other constraints governed by NC General Statute.	**Additional fees may apply if annexation involves a rural fire department or other constraints governed by NC General Statute.

	2024-2025	**Draft 2025-2026**
TIA	Fee TBD at time of Application	Fee TBD at time of Application
ROW Closure Petition	$1,000.00	$1,000.00
R/W Closure	Fee TBD at time of Application	Fee TBD at time of Application
Plan Reviews* **		
Exempt Plats	$100.00	$100.00
Subdivisions	$200.00 or $5.00 per lot whichever is greater	$200.00 or $5.00 per lot whichever is greater
Expedited Review****	Double the adopted fee	Double the adopted fee
Site Plan Reviews	$100.00	$100.00
Site Plan Resubmittal	$50.00 (After 3rd submission)	$50.00 (After 3rd submission)
Construction Plan Reviews		
Major subdivision or commercial site plan	$750.00	$750.00
Minor subdivision	$300.00	$300.00
Construction Plan Resubmittal	$1,000.00 (After 3rd submission, per additional plan review)	$1,000.00 (After 3rd submission, per additional plan review)
Engineer Fees *****		
Residential		
Less than 25 lots	$500.00	$500.00
25-50 lots	$1,000.00	$1,000.00
More than 50 lots	$2,000.00	$2,000.00
Commercial		
0-5 acres	$500.00	$500.00
More than 5 acres	$1,000.00	$1,000.00
Technical Review Committee Meeting after the Initial meeting ******	$250.00	$250.00
Financial guarantees (per written agreement)	$500.00	$500.00
Subdivision Agreement (Per Phased Plat)	$500.00	$500.00
Final Plat Reviews		
Major subdivision or commercial site plan	$750.00	$750.00
Minor subdivision	$300.00	$300.00
Final Plat Resubmittal	$100.00 (After 3rd submission)	$100.00 (After 3rd submission)
Watershed Review & Floodplain Permit Review		
Watershed Review		
Less than 10 acres	$500.00	$500.00
More than 10 acres	$50.00/acre	$50.00/acre
Floodplain Development Permit	$100.00	$100.00
Floodplain Study Review (TBD consultant review)	Fees will vary based on the consultant fees	Fees will vary based on the consultant fees
Driveway Cut (Driveway Permit Application)		
Residential	$25.00	$25.00
Commercial	$50.00	$50.00
Industrial	$100.00	$100.00
Construction Inspection		
Water	$100.00	$100.00
Sewer	$100.00	$100.00
BMP	$100.00	$100.00
Road	$100.00	$100.00
Failed Inspection Re-Inspection	$50.00	$50.00
Other		
PERC Test Application	$25.00	$25.00
Zoning Verification Letter	$20.00	$20.00
Staff Research	$0.00	$30.00 per hour
Manuals		
Zoning Ordinance	$30.00	$30.00
Subdivision Ordinance	$30.00	$30.00
Land Development Guidelines	$45.00	$45.00
Maps	Size Dependent. (See below GIS fees)	Size Dependent. (See below GIS fees)

*Text amendment fee of $30 per page changed throughout ordinance. Applicant may only amend one section, but this fee applies to all pages that are modified due to additional language in document.

** Per the North Carolina General Assembly Rural Fire Departments must be compensated when annexations impact their boundaries per NCGS § 160A-58.58.

*** Plans that are resubmitted six months after notes are sent would need to repay all required fees. Staff will treat these resubmittals as new projects. Plans that are resubmitted that have substantially addressed notes provided by staff will not be reviewed. If this occurs, this will count towards one of the provided plan reviews included with the paid fee.

**** Expedited Review for Commercial/Economic Development eligible projects reduce review time to 10 -business days from 20 days; Fee for each item is paid two times the adopted fee for any review and permitting fees associated with project including rezoning, annexations, etc.
*****Engineer Fees for Commercial Projects are to include Civic, Institutional and Industrial

****** An initial meeting with City staff to understand the technical aspects prior to submitting applications is recommended. After this recommended meeting and an initial TRC meeting, all future meetings (in-person or virtual) will require a meeting fee paid prior to the scheduling of these meetings.

		2024-2025	**Draft 2025-2026**
8 ½ " x 11"			
Black & White		$10.00	$10.00
Color		$15.00	$15.00
11" x 17"			
Black & White		$12.00	$12.00
Color		$17.00	$17.00
Custom Map (digital copy only)		*$45 per hour (requires written request to staff)	*$45 per hour (requires written request to staff)
Large format printing (larger than 11"x17" is not offered as a service.			
* 1-hour minimum			

Municipal Complex Rental Fees

	2024-2025	Draft 2025-2026
Resident		
Full Hall	$2,500.00	$2,500.00
North Half Hall	$650.00	$650.00
Economic Development Rate*	$800.00	$800.00
Non Resident		
Full Hall	$3,000.00	$3,000.00
North Half Hall	$650.00	$650.00
Civic Group		
Inside City	$500.00	$500.00
Outside City	$1,500.00	$1,500.00
Cleaning		
Full Hall	$200.00	$200.00
North Half Hall	$150.00	$150.00
Excess Hours – Past 11pm	$125.00/ Hr	$125.00/ Hr
Security	$40/Hr	$40/Hr
Refundable Deposit	$500.00	$500.00
Set Up Day Access Fee	$650.00	$650.00

Training Rooms

Resident	2024-2025	Draft 2025-2026
A or B First Three (3) Hours	$25.00	$25.00
A and B First Three (3) Hours	$50.00	$50.00
Each Additional Hour for A or B	$25.00	$25.00
Each Additional Hour for A and B	$50.00	$50.00
Non Resident		
A or B First Three (3) Hours	$50.00	$50.00
A and B First Three (3) Hours	$100.00	$100.00
Each Additional Hour for A or B	$50.00	$50.00
Each Additional Hour for A and B	$100.00	$100.00

*Economic Development Rate on Rentals: Rentals that support Economic Development or travel/tourism may reserve space at the Municipal Complex at a discounted rate. Determination of qualifying events will be reviewed by City Manager. All other fees shall still be paid by qualifying events (Deposit, Security, Set Up).

	2024-2025	Draft 2025-2026
***Old Gym**		
Resident	$50.00/hr	$50.00/hr
Non-Resident	$150.00/hr	$150.00/hr
Tournament – No Lights		
Resident	$100.00/day	$100.00/day
Non-Resident	$200.00/day	$200.00/day
Ball field		
Resident	$5.00/hr	$5.00/hr
Non-Resident	$15.00/hr	$15.00/hr
Ball field – Lights		
Resident	$10.00/hr	$10.00/hr
Non-Resident	$20.00/hr	$20.00/hr
Picnic Shelter – Small		
Resident	$25.00/3 hrs	$25.00/3 hrs
Non-Resident	$50.00/3 hrs	$50.00/3 hrs
Picnic Shelter - Large		
Resident	$50.00/4 hrs	$50.00/4 hrs
Non-Resident	$100.00/4hrs	$100.00/4hrs
Fitness Center per month		
Resident	$10/ month	$10/ month
Non-Resident	$30.00/ month	$30.00/ month
Group Campsites at Mt. Island Park at Mt. Holly		
Resident	$25.00/day	$25.00/day
Non-Resident	$50.00/day	$50.00/day
Adult Athletics		
Softball & Basketball - Per Team		
Resident	$500.00	$500.00
Non-Resident	$550.00	$550.00
Softball & Basketball – Individual		
Resident	$55.00	$55.00
Non-Resident	$60.00	$60.00
Volleyball - Per Team		
Resident	$175.00	$175.00
Non-Resident	$225.00	$225.00
Volleyball - Individual		
Resident	$20.00	$20.00
Non-Resident	$25.00	$25.00
Soccer, Dodgeball & Kickball – Per Team		
Resident	$300.00	$300.00
Non-Resident	$350.00	$350.00
Soccer, Dodgeball & Kickball – Individual		
Resident	$35.00	$35.00
Non-Resident	$40.00	$40.00
Flag Football – Per Team		
Resident	$350.00	$350.00
Non-Resident	$400.00	$400.00
* Note – Old Gym cannot be rented for parties		

	2024-2025	Draft 2025-2026
Adult Athletics (con’t)		
3-3 Adult Basketball League		
Resident	$125.00/team	$125.00/team
Non-Resident	$175.00/team	$175.00/team
Youth Athletics		
Resident	$50.00	$50.00
Non-Resident	$75.00	$75.00
Late Registration Fee		$25.00
Instructor Fee	$25/hr	$25/hr
Co-sponsored class		

For any City employee (full and part time) that is an outside of the City limits resident, then they are eligible to pay the resident rate for any programs while employed with the City of Mount Holly

Use of Facility (3 hours minimum)	Current	Use of Facility - Tuckseege and Old Gym (use own equipment)	1-10 hrs	11+ hrs
Resident - For parties	$50.00/hr	Resident - For practices	$20.00/hr	$15/hr
Non-Resident-For parties	$150.00/hr	Non-Resident-For practices	$60/hr	$45/hr
Use of Storage	Not Allowed	Use of Storage	Not Allowed	Not Allowed
Use of PA System	Not Allowed	Use of PA System	Not Allowed	Not Allowed
Electrical Hookup	No Charge	Electrical Hookup	Not Allowed	Not Allowed
Kitchen	No Charge	Kitchen	Not Allowed	Not Allowed
Chairs & Tables	No Charge	Chairs & Tables	Not Allowed	Not Allowed

Recreation Department may also require a police officer for certain events.
$50.00 non-refundable clean up fee.
$100.00 refundable damage fee.

	2024-2025	Draft 2025-2026
Special Event Service Fee		
Special Event Application Fee	$200.00	$200.00
Fee for Service (4 Hour Event)	$2,400.00	$2,400.00
Fee for Service- Alcohol (4 Hour Event)	$2,800.00	$2,800.00
Fee for Service (8 Hour Event)	$3,700.00	$3,700.00
Fee for Service- Alcohol (8 Hour Event)	$4,300.00	$4,300.00
Vendor Fees		
Arts & Crafts, Business selling items	$25.00	$25.00
Business not selling anything	$17.50	$50.00
Non-Profit food vendor	$45.00/10 ft.	$45.00
Commercial food vendor	$50.00/10 ft.	$50.00
Rides & entertainment	$75.00/space	$75.00/space
Parade Entry	0	$20.00
Civic or Church not selling anything	No Charge	1 Free Spot $25.00 (Refundable Deposit Required)

Water & Sewer	2024-2025	Draft 2025-2026
Water (per 1,000 gallons)		
Base Fee		
Water Availability Fee (includes first 2,000 gallons) per month		
Inside City		
Residential	$13.44	$15.06
Industrial	$158.30	$177.72
Institutional	$16.43	18.41
Business	$16.43	18.41
Outside City		
Residential	$24.30	$27.23
Industrial	$314.01	$351.70
Institutional	$30.28	$33.92
Business	$30.28	$33.92
Town of Stanley	$221.34	$221.34
Irrigation		
Institutional	$16.43	$18.41
Business	$16.43	$18.41
Residential	$13.44	$15.06
Off	$13.44	$15.06
Raw Water	$158.30	$158.30
Waterline Replacement Fee		
Inside City		
Residential	$3.35	$3.35
Industrial	$111.00	$111.00
Institutional	$5.55	$5.55
Business	$5.55	$5.55
Outside City		
Residential	$6.70	$6.70
Industrial	$222.00	$222.00
Institutional	$11.10	$11.10
Business	$11.10	$11.10
Volumetric Rates		
Residential		
Base Tier (Under 2,000 gallons per month)		
1st Tier (2,001 – 6,000 gallons per month)	$5.06	$5.67
2nd Tier (6,001 – 10,000 gallons per month)	$5.42	$6.08
3rd Tier (10,000 plus gallons per month)	$5.79	$6.49
Non-Residential		
Basic Tier (Under 2,000 gallons per month)	$6.33	$7.09
1st Tier (2,001 – 6,000 gallons per month)	$6.33	$7.09
2nd Tier (6,001 – 10,000 gallons per month)	$7.01	$7.86
3rd Tier (10,000 – 9,999,999 gallons per month)	$7.69	$8.62
4th Tier (10,000,000 plus gallons per month)	$8.61	$9.65
Town of Stanley	$3.27	$3.39
Raw Water	$0.53	$0.59

	2024-2025	Draft 2025-2026
Water Tap Fees		
¾" Inside city	$1,200.00	$1,200.00
¾" Outside city	$2,100.00	$2,100.00
1" Inside city	$1,400.00	$1,400.00
1" Outside city	$2,500.00	$2,500.00
2" Inside city	$3,300.00	$3,300.00
2" Outside city	$6,300.00	$6,300.00
Wet Tap on existing customer service line	$1,200.00	$1,200.00
Sewer (per 1,000 gallon)		
Sewer Availability Fee (includes first 2,000 gallons)per month		
Inside City		
Residential	$17.52	$18.57
Industrial	$297.22	$315.05
Institutional	$23.29	$24.69
Business	$23.29	$24.69
Outside City		
Residential	$33.07	$35.05
Industrial	$592.47	$628.02
Institutional	$44.60	$47.28
Business	$44.60	$47.28
A&E	$470.23	$470.23
Sewerline Replacement Fee		
Inside City		
Residential	$6.30	$6.30
Industrial	$209.35	$209.35
Institutional	$10.50	$10.50
Business	$10.50	$10.50
Outside City		
Residential	$12.60	$12.60
Industrial	$418.70	$418.70
Institutional	$21.00	$21.00
Business	$21.00	$21.00
Volumetric Rates		
Residential		
Basic Tier (Under 2,000 gallons per month)		
1st Tier (2,001 – 6,000 gallons per month)	$7.52	$7.97
2nd Tier (6,001 – 10,000 gallons per month)	$8.35	$8.85
3rd Tier (10,000 plus gallons per month)	$8.69	$9.21
Non-Residential		
Basic Tier (Under 2,000 gallons per month)	$9.38	$9.94
1st Tier (2,001 – 6,000 gallons per month)	$9.38	$9.94
2nd Tier (6,001 – 10,000 gallons per month)	$10.49	$11.12
3rd Tier (10,000 –9,999,999 gallons per month)	$11.61	$12.31
4th Tier (10,000,000 plus gallons per month)	$7.35	$7.79
A&E	$5.00	$5.18
Outside customers are double the inside rate		

	2024-2025	Draft 2025-2026
Sewer Tap Fees		
4” Inside city	$850.00	$1,200.00
4” Outside city	$1,700.00	$1,700.00
Over 4” Inside city	Negotiable	
Over 4” Outside city	Negotiable	
Cleanout	$150.00	$200.00
Minimum Bill	**2,000 gallons**	
Pretreatment (See worksheet)	Actual Analytical Cost	
Radio Read Meter		
¾”	$350.00	$350.00
1”	$425.00	$425.00
2”	$925.00	$1,175.00
Other Fees		
Service Deposit for owners & renters		
Residential		
Inside City	65	$65.00
Outside City	80	$80.00
Commercial		
Inside City	$100.00	$100.00
Outside City	$115.00	$115.00
Late Fee (after 16th)	$15.00	$15.00
Delinquent Penalty (after 26th)	$30.00	$30.00
Lock Fee	$15.00	$15.00
Broken Lock Replacement	$30.00	$30.00
Returned Check Fee	$35.00	$35.00
Meter Testing Fee	$100.00	$100.00
Irrigation cut off	$75.00	$75.00
Irrigation reconnection	$75.00	$75.00
Stormwater	$3.50/ERU (5000 SF = 1 ERU)	$3.50/ERU (5000 SF = 1 ERU)

Meter Size	Water	Wastewater	Total
5/8" or 3/4"	$700	$1,470	$2,170
1”	$1,750	$3,680	$5,430
2”	$5,600	$11,760	$17,360
3”	$12,250	$25,730	$37,980
4”	$22,050	$46,310	$68,360
6”	$45,500	$95,550	$141,050
8”	$98,000	$205,800	$303,800
10”	$147,000	$308,700	$455,700
12”	$185,500	$389,550	$575,050

	2024-2025	Draft 2025-2026
Residential (up to 2 cans)	$7.10	$7.10
Additional Can		
Purchase		
Service	$7.10	$7.10
Commercial Rollout (up to 5 cans)	$11.91	$11.91
Additional Can		
Purchase	No Cost	No Cost
Service	$11.50	$11.50
Commercial Dumpsters(Downtown)*		
Bulk Container	Contracted	Contracted
Bulk Item		
Depend on Weight and or Size	$15.00	$15.00
Appliances**	$25/ item	$25/ item
Tires		
Must be off rim	$5/ tire	$5/ tire
Mattress	$20.00	$20.00
Box Spring	$5.00	$5.00
Mattress and Box Spring	$25.00	$25.00

*Fee determined by the cost by provider to collect 1 time per week divided by the number of buildings/customers that a dumpster serves.

Example(not actual):
Municipal Lane Dumpster provides service to 10 non-residential buildings/customers for a cost of $750/month. Each building/customer pays 1/10 of total cost.
If customers require more collection than 1 per week, then the added costs will be equally divided by all buildings/customers.
** City does not pick up computer monitors and televisions.

	2024-2025	Draft 2025-2026
Fire Plan Review		
Construction Cost < $50,000	$100.00	$155.00
Construction Cost $50,001 to $100,000	$150.00	$185.00
Construction Cost $100,001 to $500,000	$175.00	$210.00
Construction Cost $500,001 to $1,000,000	$200.00	$250.00
Construction Cost $1,000,001 to $5,000,000		$265.00
Construction Cost $5,000,001 to $10,000,000	$225.00	$560.00
Construction Cost > $10,000,000	$100.00	$1,180.00
Fire Sprinkler Shop Drawings	$100.00	$225.00
Performance Test		
Fire Pumps	$130.00	$215.00
Sprinklers	$130.00	$215.00
Fire Alarm (New Construction)	$150.00	$215.00
Fire Alarm (up-fit)	$125.00	$215.00
Standpipe Systems	$150.00	$215.00
Special Hazards, Suppression Systems	$150.00	$150.00
Foam Systems FM200, Clean Agents, Food Truck		$150.00
Miscellaneous Fees		
Construction Permit	$50.00	$200.00
Hazardous Material Permit	$150.00	$250.00
Storage Hanlding & Sale Explosives/Fireworks	$100.00	$300.00
Spraying or Dipping of Flammable Finishes	$75.00	$300.00
Re-Inspection Fee performance Testing	$100.00	$200.00
Blasting Permit	$100.00	$250.00
Fireworks Permit	$75.00	$250.00
Hydrant Flow Test	$75.00	$150.00
Tank Removal Permit	$75.00	$250.00
NC Mandatory Permits (Chapter 1)	$75.00	$150.00
Temporaty Membrane Structures Tents	$75.00	$200.00
ABC Inspection	$100.00	$200.00
Foster Home Inspection	$25.00	$25.00
Order to Remedy Violations	$100.00 - 300 (based on ty	$100.00 - 300 (based on type)

Proposed Position Allotment FY 25-26

ADMINISTRATION : (22 Full, 2 Part, 2 PT Temp)	
Position	Positions Authorized FY 25-26
City Manager	1
Assistant City Manager	1
HR Director	1
City Clerk	1
Finance Director	1
Deputy Finance Director	1
General Ledger Accountant	1
IT Director	1
Fiscal Analyst	1
Administrative Asst - Finance	1
Customer Service Specialist	1
Deputy City Clerk	1
Deputy Public Works Director of Buildings and Maintenance	1
Maintenance Technician	2
Landscape Technician	1
Systems Administrator I	1
Deputy HR Director	1
Electrician	1
Janitor	1
Revenue Collector (Part Time)	2
Intern (Part Time Temp)	2
Economic Development Director	1
Billing Analyst	1

POLICE (49 Full, 9 Part, 2 Auxiliary)	
Position	Positions Authorized FY 25-26
Police Chief	1
Deputy Police Chief	1
Captain	2
Sergeant (includes 1 SRO)	7
Corporal (includes 1 SRO)	5
Patrol Officer (includes SRO and Detective)	19
Telecommunicator	8
Records Management Supervisor	1
PD Executive Assistant	1
CSI, Evidence and Accreditation Manager	1
PT Detective/Officer	4
Auxiliary Officer (No Benefits)	2
Crossing Guards - PT (No benefits)	5
Lieutenant	3

GARAGE (4 Full)	
Position	
Mechanic	1
Mechanic Assistant	2
Admistrative Support Specialist	1

PLANNING: (6 Full)	
Position	
Planning & Development Director	1
Deputy Planning Director	1
Planner I - CEPS	1
GIS Technician II	1
Planner II	1
Planning Technician	1

FIRE (41 Full, 10 Part)	
Position	
Fire Chief	1
Deputy Fire Chief	1
Captain	10
Fire Marshal	1
Firefighter	24
Firefighter PT	10
Administrative Assistant	1
Fire Division Chief	3

STREETS/SOLID WASTE (19 Full)	
Position	
Deputy Public Works Director of Streets & Solid Waste	1
Streets and Solid Waste Division Manager	1
Crew Leader	2
Solid Waste Worker I	10
Solid Waste Worker II	5

PARKS & RECREATION (9 Full, 13 Part)	
Position	
Recreation Superintendent	1
Athletic Coordinator	1
Recreation Maintenance Supervisor	1
Maintenance Technician	2
Recreation Specialist	2
Parks and Recreation Director	1
PT - Recreation Aide and Maintenance Technician (no benefits)	13
Special Events Coordinator	1

UTILITIES ADMINISTRATION (8 Full)	
Position	
Deputy Public Works Director of Utilities	1
Site Inspector	1
Stormwater Compliance Specialist II	1
Manager of Capital Projects and Inspections	1
Engineer	1
Senior Administrative Support Specialist	1
Meter Analyst	1
Public Works Director	1

WATER (7 Full)	
Position	
ORC	1
Plant Operator	6

WASTEWATER (3 Full)	
Position	
ORC	1
Plant Operator	2

FIELD SERVICES (14 Full)	
Position	
Field Division Operations Manager	1
Crew Leader	1
Utility Crew (Utility Tech I or II)	7
Meter Reader	1
Location Tech	1
Pump Specialist	1
Utility Superintendent	1
Pump Technician	1

Total Full Time Positions Allotted	**182**
Total Part Time Positions Allotted	**36**
Total Auxiliary Officer Positions Allotted	**2**
	220

Regular Meeting
Agenda Action Form

Meeting Date	From
June 23, 2025	Brandon Livingston, Planner II Planning

CONSENT AGENDA Item # 3

Call for a Public Hearing to Consider a Text Amendment to Update Chapter 153.049 of the Subdivision Ordinance to Provide Standards for Access & Fire Safety for Construction Sites. Case # TA-25-6.

Will this require a public hearing?

No

Background/Purpose of Request

This proposed text amendment has been submitted by staff to add a new Section 153.049.N to the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. The amendment aims to establish minimum requirements for fire access and fire protection at new construction sites, aligning with the standards outlined in Chapter 14 of the North Carolina Fire Code.

These requirements are particularly relevant for “shell building” projects and other developments that involve standpipe systems and/or private fire hydrants. The intent is to enhance public safety by ensuring adequate emergency access and improving fire protection measures during and after construction.

If this call is approved, the Planning Commission will consider the proposal at a meeting on **July 7, 2025**, and the City Council will hold a public hearing on **July 14, 2025**.

Fiscal Impact

Will Item affect current budget?	No.
Reviewed by Finance Director?	No.
Preaudit Certification Required?	No.
Capital Project Ordinance Required?	No.
Budget Transfer Required?	No.
Total City Dollars:	NA
Budget Code:	NA
Reviewed by City Attorney?	No.

Manager/Staff Recommendation

Staff supports that a favorable recommendation regarding this call be forwarded to the City Council.

Attachments

1. Fire Access Roads Text Amendment Application
2. Section 153.049 Redlines

APPLICATION FOR TEXT AMENDMENT

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY, NORTH CAROLINA

Date Filed: **06-17-2025.** Application Number: **TA-25-6**

I, the undersigned, do hereby respectfully make a formal application for your review of my request concerning the text amendment described below:

1. The amendment is found in the City of Mount Holly Zoning Ordinance relating to: **Amend the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance Sections 153.049 to establish minimum requirements for fire access and fire protection at new construction sites.**
2. The following statement best describes what you would like the text amendment to reflect: **This proposed text amendment has been submitted by staff and would establish minimum requirements for fire access and fire protection at new construction sites, with a focus on shell buildings and developments that include standpipe systems or private fire hydrants. The amendment aligns with Chapter 14 of the North Carolina Fire Code to ensure adequate emergency access and improve fire safety during construction.**
3. Name: **Faith Moore, Planning Intern.**
   Address: **400 E Central Avenue Mount Holly, NC 28120.**

704-951-3017	*Faith Moore*
Phone Number	Signature of Applicant

INSTRUCTIONS: Applications must be TYPED or LEGIBLE and filed with the City of Mount Holly Planning and Zoning Department, together with the application fee in the amount of **~~$250.00~~ (See Fee Schedule)** at least 30 days prior to the Planning Commission meeting for initial consideration.

Section $153.049

(N) Requirements for Access and Fire Protection at Construction Sites

1. General Standards
    a. Fire Access Roads must be installed and maintained during construction. Developers must ensure that on-street parking of workers and placement of dumpsters do not reduce the roadway width below 20 feet or obstruct traffic flow.
    b. Combustible waste and construction debris shall be kept to a minimum and shall not be located as to obstruct any access road or fire appliance.
    c. Any parking deck may NOT be used unless all guidelines established here-in are followed, AND the required fire separation between the deck and attached structure is in place with all openings protected with fire doors or other opening protections
2. Fire Department Access Roads
    a. Once vertical construction begins, there shall be a fire access road that enables the fire department to access the site, and this road shall be capable of reaching with-in 100 feet of temporary or permanent sprinkler or standpipe connections. In addition, this road shall:
        i. Be of an all-weather driving surface capable of handling the imposed load of fire apparatus (up to 80,000 pounds).
        ii. Be no less than 20-feet wide and have a vertical clearance of no less than 14 feet.
        iii. Have a minimum turning radius of 42 feet outside and 30 feet inside.
        iv. Have a slope no greater than 10%. Roads with a dead-end that exceeds 150 feet shall be provided with an approved turnaround such as a hammerhead or other approved method.
        v. Any gate or other security device shall either have a Knox padlock, or be arranged such that we can gain entry quickly with forcible entry tools (i.e. bolt cutters, etc.).
        vi. Be maintained throughout the project until permanent fire access roads are available.
3. Signage
    a. The access road point of entry shall be posted with a sign that meets the following criteria: The sign shall be of a durable material that can withstand inclement weather conditions. This sign shall read “Fire Department Access” and shall also include the address of the project.
    b. The sign shall have a minimum dimension of 3’ x 3’ and shall have a red background with white lettering. Lettering and numbering shall be of a reflective material.

c. Lettering and numbering for signs shall be a minimum of 6 inches in height, except in cases where space is an issue, the address numbers and lettering may be reduced to 4 inches in height.

d. Sign shall be posted so that the bottom of the sign is no less than 6 feet above grade.

4. Fire Protection:

a. Once vertical construction begins or once combustible materials are brought onto the site, per the North Carolina Fire Code - Chapter 14, an approved water supply for fire protection shall: Be installed and approved by MHFD, and maintained operable throughout the construction process. If this water supply is a temporary water tank or other cistern, a quantity sufficient to meet the needed fire flow for a 30-minute period shall be provided.

i. If the water supply is a private or public hydrant, they shall remain fully accessible at all times and shall never be blocked by construction vehicles or debris.

ii. The temporary access road shall be such that no hydrant or temporary water supply is more than 100 feet from the access road.

b. For buildings that incorporate a fire standpipe system:

i. There shall be at least one standpipe provided for use during construction.

ii. The standpipe shall be installed once construction progresses more than 40 feet above the lowest level of fire department access.

iii. Standpipes shall be provided with fire hose connections at accessible locations either adjacent to usable stairs, or in their permanent locations in stairways if provided.

iv. As construction continues, standpipes shall progress to within one floor of the highest floor of construction having secured decking or flooring.

c. Fire extinguishers shall be:

i. Installed and maintained on all floor levels at each stairway.

ii. Shall be checked daily by the superintendent of their designee.

iii. Additional extinguishers shall be required and located nearby those areas during special operations such as welding and cutting, handling of flammable liquids, etc.

Regular Meeting
Agenda Action Form

Meeting Date	From
June 23, 2025	Nathaniel Jones, Planning Technician Planning

CONSENT AGENDA Item # 4

Call for a Public Hearing to Update Section 7.1 Note 28 of the City's Zoning Ordinance to Update the standards for Solar Energy Systems. Case # TA-25-5.

Will this require a public hearing?

No

Background/Purpose of Request

This proposed amendment to Section 7.1, Note 28 of the City Zoning Ordinance would revise the maximum height permitted for ground-mounted solar panels in commercial zoning districts, while also clarifying height standards within residential zones. The amendment was initiated by Atrium Health to facilitate the installation of permanent solar panels in their parking lot through solar car canopies. Additionally, this update aims to provide clearer guidance for commercial properties that require more than 12 feet of clearance for ground-mounted solar infrastructure. Planning staff collaborated with Atrium Health and Charlotte Engineers to develop language that supports both Atrium's solar initiative and the City's broader planning objectives. The amendment also includes provisions to restrict the placement of taller units to appropriate locations. Planning Technician Nathaniel Jones, in coordination with other Planning staff, helped draft the language included in this update. Staff recommends approval of this call for a public hearing. If approved by Council, the Planning Commission will consider the amendment at its July 7th meeting, followed by City Council review on July 14th.

Fiscal Impact

Will Item affect current budget?	No.
Reviewed by Finance Director?	No.
Preaudit Certification Required?	No.
Capital Project Ordinance Required?	No.
Budget Transfer Required?	No.
Total City Dollars:	N/A
Budget Code:	N/A
Reviewed by City Attorney?	No.

Manager/Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the call be approved, and the public hearing be set for July 14th.

Attachments

1. TA-25-5 Application
2. TA-25-5 Redlines Note 28 - Solar Energy Systems

APPLICATION FOR TEXT AMENDMENT
CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY, NORTH CAROLINA

Date Filed: May 28th, 2025. Application Number: TA-25-5.

I, the undersigned, do hereby respectfully make a formal application for your review of my request concerning the text amendment described below:

1. The amendment is found in the City of Mount Holly Zoning Ordinance relating to:

   Note 28, Section C of Ch.12, § 12.6,.

2. The following statement best describes what you would like the text amendment to reflect:

   See Attached Text Amendment.

3. Name: Bennett Thompson.

   Address: 1043 E Morehead St, suite 105, Charlottte, NC 28203.

704-491-3436	bennett.thompson@advocatehealth.org	Bennett Thompson	5/28/2025
Phone Number	**Email**	**Signature of Applicant**	

INSTRUCTIONS: Applications must be TYPED or LEGIBLE and filed with the City of Mount Holly Planning & Development Department, together with the application fee in the amount of ***$250.00-plus $20.00 per page for each page in the City's Zoning Ordinance that requires updating as a result of the text amendment*** at least 30 days prior to the Planning Commission meeting for initial consideration.

Note 28, Solar Energy Systems.

(A) *Intent.*

(1) To provide for the regulation of the construction and operation of solar energy facilities in the City of Mount Holly, subject to reasonable conditions that will protect the environment, public health, safety and welfare. Zoning permits are required for all energy systems. Additionally, a special use permit is required for some large energy systems.

(2) All applications for solar energy systems must include a full site plan showing the following:

(a) Shape and dimensions of the parcel;

(b) Location of the lot with respect to adjacent rights-of-way;

(c) Shape, dimensions and location of all buildings or solar panels or arrays, both proposed and existing;

(d) Square footage of any built upon area;

(e) Elevation drawing of the solar energy system including, dimensions of each individual system, type and color of all materials; and

(f) Full buffer plan illustrating compliance with this ordinance.

(B) *Definitions.* The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this chapter, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning.

ACCESSORY SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM. Any solar collector or other solar energy device, or any structural design feature, mounted on a building or on the ground, and whose primary purpose is to provide for the collection, storage and distribution of solar energy for space heating or cooling, for water heating or for electricity.

APPLICANT. The person or entity filing an application under this ordinance.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT. A detailed examination of the applicant's proposal and its local environmental context with an emphasis on avoiding, minimizing and mitigating adverse impacts.

FACILITY OPERATOR. The entity responsible for the day-to-day operation and maintenance of the energy facility.

FACILITY OWNER. The entity or entities having controlling or majority equity interest in the energy facility, including their respective successors and assigns.

PARTICIPATING LANDOWNER. A landowner under lease or other property agreements with the facility owner or operator pertaining to the energy facility.

SOLAR ENERGY. Radiant energy (direct, diffuse and reflected) received from the sun.

SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM, LARGE. A solar collection system that generates electricity from sunlight to be sold-for-profit to a wholesale electricity market through a regional transmission organization and an inter-connection with the local utility power grid and/or for direct distribution to a number of properties and consumers.
Any solar energy system not identified as a small solar energy system shall be considered a ***LARGE SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM***.

SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM, ROOF-MOUNTED. A solar collection system that is installed upon or is part of the roof of a building or structure located on the subject property. Systems integrated as awnings or attached to the roofs of porches, sheds, carports and covered parking structures also fall under this distinction.

SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM, SMALL. An accessory solar collection system that generates energy from sunlight for direct consumption on the subject property and/or for inter-connection to the electric utility power grid to offset energy use on the subject property, in accordance with current state net-metering laws.

SPECIAL USE PERMIT. Requirements for special use permits may be found in Ch. 12, § 12.6, of the Zoning Ordinance.

(C) *Small solar energy systems.* The following shall constitute the criteria and requirements associated with a small solar energy system.

(1) *Permitted.* Small solar energy systems shall be permitted as an accessory use by right in all zoning districts, subject to the requirements set forth in this ordinance, except for L-I and H-I. Solar energy systems include ground-, pole- and roof-mounted systems.

(2) *Energy.* The energy generated by the small solar energy system shall be used primarily for direct consumption on the subject property and/or for inter-connection to the electric utility power grid to off-set energy use on the subject property, in accordance with current state net-metering laws.

(3) *Zoning permit.* The construction of the small solar energy system shall be in accordance with an approved zoning permit from the City of Mount Holly and building permit from Gaston County.

(4) *Number of allowed small solar energy systems.*

(a) Front yard and front facade placement are prohibited in all residential zoning districts. Properties that are located in commercial zoning districts greater than three acres may be in the front yard.

(b) Side yard and rear yard placement allows a maximum of four ground-mounted small solar energy systems per side or rear yard in residential zoning district.

(c) Front, side and rear roof slope placement shall be determined by a licensed engineer certifying that the structural integrity of the structure can support the required number of solar panels needed. Solar panels must not compromise the structural integrity of the structure and may be placed in any configuration on a front, side or rear roof slope.

(d) Solar panels may be placed in any configuration on the front roof slope of a structure if glare is mitigated. A licensed engineer must provide a letter stating that the angle of any front roof slope placement of a solar panel will not produce a glare directed towards the street or adjoining properties.

1. *Setback.* Ground- or pole-mounted solar energy systems shall be placed so that no individual component of the solar system may extend into the side or rear setback. Solar energy systems may be placed no closer than ten feet from the rear lot line (except on double frontage lots as defined in § 3.13 of this ordinance) and ten feet from side lot lines if less than 12 feet above ground when orientated at maximum tilt. Ground- or pole-mounted solar energy systems shall not be allowed in the front yards of residential properties. If more than 12 feet above ground when operating at maximum tilt the systems shall not be placed within 100 feet of the side, rear, and front property lines, and the lot must be greater than three acres in size.

2. *Ground-mounted small solar energy systems.*

a. The total height of the solar energy system, including any mounts shall not exceed 12 feet above the ground when orientated at maximum tilt in residential zoning districts. The total height of the small solar energy system shall not exceed 20 feet in height when operating at maximum tilt in commercial zoning districts. If the solar energy system is intended to provide power for outdoor lighting, the system shall not extend higher than the permitted height of the structure to which it is attached and/or inter-connected to.

b. The solar energy system shall be mounted onto a pole, rack or suitable foundation, in accordance with manufacturer specifications, in order to ensure the safe operation and stability of the system. The mounting structure (fixed or tracking capable) shall be comprised of materials approved by the manufacturer, which are able to fully support the system components and withstand adverse weather conditions.

c. Multiple mounting structures shall be spaced apart at the distance recommended by the manufacturer to ensure safety and maximum efficiency.

d. Any glare generated by the system must be mitigated or directed away from an adjoining property or adjacent road when it creates a nuisance or safety hazard.

e. It shall be demonstrated that the small solar energy system shall not unreasonably interfere with the view of, or from, sites of significant public interest such as a public park, a state designated scenic road or historic resources.

f. Any electrical wiring used in the system shall be underground (trenched) except where wiring is brought together for inter-connection to system components and/or the local utility power grid.

g. No ground-mounted small solar energy systems shall be affixed to a block wall or fence.

3. *Roof-mounted small solar energy systems.*

a. Roof-mounted small solar energy systems shall include integrated solar shingles, tiles or panels as the surface layer of the roof structure with no additional apparent change in relief or projection (the preferred installation), or separate flush- or frame-mounted solar panels attached to the roof surface.

b. Separate flush- or frame-mounted small solar energy systems installed on the roof of a building or structure shall not:

i. Project vertically above the peak of the sloped roof to which it is attached; or

ii. Project vertically more than five feet above a flat roof installation.

c. The combined height of a roof-mounted system and the principal structure to which it is attached may not exceed the maximum height for the relative zone, in which it is located, as described in Ch. 5 of this ordinance.

d. It shall be demonstrated that the placement of the system shall not adversely affect safe access to the roof, pathways to specific areas of the roof and safe egress from the roof.

e. Any glare generated by the system must be mitigated or directed away from any adjoining property or adjacent road when it creates a nuisance or safety hazard.

4. *Appearance.*

a. The small solar energy system shall remain painted or finished the color or finish that was originally applied by the manufacturer.

b. All signs, other than the manufacture's identification, installer's identification, appropriate warning signs or owner identification on a small solar energy system shall be prohibited. Not more than one manufacturer label bonded to or painted upon the solar energy system shall be permitted.

(e) No element of the solar system shall reflect sunlight or glare onto a neighboring property or right-of-way. Failure to mitigate glare can result in an enforceable zoning violation.

(5) *Code compliance.*

(a) A small solar energy system shall comply with all applicable Construction and Electrical Codes.

(b) All obsolete or unused systems shall be removed within six months of cessation of operations without cost to the city. Reusable components are to be recycled whenever possible.

(6) *Violations.* Subsequent to the effective date of this ordinance, it is unlawful for any person to construct, install or operate a small solar energy system that is not in compliance with this ordinance or with any condition contained in a zoning permit issued pursuant to this ordinance.

(D) *Large solar energy systems.* The following shall constitute the criteria and requirements associated with a large solar energy system.

(1) *Permitted.* Large solar energy systems shall be a use permitted in the L-I and H-I Zoning Districts with a special use permit. Large solar energy systems are subject to a review and to the requirements set forth in this ordinance. If a large solar energy system does not sell for profit to a wholesale electricity market through a regional transmission organization, then a special use permit shall not be required but the applicant must meet all provisions of this ordinance.

(2) *Energy.* The electricity generated by the large solar energy system shall be sold for profit to a wholesale electricity market through a regional transmission organization and an inter-connection with the local utility power grid and/or for direct distribution to a number of properties and consumers. A business may choose to operate a large solar energy system and not sell the energy for profit to a wholesale electricity market through a regional transmission organization so long as the business primarily utilizes such electricity generated for the business activities on their property and are located in the L-I or H-I Zoning Districts.

(3) *Zoning permit.* The construction of the large solar energy system shall be in accordance with an approved zoning permit from the City of Mount Holly and building permit from Gaston County. If the large solar energy system is to be inter-connected to the local utility power grid, a copy of the conditional approval from the local utility must be provided prior to or at the time of application for the required zoning permit and building permit.

(4) *Setback.* Ground-mounted large solar energy systems shall be setback a minimum of 50 feet from any property line. If the large solar energy system abuts a residential zoning district the solar energy system shall be setback a minimum of 100 feet from any property line.

(5) *Ground-mounted large solar systems.*

(a) The total height of the solar energy system, including any mounts, shall not exceed 20 feet above the ground when oriented at maximum tilt.

(b) Shall be mounted onto a pole, rack or suitable foundation, in accordance with manufacturer specifications, in order to ensure the safe operation and stability of the system. The mounting structure (fixed or tracking capable) shall be comprised of materials approved by the manufacturer, which are able to fully support the system components and withstand adverse weather conditions.

(c) Multiple mounting structures shall be spaced apart at the distance recommended by the manufacturer to ensure safety and maximum efficiency.

(d) A security fence equipped with a gate and a locking mechanism must be installed at a height of eight feet along all exterior sides of the solar farm.

(e) A landscape buffer/screen along all exterior sides of the security fence must consist of (the landscape buffer may be located in the setback areas):

1. On-site mature vegetation exists at a minimum height of ten feet and depth of 50 feet between the security fence and adjacent property including rights-of-way and/or on-site mature vegetation exists at a minimum height of ten feet and depth of 100 feet between the security fence and adjacent property including rights-of-way when abutting a residential zoning district;

2. A single row of evergreens in combination with mature vegetation, installed at a height of five feet achieving opaqueness and a minimum height of ten feet in five years;

3. A double row of off-set evergreens absent mature vegetation, installed at a height of five feet achieving opaqueness and a minimum height of ten feet in five years; or

4. A berm combined with evergreen vegetation installed at a height of five feet achieving opaqueness and a minimum height of ten feet in five years.

a. Any glare generated by the system must be mitigated or directed away from an adjoining property or adjacent road when it creates a nuisance or safety hazard.

b. It shall be demonstrated that the large solar energy system shall not unreasonable interfere with the view of, or from, sites of significant public interest such as a public park, a state designated scenic road or historic resources.

c. Any electrical wiring used in the system shall be underground (trenched) except where wiring is brought together for inter-connection to system components and/or the local utility power grid.

d. No ground-mounted large solar energy systems shall be affixed to a block wall or fence.

(6) *Roof-mounted large solar energy systems.*

(a) Roof-mounted large solar energy systems shall include integrated solar shingles, tiles or panels as the surface layer of the roof structure with no additional apparent change in relief or projection (the preferred installation), or separate flush- or frame-mounted solar panels attached to the roof surface.

(b) Separate flush- or frame-mounted large solar energy systems installed on the roof of a building or structure shall not:

1. Project vertically above the peak of the sloped roof to which it is attached; or

2. Project vertically more than five feet above a flat roof installation.

(c) The combined height of a roof-mounted system and the principal structure to which it is attached may not exceed the maximum height for the relative zone, in which it is located, as described in Ch. 5 of this ordinance.

(d) It shall be demonstrated that the placement of the system shall not adversely affect safe access to the roof, pathways to specific areas of the roof and safe egress from the roof.

(e) Any glare generated by the system must be mitigated or directed away from an adjoining property or adjacent road when it creates a nuisance or safety hazard.

(7) *Appearance.*

(a) The large solar energy system shall remain painted or finished the color or finish that was originally applied by the manufacturer.

(b) All signs, other than the manufacturer's identification, installer's identification, appropriate warning signs or owner identification on a large solar energy system shall be prohibited. Not more than one manufacturer label bonded to or painted upon the solar energy system shall be permitted. An appropriate warning sign concerning voltage must be placed at the main gate to include the name of the solar energy system operator and a local phone number for the solar energy system operator in case of an emergency.

(8) *Code compliance.* The applicant shall be required to provide an engineer as-built drawing which shall certify compliance with all safety requirements required under the code section and the manufacturer's specifications. A large solar energy system shall comply with all applicable Construction and Electrical Codes.

(9) *Removal of solar farm equipment and site restoration.*

(a) The application must include decommissioning plans that describe the anticipated life of the solar energy system, the estimated decommissioning costs in current dollars, the method of ensuring that funds will be available for decommissioning and restoration, and the anticipated manner in which the solar energy system project will be decommissioned and the site restored.

(b) The land owner or tenant must notify the city when the solar energy system is no longer generating electricity and when the decommissioning of the solar energy system will begin.

(c) Following a continuous six-month period in which no electricity is generated, the permit holder will have six months to complete decommissioning of the solar energy system. Decommissioning includes removal of solar panels, buildings, cabling, electrical components and any other associated facilities below grade as described in the approved decommissioning plan. The land owner or tenant must notify the city when the decommissioning of the solar energy system is complete.

(10) *Violation.* Subsequent to the effective date of this ordinance, it is unlawful for any person to construct, install, or operate a large solar energy system that is not in compliance with this ordinance or with any condition contained in a zoning permit issued pursuant to this ordinance.

Regular Meeting
Agenda Action Form

Meeting Date	From
June 23, 2025	Ryan Baker, Fire Chief Fire Department

CONSENT AGENDA Item # 5

Permission for the Fire Department to apply for 2024 SAFER Grant (Staffing)

Will this require a public hearing?

No

Background/Purpose of Request

The Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grants (SAFER) was created to provide funding directly to fire departments and volunteer firefighter organizations to help them maintain or increase the number of trained, "front-line" firefighters available in their communities. SAFER aims to improve local fire departments' abilities to meet minimum staffing, response, and operational standards established by NFPA 1710.

We are requesting permission from the Council for the Fire Department to apply for the FEMA SAFER Grant. This grant provides three years of supplemental funding for new staff salaries and benefits. Please see the attached documents for more information. This request aims to hire three firefighters, which would have four firefighters at all three stations. There are several benefits to adding the positions:

- Increased safety of our citizens
- Increased safety of our firefighters
- Allows crews to begin fire attack and rescue on fires
- Increase in efficiency on medical calls such as CPR and rescues
- Improves span of control for the department
- Increased staffing will improve our ISO numbers.

Period of Performance - Hiring of Firefighters (Hiring) Activity: The performance period for applications funded under the Hiring Activity will be 36 months.
Key Dates and Times
a. Application Start Date: May 23,20225 at 8 a.m. ET
b. Application Submission Deadline: July 3, 2025, at 5 p.m. ET
c. 180 days to recruit and hire firefighters from the awarded date

Anticipated Award Date: Beginning on August 18, 2025, and continuing thereafter until all FY 2024 SAFER Program grant awards are issued (August 18 -September 30, 2025). This grant requires matching funds for the three years. The first and second year is 75% funded by FEMA, with 35%

funded by FEMA in year three. See the attached fact sheet for more information. The funding would cover the regular salary and benefits of the firefighters. The city still has to provide gear, uniforms, non-scheduled overtime, and salary increases throughout the grant.

Fiscal Impact

Will Item affect current budget?
Reviewed by Finance Director?
Preaudit Certification Required?
Capital Project Ordinance Required?
Budget Transfer Required?
Total City Dollars:
Budget Code:
Reviewed by City Attorney?

Manager/Staff Recommendation

Attachments

1. Fiscal Year 2024 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program
2. SAFER Grant fact sheet 2024

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.

Contents

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.** ***SAFER Program Office Contact*** 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.** ***FEMA Grants News*** 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.** ***Grant Programs Directorate (GPD) Award Administration Division***

	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.

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

	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.** ***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.

	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.** ***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.

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 1720[2]).

[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

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 requestion 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 is 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 forR&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 <u>and</u> 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 extend 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:

- 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. • 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, o 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: o Entry-level physical exam for each new recruit; o Annual physicals for newly recruited members[4]; and o Station duty uniforms. • Wellness and Fitness for Existing Members. Wellness and Fitness costs of an annual exam may include: o Physical exams; o Job-related immunization; o Periodic Physical Exam/Health Screening; o Behavioral health; and o 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:
  o SCBAs, including masks/face pieces.
  o Anything involving the IDLH atmosphere.
  o Any activities precluded by the AHJ.
• Ineligible PPE expenditures:
  o Three-quarter length rubber boots.
  o SCBAs (not including SCBA masks/face pieces).
  o PASS Devices.
  o Spare cylinders.
  o Bomb disposal suits.
  o PPE for hazardous materials and other specialized incidents.
  o 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

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.

Important Dates:

Application Due: May 23, 2025 – July 3, 2025

Projected Award - Start: August 18, 2025 – September 30, 2025

180-day Recruitment Period

Grant Link: https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_gpd_safer-nofo_fy24.pdf

Grant Deadline: July 3, 2025

Grant Funding Parameters:

- Year one and two – 75% funded by FEMA, 25% funded by the City of Mount Holly
- Year three – 35% funded by FEMA, 65% funded by the City of Mount Holly
- Year four and beyond – 100% funded by the City of Mount Holly

What are some ineligible expenses in the Hiring category?

- Pre-application costs, such as grant writer fees, administrative costs, and indirect costs associated with hiring or rehiring of firefighters
- Costs to train and equip firefighters
- Uniforms and physicals
- Overtime costs (except overtime costs routinely paid as a part of the base salary or the firefighter's regularly scheduled and contracted shift hours to comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act [FLSA])
- Salaries and benefits of firefighters who are current employees or were hired before the award date (except under the retention activity)
- To fund promotions (e.g., pay a current member a higher salary by placing them in a new SAFER-funded position

If a fire department receives a SAFER Award, how much time does it have to hire the positions?

For all grantees under the Hiring of Firefighters category, a default 180-day recruitment period begins when the application is approved for the award.

The three-year period of performance automatically starts after the 180-day recruitment period, regardless of whether the grantee has successfully hired or rehired the requested firefighters.

If a grantee can rehire or hire their SAFER-funded firefighters during the 180-day recruitment period, the period of performance may begin at that time. Grantees must submit an amendment requesting that the performance period start before the 180-day recruitment period ends. The period of performance cannot be initiated later than 180 days after the recruitment period.

The following costs are the initial costs the City would be responsible for per Firefighter.

- Uniforms and Gear:
  1 - set of gear per FF: $7,000.00
  1 - complete uniform per FF $1600.00

  Total: $8,600.00 per firefighter x 3 = $25,800.00 for equipment & (nonscheduled overtime calculations are not included)

- Grant writing fees would be 2% if awarded the grant = $9,446.01

The following is the cost breakdown for the positions covered by the grant per year for three years.

Position	Salary	FICA	Retirement	401K	Life Insurance	Disability	Medical	Total
Firefighter - Station 2 - A Shift	$51,964.00	$3.975.25	$7,456.83	$2,598.20	$114.00	$288.00	$10,702.92	$85,699.20
Firefighter - Station 2 - B Shift	$51,964.00	$3.975.25	$7,456.83	$2,598.20	$114.00	$288.00	$10,702.92	$85,699.20
Firefighter - Station 2 - C Shift	$51,964.00	$3.975.25	$7,456.83	$2,598.20	$114.00	$288.00	$10,702.92	$85,699.20
							Total:	**$255,297.60**

Once the grant's performance period runs up, the firefighters' cost would be upon the City to fund the positions. This would not hit the budget until the 2029-2030 year.

Upfront Cost

Description	Cost per	Total
Turnout Gear and Uniform x 3	$8600.00	$25,800.00
Grant Writing	2% of Awarded	$9,446.01
	Total	$35,246.01

Year Funding from FEMA	**Total From FEMA**
2025 – 2026	**$191,473.20**
2026 - 2027	**$191,473.20**
2027 - 2028	**$89,354.16**
Total	**$472.300.56**
Year Funding from City	**Total From City**
2025 – 2026	**$63,824.40**
2026 - 2027	**$63,824.40**
2027 - 2028	**$165,943.44**
Total	**$293,592.24**

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, JUNE 9, 2025

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Moore called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. The following were present:

Mayor David Moore	Jonathan Blanton, City Manager
Mayor Pro Tem Lauren Shoemaker	Brian DuPont, Assistant City Manager
Councilman Ivory Craig	Alexis Hines, Human Resources Director
Councilman Jeff Meadows	Brian Reagan, Police Chief
Councilman Bryan Hough	Greg Beal, Planning Director
Councilwoman Phyllis Harris	Ryan Baker, Fire Chief - Absent
Councilman Kenneth Reeves	Robert Stewart, Deputy Utilities Director
Marie M. Anders, City Attorney	Eric Smallwood, Parks and Recreation Director
Tara Douglas, City Clerk	Michelle Wood, Finance Director
	Matt Black, Economic Development Director
	Jason Green, Public Works Director

INVOCATION

Fire Chief Baker led the Council, Staff, and attendees in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Boy Scout Troop 59 led the Council, Staff, and attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

SET THE AGENDA

Mayor Moore entertained a motion to approve the agenda as presented

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Councilman Reeves seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 6-0. (Motion Carried)

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Request to Apply for a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant
2. Approval of Employee Leave Practices and Policies
3. Award Bid for removal of solids and liquids from the Wastewater Treatment Plant

4. Approval of Minutes – City Council Work Session May 19, 2025

Mayor Moore entertained a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion: Councilman Craig made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilman Hough seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 6 -0. (Motion Carried)

Mayor Moore recognized Bonnie Beatty, a resident of Mount Holly, who turned 105 years old today.

PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation and Introduction from Miss Mount Holly 2025 ***Mary Jae Felizarta***

Miss Mount Holly Mary Jae Felizarta introduced herself and her upcoming competition in the Miss North Carolina competition. Ms. Felizarta stated that she has had the privilege of volunteering at the Holy Angels Home and serving at the Taste of Mount Holly event. Ms. Felizarta stated that she is a medical student at UNC Chapel Hill. Ms. Felizarta spoke of her initiative to advocate for equitable, accessible care for all communities.

2. Presentation of a Proclamation for the Mountain Island Charter School Soccer Team ***Mayor Moore and City Council***

Mayor Moore and City Council presented a proclamation to the Mountain Island Charter School Soccer Team, Coach Darren Johnson, and Coach Jeff Painter for their successful season and state championship.

3. Presentation of a Proclamation for the 150th Anniversary of the Mount Holly Cotton Mill Building, currently Muddy River. ***Mayor Moore and City Council***

Mayor Moore and City Council presented a proclamation in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Mount Holly Cotton Mill Building, currently known as Muddy River to owners Robbie and Caroline Delaney who purchased the former Mount Holly Cotton Mill in 2022.

4. Swearing in of Firefighter Michael Kallem ***Fire Chief Ryan Baker***

Fire Chief Ryan Baker introduced Firefighter Michael Kallem. Mayor Moore administered the Firefighter oath of office to Michael Kallem. Firefighter Michael Kallem had his badge pinned by his wife.

5. Review and Approval of the Update to the Arts on the Greenway Crosswalk Mural **_Paul Lowe_**

Mr. Lowe presented an update on the Arts on the Greenway Crosswalk Mural. Mr. Lowe stated that the current mural is beginning to fade. Mr. Lowe stated that PAAC reviewed the proposed design at their May 21, 2025 meeting and recommended approval of this updated design. Mr. Lowe stated that if approved by the Council, this updated design would be completed by June 30, 2025.

Motion: Councilman Craig made a motion to approve the updated design to the Arts on the Greenway Crosswalk Mural. Councilman Meadows seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 6-0. (Motion Carried)

6. Approve Replacement location and Art Associated with the Bee Art Mosaic to be installed at River Street Park. **_Paul Lowe_**

Mr. Lowe stated that one of the mosaics at River Street Park is damaged and that staff is recommending a new location for the replacement. Mr. Lowe stated that the new location that is planned for the fishing pier would replace that work. Mr. Lowe confirmed that Parks and Recreation support this new location along with PAAC who voted to recommend approval of the new location and artwork at their May 21, 2025 meeting.

Motion: Councilman Hough made a motion to approve the replacement location and art associated with the Bee Art Mosaic to be installed at River Street Park. Councilman Reeves seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 6-0. (Motion Carried)

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Budget Highlights and Public Hearing on the proposed Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget and Fee Schedule **_Jonathan Blanton_**

Mr. Blanton reviewed the budget highlights for the proposed Fiscal Year 2025-2026 and Fee Schedule. Mr. Blanton stated that he is proud of this budget and the work that his staff has done. Mr. Blanton stated that his staff has done a tremendous job at cutting costs and compiling one of the most conservative budgets that the City of Mount Holly has had in several years. Mr. Blanton reviewed what the budget presentation award that the Finance Department received is. Mr. Blanton explained that this award recognizes budgets that are of the highest quality and excels as a policy document, financial plan, operations guide and a communication tool. Mr. Blanton stated that this recognition paired with our consistent financial audits over the last several years is a true testament to the commitment of our staff and our elected officials to the highest level of transparency and fiscal responsibility. Mr. Blanton shared that the City proudly carries a credit rating of AAAM by SNM and AAAMF by Moody's Investor Services, both of which indicate an incredibly strong financial position.

Mr. Blanton reviewed the budget preparation timeline. Mr. Blanton stated that the recommended budget is balanced at $42,369,691.00, which is a 6.7% decrease from the prior fiscal year. Mr. Blanton stated that the budget is comprised of several different funds. Mr. Blanton stated that the General Fund Budget is balanced at $25,216,517.00, the Water and Sewer Fund Budget is balanced at $15,903,301.00, the 911-Wireless and Wireline Fund is balanced at $110,673.00, the Tourism Development Authority Fund is balanced at $339,200.00, and the Powell Bill Fund is balanced at $800,000.00. Mr. Blanton stated that the City has ongoing Capital Construction Projects totaling $31,279,928.00.

Mr. Blanton stated that he is going to give an overview of each fund and some of the major projects that the City is working on. Mr. Blanton reviewed the General Fund stating that the City is projecting $25,216,517.00 in General Fund revenue for fiscal year 2026. Mr. Blanton stated that these funds are derived from property taxes, sales and use taxes, investment earnings, and utility franchise taxes. Mr. Blanton stated that the proposed property tax for fiscal year 2026 remains the same at $0.405.

Mr. Blanton reviewed the General Fund Expenditures stating that the General Fund allocates funding to the City Council, Administration, Police, Fire, Garage, Streets and Solid Waste, Planning, and Parks and Recreation. Mr. Blanton announced that this year the expenditures for the General Fund decreased by 6.8% from the prior fiscal year and that we are allocating $776,745.00 from the Fund Balance to balance the General Fund which is an 80.8% decrease from the prior fiscal year. Mr. Blanton stated that these funds from the Fund Balance will go to fund the following capital projects: $3,000.000.00 towards Phase I of Kemp A. Michael Way, $3,196,531.17 for Dutchman's Creek Bridge, and $673,500.00 for the Museum construction. Mr. Blanton stated that Fiscal Year 2025 totaled $4,425,450.00 in Capital Projects. Mr. Blanton stated that construction is continuing on the Ransom Hunter Park.

Mr. Blanton reviewed the Water and Sewer Fund Revenue stating that the City is projecting $15,903,301.00 in Water and Sewer Fund revenue for fiscal year 2025. Mr. Blanton explained that these funds are from water and sewer sales, stormwater revenue, and utility fees. Mr. Blanton stated that there is a 12% increase in water rates and a 6% increase in sewer rates that were based on the recently adopted study by Raftelis. Mr. Blanton stated that those two increases will total an additional revenue of $624,000 in water revenue and $368,000 in sewer revenue. Mr. Blanton stated that in the previous fiscal year, the Water and Sewer Fund provided for over $6,000,000.00 in large-scale projects and we are going to continue to make a lot of headway on those projects in the upcoming fiscal year. Mr. Blanton stated that the City is projecting that expenditures for the Water and Sewer Fund to decrease by 10.2% in the upcoming fiscal year. Mr. Blanton stated that in regard to the Fund Balance, the City will be allocating $727,297.00 to the Water and Sewer Fund and this represents an 86.6% decrease from the prior fiscal year. Mr. Blanton stated that this will go towards some of the large-scale projects that the City is working on, including $1,500,000.00 in aerial and lift station upgrades to the Riverfront Community, approximately $2,000,000.00 will go towards Phase 2 of the lower Dutchman's Creek Sewer Project, approximately $15,000,000.00 towards the decommissioning of the Wastewater Treatment Plant, approximately $500,000 towards designs for upgrades to the Dutchman's Creek lift station and force main, over $400,000.00 for infiltration and inflow testing aerial structures and sewer lining, $1,000,000.00 in upgrades to the City's north water tank, $93,000 in pump renovations and necessary upgrades to the water plant, and an additional $287,263 for upgrades to the water plant infrastructure. Mr. Blanton highlighted that the Water Treatment Plant was awarded the North Carolina Area Wide Optimization Program (AWOP) Award.

Mr. Blanton reviewed the 911-Wireless and Wireline Fund stating that the 911-Wireless and Wireline Fund consists of funding from revenues derived from surcharges on wireless and wireline telephones in the 911 service area. Mr. Blanton explained that these funds are collected by the State of North Carolina and distributed to the City. Mr. Blanton stated that the City is projected to spend approximately $110,673.00 in that fund in the upcoming fiscal year.

Mr. Blanton reviewed the Tourism and Development Authority Fund stating that this fund consists of funding from occupancy taxes paid by travelers who stay overnight. Mr. Blanton stated that these funds are overseen and expended by the Tourism Development Board. Mr. Blanton stated that the City is projecting approximately $339,200.00 in the Tourism Development Fund for the upcoming fiscal year. Mr. Blanton noted that this is a slight increase since the City is allocating money from the Fund Balance so that the City can continue to work with the Tourism Development Authority on some of the great projects that have been underway. Mr. Blanton noted the that the alleyway behind the Awaken Gallery was possible thanks to the partnership with the Tourism Development Authority. Mr. Blanton also noted that the new electronic sign was another partnership with the Tourism Development Authority.

Mr. Blanton reviewed the Powell Bill Fund stating that the Powell Bill Fund consists of funds for the maintenance of public streets. Mr. Blanton stated that these funds are collected by the State of North Carolina and distributed to the City. Mr. Blanton noted that the City is projecting approximately $800,000.00 in revenues and expenditures for the upcoming fiscal year.

Mr. Blanton stated that as he mentioned in the budget message that the City focused on three goals in this budget: the first being to finalize the large-scale capital projects that were just spoken of, and the second goal was working towards improving employee retention and recalibrating benefits through several measures that are proposed in this budget. Mr. Blanton explained that the City is going to bring all of the current positions to a level that is at or above the neighboring market, revising the City's general pay plan in order to more closely align with market midpoints, implementing a starting minimum wage that is proposed at $18.33 per hour, transitioning the City's retirees to a cost-saving health reimbursement arrangement, and addressing the issues of compression within various ranks of employees via paygrade revisions. Mr. Blanton explained that the City worked closely with a consultant, Baker Tilly, who looked into these matters that were presented to our City Council earlier this year. Mr. Blanton stated that the recommended budget provides for those changes to be made. Mr. Blanton stated that the last goal that the City focused the funding of new improvements in order to continue to sustain a high quality of life that our residents are accustomed to. Mr. Blanton stated that one of these improvements is $85,630.00 in camera upgrades to promote safety throughout the City. Mr. Blanton stated that the City will be investing $178,000.00 in communication and technology upgrades to our Police Officers and Fire Fighters. Mr. Blanton stated that the City will be putting $366,634.00 towards sanitation equipment in our Streets and Solid Waste Department and $100,000.00 towards the Recreation Department to upgrade our trail system as well as some improvements at Woodlawn Park. Mr. Blanton stated that the City will invest $110,000.00 towards new art projects and the continuation of our outdoor gallery.

Mr. Blanton stated that the recommended budget is balanced in accordance with North Carolina General Statue 159-11. Mr. Blanton thanked the Mayor and Council for their direction and thanked the Finance Department for their hard work.

Councilman Meadows asked Mr. Blanton to speak to the City's policy and practice regarding transferring money from the Unassigned Fund Balance to the budget itself as far as operating expenses go. Mr. Blanton stated that the proposed budget does not allocate any Fund Balance for operational cost, and it only goes toward subsidize the capital projects that were referenced. Mr. Blanton stated that the City's Fund Balance is roughly around 30% of Unassigned Fund Balance, but our total Fund Balance is much higher than that. Mr. Blanton stated that the State of North Carolina recommends at least 8% and the City is well above that threshold.

Councilman Meadows asked Mr. Blanton to explain the difference between ongoing operational costs and one-time capital costs. Mr. Blanton explained that over the years, the City has expended large amounts in one-time capital costs such as the water tower that is going up and the Gateway Connector road. Mr. Blanton explained that these are large-scale one-time capital project costs that will not be ongoing, whereas operational costs would be recurring each year with those one-time projects being capital projects typically over $5000.00. Mr. Blanton stated that over the last fiscal year, some of these one-time capital projects were up to $6,000,000.00 in costs that were supported from the Unassigned Fund Balance.

Councilman Meadows asked Mr. Blanton if there had been a comparison done over the last couple of years of operating costs. Mr. Blanton stated that operational costs had gone up a bit over the last couple of years, but that there was a 6.8% decrease in the General Fund and a 10.2% decrease in the Water and Sewer Fund from the prior fiscal year. Councilman Meadows confirmed that in previous fiscal years there were increases in the operational costs, but that staff did work to actually decrease the amount of operating expenses that we have in this budget. Mr. Blanton confirmed Councilman Meadows statement.

Councilman Craig congratulated the staff on this budget.

Mayor Moore entertained a motion to come out of the regular meeting and go into the public hearing.

Motion: Councilwoman Harris made a motion to come out of the regular meeting and go into the public hearing. Councilman Reeves seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 6-0. (Motion Carried)

Speakers at the Public Hearing:

1. Bob Hendricks spoke and gave high compliments to our City Manager Jonathan Blanton. Mr. Hendricks spoke about the increase in the water rate. Mr. Hendricks stated that there will be another rate increase the following year as it stands for $1.1 million. Mr. Hendricks stated that the 12% and 6% is not a one off and the people deserve to know that. Mr. Hendricks suggested that the Council should manage and vote accordingly, especially if you are running for re-election, not to put this increase for our utilities through. Mr. Hendricks stated that the Council should pull back tonight, reevaluate it and make sure that this is something that the community wants. Mr. Hendricks stated that the City should pull the money from other capital sources.

Mayor Moore entertained a motion to come out of the public hearing and go back into the regular meeting.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker made a motion to come out of the public hearing and go back into the regular meeting. Councilwoman Harris seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 6-0. (Motion Carried)

Motion: Councilman Hough made a motion to approve the proposed Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget and Fee Schedule. Councilwoman Harris seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 6-0. (Motion Carried)

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Clyde Davis- 308 Piedmont Avenue: Mr. Davis shared some observations in Mecklenburg County regarding actions taken with vague notifications and lack of transparency. Mr. Davis remarked on actions taken during Closed Session in the Mecklenburg County Board.
2. Stephanie McLaughlin -308 Piedmont Avenue: Ms. McLaughlin gave an update on the most recent Mount Holly Community Development Foundation event. Ms. McLaughlin thanked Mr. Blanton, the community leaders, and the Tourism Development Authority.
3. Ned Brantley discussed variance concerns regarding Imagery and their Homeowners Agency. Mr. Brantley stated that the number of trees that are being cut down is disturbing. Mr. Brantley stated that approximately 500 or more trees have been cut down illegally. Mr. Brantley stated that he would like to know if the City has given variances to the board of Imagery. Mr. Brantley stated that Mr. Beal told him that he does not know these people and that he has never given a variance. Mr. Brantley would like the Council to investigate to find out if there has been a variance issued and to find out what is going on.

NEW BUSINESS

1. City Manager Report ***Jonathan Blanton***

Mr. Blanton mentioned the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant that was on the Consent Agenda tonight which is being pursued by our new Parks and Recreation Director Eric Smallwood. Mr. Blanton stated that the City ordered a contract for the basin cleaning as part of the Wastewater Treatment Plant decommissioning. Mr. Blanton stated that this cleaning will be happening within the next 60 days as the City undertakes decommissioning some of the inactive parts of the plant. Mr. Blanton stated that the City will go online with the City of Charlotte later this fall. Mr. Blanton thanked the Wastewater Treatment Plant team as they have kept the plant running as the City has made provisions to go online with the City of Charlotte. Mr. Blanton thanked Stephanie McLaughlin, Arts Mount Holly, and the Mount Holly Community Development Foundation for the great work on the events. Mr. Blanton reminded everyone that the fireworks celebration will be on Thursday, June 26, 2025 downtown. Mr. Blanton stated that the US Army Corp of Engineers finished their project here last week. Mr. Blanton stated that 32 points in our waterways were cleared and over 45,000 cubic yards of debris was removed. Mr. Blanton stated that this was at no cost to the City and was a project that came through FEMA. Mr. Blanton thanked the Public Works department for overseeing this project. Mr. Blanton stated that the paving downtown was completed last week so many thanks to our business owners downtown on South Main Street for their patience. Mr. Blanton encouraged everyone to stop and check out the Holland Restaurant while enjoying downtown.

Councilman Meadows suggested having the Community Development Foundation on the agenda so that they can update the Council without the 3-minute time limit constraint. Mayor Moore mentioned that their representative would need to request being put on the agenda.

CLOSED SESSION

1. Closed Session Pursuant to N.C.G.S 143-318.11(a) (3 and 5)

Mayor Moore entertained a motion to go out of the regular meeting and into Closed Session.

Motion: Councilman Hough made a motion to go out of the regular meeting and into the Closed Session at 7:57 PM. Councilwoman Harris seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 6-0. (Motion Carried)

Motion: Councilman Hough made a motion to come out of Closed Session and back into the regular meeting at 9:08 PM Councilwoman Harris seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 6-0. (Motion Carried)

Motion: Councilman Hough made a motion to end negotiations with North State for the downtown redevelopment project. Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 6-0. (Motion Carried)

Motion: Councilman Hough made a motion to adjourn the June 9, 2025 City Council Meeting at 9:09 PM. Councilman Reeves seconded the motion.

All Council members present and voting, voted in favor 6-0. (Motion Carried)

The meeting adjourned at 9:09 PM

Regular Meeting
Agenda Action Form

Meeting Date	From
June 23, 2025	Tara Douglas, City Clerk City Clerk

CONSENT AGENDA Item # 7

Approval of Minutes - Closed Session from June 9, 2025

Will this require a public hearing?

No

Background/Purpose of Request

Per the internal staff policy shared with Council, approval of closed session minutes will be part of the consent agenda. A copy of the minutes will be provided under a separate cover to the Council as part of the closed session information packet.

Fiscal Impact

Will Item affect current budget?
Reviewed by Finance Director?
Preaudit Certification Required?
Capital Project Ordinance Required?
Budget Transfer Required?
Total City Dollars:
Budget Code:
Reviewed by City Attorney?

Manager/Staff Recommendation

Attachments

None

Regular Meeting Agenda Action Form

Meeting Date	From
June 23, 2025	City Clerk

PRESENTATIONS Item # 1

Presentation from the Mount Holly Community Development Foundation

Will this require a public hearing?

No

Background/Purpose of Request

Fiscal Impact

Will Item affect current budget?
Reviewed by Finance Director?
Preaudit Certification Required?
Capital Project Ordinance Required?
Budget Transfer Required?
Total City Dollars:
Budget Code:
Reviewed by City Attorney?

Manager/Staff Recommendation

Attachments

None

Regular Meeting
Agenda Action Form

Meeting Date	From
June 23, 2025	Greg Beal, Planning Director Planning

PRESENTATIONS Item # 2

Update on the 2018 Strategic Vision Plan

Will this require a public hearing?

No

Background/Purpose of Request

As mentioned at the Council Retreat on February 28th and subsequent Planning Updates, staff has created a public-interface, found on our ArcGIS Hubsite at mtholly.us. This interface will give factual, up-to-date information on the 111 recommended goals of this 2019-adopted plan. The Strategic Vision Plan Experience Builder can be found at the link in the attached presentation. The Staretegic Vision Plan Update project began with the consultant's due diligence and research in the summer of 2017. In October 2017, the consultants held one-on-one input meetings with any business owner, who requested such, as well as nearly all the nonprofits and community organizations in town. This was in addition to the survey and public meetings held in association with the creation of the updated plan. The process took nearly 18 months to complete, with the January 2019 adoption, at a cost of $130,000. The plan is recommended to take 10-12 years, which does not consider COVID impacts, and out of 111 specific goals mentioned in the Plan, 46 goals have been completed (41%), 18 goals are in process (16%) and 47 goals have not been started (most are long-range or dependent on the private sector for completion). In terms of updating the plan, in 2023, staff held presentations to educate many of our partner-organizations, which are represented through the City Summit and at its quarterly meetings. Two presentations were made by staff, as well as subsequent individual presentations to some of our local nonprofits, at their request. The City's hope was that some partners listed in the Strategic Vision Plan Update (or not even listed as they were not in existence at that time) would help take on some of the uncompleted goals, the 47 mentioned above, which were probably more in 2023. Staff received no interest from these groups, and it is a common belief that they are doing everything they can to meet their group's own commitments. Volunteer burnout is a real thing, and one can easily find the same faces on multiple boards. However, we will continue to look for opportunities to partner with groups such as the TDA and others, not simply the our historic "go-to" organization, the Mount Holly Community Development Foundation.

There are other project milestones, policy decisions, and important decisions that City Council has made over 20+ years. Capturing these in the attached document has taken hours upon hours of staff time, in review of the minutes, but they are important to note as well. Staff will be presenting the update, similar to the Council Retreat Discussion, highlighting the hubsite, as well as other undertakings over the last 20+ years and how best to capture those important decisions.

Fiscal Impact

Will Item affect current budget?	N/A
Reviewed by Finance Director?	N/A
Preaudit Certification Required?	N/A
Capital Project Ordinance Required?	N/A
Budget Transfer Required?	N/A
Total City Dollars:	N/A
Budget Code:	N/A
Reviewed by City Attorney?	N/A

Manager/Staff Recommendation

Staff is presenting this information to Council for feedback and direction on any suggestions that you may have.

Attachments

1. Strategic Vision Plan Update_Council Work Session (6-23-25)
2. City Accomplishments Since 2001

Strategic Vision Plan Update Project

City Council Presentation
June 23, 2025

2008 Strategic Vision Plan

- 2003 Vision Process was the Basis for aforementioned Goals
- 2008 Strategic Vision Plan, a $120k investment, placed our Vision in a Comprehensive Master Plan
- Project Team: Charlotte Community Design Studio, UNCC Urban Institute, Warren and Associates
- The City utilized this investment to obtain more than $2.4 million in direct and indirect grant funding.
- Many implementation projects have been accomplished through partnerships with City and community organizations

2008 Strategic Vision Plan Results

- Four phases with 61 individual recommendations arranged around 6 core values
- Recommendations are tracked in three categories:
  - Accomplished 49
  - In progress, partial 10
  - Not completed/priority change 2

2018 Strategic Vision Plan Update

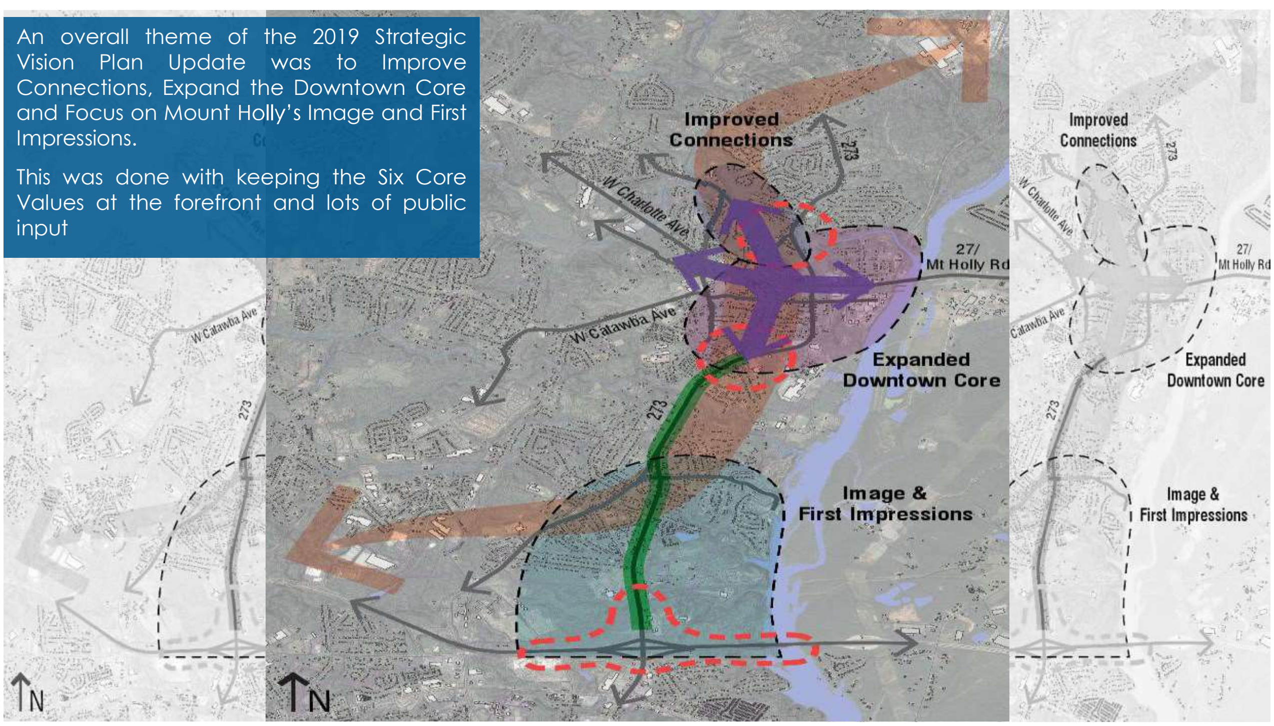
The Update Plan was crafted around Six Core Values, important to the Mount Holly Community….

- Core Value #1: Preserve and Enhance Small Town Character
- Core Value #2: Continue to Connect the Downtown Core
- Core Value #3: Improve Connections Throughout the City
- Core Value #4: Increase Vibrancy Through Art and Placemaking
- Core Value #5: Enhance Gateways and First Impressions
- Core Value #6: Advance the Legacy of Visionary Leadership

2018 Strategic Vision Plan Update

In addition to the Introduction, the Plan was broken down into the following components….

- Market Analysis Synopsis
- Connectivity and Transportation
- Downtown Area Plan
- Gateway District at Exit 27 of I-85
- Woods & Water District
- Placemaking, Arts and a Healthy Community
- Policies, Marketing & Organization
- Implementation Strategy & Action Plan



2018 Strategic Vision Plan Update Goals and Accomplishments

The Implementation Strategy & Action Plan is an important component

- Serves as a Community Call to Action
- Intended to create public-private partnerships with champions for goals
- **6** Chapters, **31**, Broad Recommendations, **111** Specific Recommendations
- Urges the City and its partners to *Celebrate Accomplishments!*
- *Such as…………………..*

Number	Goal	Timeframe to be Completed	Note	Status
1.	2.2.1 Coordinate with Gaston County transit, CATS, and GCLMPO	Short Term	Met with these groups and continue conversation as the Silverline light rail into Belmont progresses.	☑
2.	2.3.2 Advocate for Multi-Modal Elements to be included in NCDOT Projects	Short Term	All projects proposed in Mount Holly have non-motorist facilities proposed.	☑
3.	2.5.4 Continue to Update the City's Pavement Condition and Sidewalk Condition Surveys	Medium Term	The update was made in 2020.	☑
4.	2.5.2 Develop a List of Performance Measures for the City's Transportation Investments	Short Term	Five Counters added to parks. Traffic Studies for public projects. South Gateway Connector Road	☑
5.	2.5.3 Conduct a Separate Traffic Impact Analysis for the Freightliner Plant	Medium Term	Developments in this corridor conducted TIAs, which presented positive mitigation undertakings & recommendations to the GCLMPO	☑
6.	2.5.4 Continue to Update the City's Pavement Condition and Sidewalk Condition Surveys	Medium Term	The City continues to invest in Pavement Condition Surveys on a biennial basis.	☑

Number	Goal	Timeframe to be Completed	Note	Status
7.	2.5.5 Develop Future Land Use Scenarios Based on Population Projections	Medium Term	Through the use of the Land Use Plan, GIS software, and the TIA analysis staff continuously examines these scenarios.	☑
8.	2.5.6 Conduct a Full Sign Inventory	Long Term	Through GIS and Master Sign Plan, the City has an updated traffic sign map. .	☑
9.	2.5.7 Conduct a City-wide ADA Assessment	Short Term	Assessment was accomplished by staff; NCDOT approval in December 2019; Council approval in January 2020.	☑
10.	3.1.1 Encourage Overall Downtown Design Standards	Short Term	Existing and proposed uses are held to the standards in place; wayfinding signage has been integrated.	☑
11.	3.2.1 Construct Trellis for the Farmers Market	Short Term	Trellis construction has been completed	☑
12.	3.3.1 Begin Exploring the Extension and Renovation of Veteran's Park	Short Term	Plans and studies have been completed.	☑

Number	Goal	Timeframe to be Completed	Note	Status
13.	3.3.2 Develop Detailed Plan for a Splash Pad and Park	Short Term	Plans and studies have been completed.	☑
14.	3.3.3 Veteran's Park Implementation	Medium Term	Phased approach, which specifically focuses on property acquisition and proper site assembly	☑
15.	3.4.2 Consolidate and Develop More Efficient Parking Behind Buildings	Short Term	Parking was consolidated behind Old City Hall thru sale of annex building; Presbyterian Church partnership for events	☑
16.	3.5.1 Reorganize Parking on West Charlotte behind North Main Buildings	Short Term	New N. Main St. parking lot was completed in Fall 2020.	☑
17.	3.6.3 Explore Redevelopment of Existing Apartments into Mixed-Use Development	Medium Term	Apartments were purchased with massive renovations; mixed-use approach declined by developer	☑
18.	3.8.1 Implement Trail Network Along Dutchman's Creek	Short Term	Ribbon Cutting was held in October 2020 (CaroMont to River St. Park Segment)	☑

Number	Goal	Timeframe to be Completed	Note	Status
19.	3.10.1 Begin Planning Process for the Redevelopment of the Woodlawn Mill	Short Term	City rezoned property from L-I to Multifamily-Commercial; Property was sold; have worked with developer on brownfields, tax credits and other approvals	☑
20.	3.11.1 Continue Dialogue with Potential Purchasers of the Old Fire Department Building	Short Term	Property was sold and Firehawk Brewpub operated from May 2023-August 2024; Catering business expected to open soon.	☑
21.	3.12.1 Work with Private Sector on Alsace Mill Redevelopment	Short Term	Property was rezoned & sold to Muddy River Distillery in June 2023	☑
22.	3.12.2 Implement Alsace Mill Redevelopment	Long Term	Muddy River Distillery completed renovations in June 2024 on this $4+ million project	☑
23.	4.1.3 Consider Partnering with Belmont on the Overall Gateway Design	Short Term	MOU has been established for cost-share betterments between Gaston County, Belmont & Mount Holly	☑
24.	4.2.3 Plan Greenway Extension from South Gateway Mixed-Use Through the Hospital Property to the	Medium Term	Multipurpose path designed along connector road; CaroMont Health built MPP to improved YMCA Drive	☑

Number	Goal	Timeframe to be Completed	Note	Status
25.	5.1.1 Amend the Area of the Woods and Water District to Reflect its Potential to Grow	Short Term	Woods and Water District has been expanded from 2008 Plan to reflect its potential to grow.	☑
26.	5.1.2 Consider Design Guidelines for Open Space Compatible Uses for Annexations across from Woods and Water District	Short Term	Design Guidelines for Annexation and Open Space have been implemented; working with developers on planned greenway connections	☑
27.	5.1.3 Bring the Tarheel Trailblazers to Examine the Woods and Water District	Short Term	MOU is in place and TTB are actively constructing bike trails.	☑
28.	6.1.1 Create Places for Additional Outdoor Dining	Short Term	Outdoor Dining established at JackBeagles & The Summit; other opportunities exist	☑
29.	6.1.2 Explore Opportunities for Creative Pop-Up Spaces and Events	Short Term	Art events have happened at Farmers Market, Community Garden, Alleyways	☑
30.	6.1.3 Continue to Partner with Local Artists on Art Incubators/Studios/Galleries	Short Term	Art Gallery with tattoo studio is expected to open soon. AOG has gained 501(c)(3) status	☑

Number	Goal	Timeframe to be Completed	Note	Status
31.	6.1.5 Create a Public Art Commission	Short Term	PAAC was formed in May 2021and funding for public art projects is approaching Year 4	☑
32.	6.1.6 Create a Public Art/Mural Ordinance	Short Term	Mural Ordinance was adopted by Council on July 10, 2023.	☑
33.	6.1.7 Consider a Percent for Arts Program	Medium Term	Funding for Public Arts has been initiated; future public projects will be considered	☑
34.	6.1.8 Develop the Arts on the Greenway Facility	Short Term	AOTG is open and have obtained 501(c)(3) status; New Roof, Improved Fencing and Painting added to the building	☑
35.	6.2.2 Continue to Expand the Role of the Farmers Market and Community Garden in the Community	Medium Term	Both 501(c)(3) organizations continue to expand offerings and events and serve on the City Summit	☑
36.	7.1.1 Host a Strategic Vision Plan Launch Event	Short Term	The event was held in Spring 2019	☑

Number	Goal	Timeframe to be Completed	Note	Status
37.	7.1.2 Create an Economic Development Marketing Package	Short Term	The City created a brochure highlighting commercial properties; various videos and social media posts promoting Mount Holly have been initiated.	☑
38.	7.1.3 Continue to Maintain the Economic Development Landing Page for Mount Holly (consider a specific URL)	Short Term	Economic Development Page has been updated twice and maintained; new standalone ED page is scheduled to be completed in April 2025	☑
39.	7.1.4 Meet with Key Regional Mixed-Use Developers	Short Term	Meetings with mixed-use developers for investment have taken place and are continuing.	☑
40.	7.2.5 Consider Expanding City Planning/ Economic Development Staff	Short Term	Economic Developer Director hired September 2024; Planning Staff added new position in February 2025	☑
41.	7.3.1 Establish Design Guidelines Document for Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Development	Short Term	Design Guidelines have been implemented for multifamily & mixed-use development; further revisions scheduled for April 2025	☑
42.	7.3.2 Re-examine the Cost Benefit Analysis of Residential Annexation	Short Term	A thorough CBA process has been established & updated in fall 2024.	☑

Number	Goal	Timeframe to be Completed	Note	Status
43.	7.3.3 Refine the Design Guidelines for Voluntary Annexations into the City	Short Term	As part of the Annexation Policy adopted these are part of the design matrix.	☑
44.	7.3.4 Clearly Define the Development Review Process	Short Term	The Annexation Policy clearly defines this process.	☑

Breakdown of Completion Status of Vision Plan Goals							
Chapter	# of Goals	# Completed	% Complete	# In Progress	% In Progress	# Future Goals	% Future Goals
2	20	8	40.00%	1	5.00%	11	55.00%
3	46	14	30.43%	6	13.04%	26	56.52%
4	7	3	42.86%	3	42.86%	1	14.29%
5	12	3	25.00%	3	25.00%	6	50.00%
6	10	7	70.00%	2	20.00%	1	10.00%
7	16	9	56.25%	1	6.25%	6	37.50%
Total:	**111**	**44**	**39.64%**	**16**	**14.41%**	**51**	**45.95%**

Getting this information to the public

- Workshops or Strategic Vision Plan Update events
- Bi-annual or annual presentations before City Council
- Presentations before City Summit
- Having a public interface that is a one stop shop for Strategic Vision Plan updates
- https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/99b83c43c1724da2b653be397d5c2a94/page/Home/#data_s=id%3AdataSource_1-18d7e9cf86f-layer-4%3A2
- Additionally, there are 20+ years of project milestones, sound policy decisions and other important undertakings, which are highlighted in the attached document. It is important that these be further vetted for the public and published.

City Accomplishments Since December 2001

1. Adoption of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan in December 2001, a first for the City of Mount Holly. This set the basis for investment in parks, infrastructure and proper land use designations.
2. First Resolution in Support of Greenways (August 12, 2002) was presented to City Council by consultant, WK Dickson, for possible grant funding. Councilmembers Bryan Hough and Phyllis Harris made a motion and second, respectively to support the resolution. Motion failed with two ayes and four nays.
3. System Development Fees Adoption: (October 14, 2002) Councilman Hough made a motion, which was approved 4-2, on the adoption of system development fees to ensure the development community contributed to capital utility projects, which were necessitated by growth and new homes.
4. Vision Process Contract with Ron Morgan, Urban Ventures, consultant, was approved on December 9, 2002 to prepare for bond referendum for city improvements.
5. Vision Process of 2003 (January - March 2003) attended by 150 citizens and stakeholders. Primary goals chosen: active lifestyle, downtown revitalization, and reconnection to River as primary goals with five goals of creating: 1) A great Main Street; 2) Greenways and Green Connections; 3) A Downtown Connector Trail (Linear Park); 4) A Waterfront Restaurant with Docks; and 5) An Event Center and Museum
6. Catawba Heights Park was established through a lease agreement with the Wesleyan Church on February 10, 2003.
7. Acquisition of former A&E Building (Municipal Complex) Council unanimously approved that the City Attorney to negotiate a contract for purchase of the A&E building at 400 East Central Avenue for the price of $300,000 with $50,000 in sewer credits over 6 years ($300,000 total credits). Council voted on June 9, 2003 to move forward with purchase by 5 to 1 vote (McLean). Mayor Black announced on July 8, 2003, that the City had purchased the building, and Council noted the City should move City offices to this location.
8. Vision Process Findings were presented to City Council on March 13, 2003, by Dr. Beatty, Chair of the Executive Committee for the Vision Process and Bond Order was adopted as well as ABC Election set for June 3, 2003.
9. Gaston County Soil & Erosion Control Ordinance was adopted on April 14, 2003, which is still in effect today and was the first ordinance to ensure that sediment and erosion were contained on development sites.
10. Bond Referendum: City voters voted almost 2 to 1 in favor of $5 million in bonds. $5 million bond package was to upgrade downtown streetscapes, construct linear park from downtown to river, and build river greenway (if funds available). Only streetscapes and linear park are funded.
11. Mount Holly Community Development Foundation ("MHCDF") ("Foundation") is incorporated as 501C3 non-profit in September 2003. First priorities: downtown revitalization, and greenways, and was identified as a partner by the City of Mount Holly for such.
12. Old Train Depot Rezoning was approved on October 13, 2003, which preserved this historic structure.

13. Municipal Complex Presentation was given to Council by Andrew Cox and David Creech, which was the first proposal on the building in regard to next steps.
14. Architectural Firm for Bond Projects: On December 8, 2003, Council chose Woolpert as the design firm for the bond projects, upon a previous presentation from Dr. Beatty of the Downtown Revitalization Committee.
15. Moratorium on Downtown Development was initiated and approved on January 12, 2004, in an effort to preserve downtown from potential demolition or alteration to match the pending downtown bond improvements. Architectural Design Standards were presented by Christian Sottile and David Creech at the February 3, 2004, Council meeting for informational purposes.
16. US National Whitewater Center Contract was approved on April 12, 2004, after nearly 1.5 years of periodic discussion, with five ayes and one nay (Hope).
17. Council voted unanimously to purchase future site of Mount Holly ABC Store from Maya Lodging, LLC (Holiday Inn Express) in the amount of $500,000 on May 4, 2004.
18. Mount Holly ABC Board established on May 10, 2004, not to merge with the City of Gastonia, with three reps, Carlton Broome as the Chair (3-yr term), Robert Whitt (1-yr term) and Kathy Drumm (2-yr term).
19. Fats, Oils and Grease Ordinance adopted on May 10, 2004, which is still in use today and helps to prevent damage to the sewer system and high treatment costs, associated with such.
20. Mini-storage and warehouse ordinance adopted on June 14, 2004, to prevent these uses from establishing themselves around the downtown district, limiting them to industrial zones.
21. Radio Read Meters (September 13, 2004) to prevent having to go to every home to read the utility meter was authorized by Council as a $30k purchase. Council also voted to require new developments to install said meters to reduce impact on City services and number of City employees.
22. Downtown Development Manual (March 2005): After over a year and several extensions of 120 moratoriums for downtown construction and demolition, as well as numerous meetings between City Council, the Planning Commission, downtown business owners, the consultants and staff, the Manual for Development for Downtown Mount Holly was adopted, guiding sound design for the Central Business District.
23. ABC Store lease of 2100 Spring Street, Suite B & C, is approved on May 9, 2005 by City Council. This was intended as an 18-month lease, but it would prove to be a permanent move, resulting in millions of dollars in savings.
24. National Gypsum (July, 5, 2005) was granted a unanimous resolution of support by City Council to locate a manufacturing plant in Mount Holly, next to Freightliner, which was stated to be a $125 million investment. It was noted that no taxes would be generated, but the company would be an employer and high-water user. On October 10, 2005, City Council unanimously approved rezoning and annexation of the National Gypsum-owned land into the city limits of Mount Holly, effective 3/31/06.

25. Downtown Streetscape Project (approved by bond referendum of 2003) was awarded to the sealed low bidder, Sealand, in the amount of $2,233,000, with a $111,150, in contingency by unanimous vote of City Council on August 2, 2005.
26. The Dutchman's Ridge Subdivision received unanimous approval for CU-rezoning and annexation into the City of Mount Holly for up to 231 single-family homes on October 4, 2005.
27. Downtown Clock approved by City Council as a donation to the City in agreement with First Presbyterian Church of Mount Holly on October 10, 2005.
28. Cox and Schepp is awarded as Construction Manager of Risk for Citizens Center [Municipal Complex] project on October 10, 2005.
29. Regional Pump Station, in partnership with Faison [Water's Edge Townhomes], to be located behind the YMCA, was approved unanimously by City Council on December 6, 2005, saving the City $200,000+ in future expansion costs.
30. The Priority Segment for the Mount Holly Greenway was established on December 12, 2005, upon a presentation by the FROGS (Friends of the Greenway System) to Council, to run from the future Rivertown Green (Linear Park) to Tuckaseege Park, thus beginning a journey to acquire easements and funding.
31. The City's first Stormwater Management Plan was adopted by City Council on December 12, 2005, with a note that a future position will have to be created to manage this plan in-house, which would save the City money over time.
32. A Moratorium on Voluntary Residential Annexations was established by City Council on December 12, 2005, in order to study growth, impacts on utilities, particularly wastewater treatment, through a Strategic [Vision] Plan.
33. City Council denied the annexation petition, by majority vote, for the proposed 620-single-family home, 300-acre Broadleaf development, in keeping with the spirit of the adopted moratorium on annexations.
34. On February 13, 2006, a text amendment was approved by Council to allow the City's first farmers market in downtown Mount Holly, to begin in May 2006. Leigh Brinkley presented the material on behalf of the newly-created Mount Holly Farmers Market in January 2006.
35. The rezoning for the Rehab Hospital, applied for by CHS [Atrium Health] was approved unanimously by City Council on February 13, 2006. The annexation of 30-acres of associated property was approved by Council on July 10, 2006, effective 7/31/06, paving the way for this award-winning facility.
36. Upon a recommendation from the City's Stormwater Committee, the City's first Illicit Discharge, Detection and Elimination Ordinance was adopted unanimously by City Council on June 12, 2006.
37. First negotiations with CSX, in regard to the proposed Linear Park, began in August 2006.
38. As part of the ongoing Strategic Vision Plan recommendations, City Council, by majority vote, established a moratorium for the Hwy 27 [Downtown Gateway] and I-85 [South Gateway] in order to establish zoning overlay districts on August 14, 2006.
39. ETJ Relinquishment (September 11, 2006): A large portion of the City's developed ETJ, was approved to be relinquished to Gaston County, related to the adoption of the County's

UDO, within 90 days or sooner. This assisted property owners within the ETJ, in which the City controlled zoning, in falling under the sole jurisdiction of Gaston County.

40. The estimated guaranteed maximum price of the Citizens Center [Municipal Complex] was approved for $6.3 million by a unanimous vote of City Council on October 9, 2006. At the November 13, 2006 meeting, financing from Citizens South Bank for 4.44% fixed over 20 years was unanimously approved by Council.
41. Zoning Overlay Districts were established by Council, including permitted and prohibited uses, for the Hwy 27 [Downtown Gateway] and I-85 [South Gateway] on October 9, 2006.
42. Hinshaw Properties [River Park Subdivision] (December 11, 2006) receives unanimous approval for their annexation request for the proposed 300-home Planned Unit Development, effective 12/31/06, which had been considered for quite some time, prior to existing moratorium.
43. Policy on Water and Sewer Extensions: On December 11, 2006, *A Resolution to Ratify Existing City Policy on Water and Sewer Provision* was unanimously adopted by City Council. This resolution states in writing what has been a practice by Mount Holly City Council for the last 20 years. This states we do not provide water and sewer outside the city unless they [the requestor] submits to annexation.
44. The Strategic Vision Plan and its Design Guidelines for Voluntary Residential Annexation (adopted on March 12, 2007), the ongoing Downtown Streetscape Project and Downtown Water Tank project, the purchase of Clean Water Trust Fund Land, Greenway Easement Agreements, the Citizens Center [Municipal Complex] project and Expansion of Tuckaseege Park were the focus of City Council meetings through the spring of 2007.
45. Conditional Zoning [now Conditional District Zoning] was adopted by City Council on April 9, 2007, replacing the cumbersome, quasi-judicial Conditional Use process. This was done to encourage public participation in a legislative public process, requiring the applicant/developer to hold a neighborhood meeting, as one requirement.
46. With the adoption of Design Guidelines, the moratorium for residential annexations was lifted on April 10, 2007, by unanimous vote of City Council.
47. The low bid for Phase 1 of the Tuckaseege Park Expansion, in the amount of $438,867.95, was awarded by Council to Neil Grading and Construction on April 9, 2007. This bid was rescinded in May 2007, in order to incorporate other design alternatives. New design approved by Council on July 9. 2007.
48. FEMA Model Ordinance and Floodplain Maps are adopted unanimously by City Council on August 9, 2007, as mandated, per post-Hurricane Katrina revisions.
49. The bond-funded Downtown Streetscape Project was dedicated to the public on Saturday, September 22, 2007 at 10:00 am.
50. On November 12, 2007, City Council unanimously awarded the redesign low bid for the Tuckaseege Park Expansion to Huffman Grading Company in the amount of $593,886.48.
51. On December 4, 2007, the City, through adopted resolution by City Council, officially joins the Catawba-Wateree Water Management Group.
52. On January 14, 2008, City staff presented a detailed cost estimate breakdown for the Citizens Center [Municipal Complex] project with an itemized breakdown. The Total Project Cost as presented was $8,697,270.

53. City Council adopted a resolution in support of the Catawba River Corridor Master Greenway Plan and Green Print Conservation Plan on February 11, 2008, presented by the Foundation and paid for them, as well, at a cost of $77,000; Greenways, Inc., was the consultant for the project, which received a lot of public support.
54. City Council adopted a resolution of support on April 14, 2008, for the re-activation of the P&N Railroad Line as part of the State's economic development efforts.
55. On April 14, 2008, City Council, by unanimous vote, adopted Gaston County's Economic Development Local Investment Grant Program, with tax incentives starting at a $1 million investment to be consistent with other municipalities and Gaston County.
56. On April 14, 2008, the City agreed to adopt a resolution in support of a local hotel/motel tax, to be approved by the NC General Assembly, the first step in establishing the required Tourism Development Authority. The tax levy and implementation of the TDA Board was approved by Council on October
57. After nearly two years of dedicated work and updates in public meetings, City Council, by unanimous vote, adopted the 2008 Strategic Vision Plan in its entirety, as drafted by the consultants on the project, UNC Charlotte-Urban Institute, on May 12, 2008.
58. On June 9, 2008, the City Council held its first meeting in the newly-dedicated Citizens Center [Municipal Complex], which was formally dedicated to the public on Sunday, October 19th at 2:00 pm.
59. Elevated Downtown Water Tank: City Council awarded the low bid for the construction of an elevated water tank on Huitt Street to CB&I Constructors. CB&I came in with the low bid of $1,997,000.
60. On November 11, 2008, City Council, by unanimous vote, approved a text amendment for architectural guidelines to be added to the South Gateway Overlay District, and to lift the adopted moratorium on new development that had been in place in this district since May 1, 2008.
61. Low Bidder for Phase II of the Tuckaseege Park Expansion project was awarded to Liles Construction on November 11, 2008; after some delay, the contract in the amount of $511,000 was approved by City Council on August 24, 2009.
62. On February 9, 2009, City Council adopted the Linear Park Implementation Plan and directed staff to begin negotiations with CSX Railroad; the Linear Park bonds, totaling $1.4 million, approved in June 2003 by ballot, were authorized for sell on July 27, 2009, by unanimous vote.
63. The majority of 2009 was dedicated to discussion of Wastewater Treatment Plant Options, updating City Codes for Minimum Housing, Commercial Buildings & Commercial Vehicles in Neighborhoods, Finalizing Grants for the River Street Park Neighborhood (CDBG) and Carolina Thread Trail for the Linear Park.
64. Clariant Corporation dedicated to the City's first greenway easement for the Riverfront Greenway on December 11, 2009.
65. On January 11, 2010, City Council voted to end twice-monthly, postcard billing for utility bills to customers, in favor of a monthly paper bill to include a newsletter to citizens.
66. An agreement between CSX and the City for the Linear Park Project was approved by City Council on February 9, 2010.

67. On February 9, 2010, it was reported that the City was closing out completion of the Tuckaseege Park Expansion project, including the PART-F grant award of $500,000 from the State of NC; a closeout of this $1.3 million project was approved on April 12, 2010 by City Council.
68. On March 8, 2010, City Council voted to levy the hotel/motel occupancy tax, effective April 1, 2010, and the first TDA Board was established by appointing Jim Guin as Chairman of the TDA for a three (3) year term, Wendy Foster to a two (2) year term and a representative from Robin's Nest Bed and Breakfast to a one (1) year term.
69. CSX Approval of Linear Park (September 9, 2010): After nearly two years of unreturned phone calls to the railroad, and eventual negotiations, CSX gave approval of the Linear Park Construction Plans; $1.4 million in bond money was utilized for this project.
70. At an October 18, 2010 special meeting, City Council approved unanimously a MOU with the Foundation (MHCDF) for the development of greenways within the City; this agreement was later revised and approved by majority vote at the November 8, 2010 Council meeting.
71. On November 8, 2010, City Council voted to adopt city-wide design guidelines for commercial construction, located outside the existing and established Downtown Gateway and South Gateway. The City Council also adopted new design guidelines for single family construction within the city limits, which was later disallowed by a 2015 State law for all local governments.
72. A&E dedicated the second greenway easement for the Riverfront Greenway on March 14, 2011; this only left the greenway easement on the Duke Energy property to complete easement acquisition.
73. Small Business Incentive Grant was established on June 14, 2011 by City Council upon a recommendation from the EDC. This program ran until September 2018 and created 16 new businesses or business expansions in downtown Mount Holly with up to $15,000 in grant funding for each business. Nearly $225,000 in grant funding was awarded overall.
74. Linear Park Project began on September 30, 2011 with clearing and grading by Bell Construction, the low bidder for Phase 1 of the project, which was completed in March 2012.
75. Wayfinding Branding Project (January 14, 2012) was adopted by Council on January 14, 2012, upon a recommendation by the EDC Steering Committee. This project began in October 2011 with the hiring of ACSM to develop a Mount Holly Brand, Logo, Tagline and Wayfinding Sign Specifications, all of which are utilized to this day.
76. Carolinas Healthcare System drops its appeal of the CaroMont Health Emergency Medplex in January 2012, after the judge rejected its arguments, allowing the certificate of need application, filed in 2009 to move forward.
77. Linear Park Phase 2 project was awarded in October 2012 to Bell Construction at a cost of $384,000, which extended sidewalks from the Municipal Complex area to South Main Street along E. Catawba and E. Central Avenues.
78. DiscoverYou!: CaroMont Health opened DiscoverYou!, a healthy-living interactive center on January 18, 2013, being the first lease (10 yrs.) secured by the City for the Municipal Complex; this grand opening was preceded by months of interior renovation.

79. CDBG Grant Completion: The $1 million Community Development Block Grant was completed in March 2013, after two years of housing demo, housing renovations, infrastructure improvements and park additions in the River Street Park Neighborhood.
80. Tailrace Marina at Riverfront A mixed-use project for 128 apartments and a full-service restaurant was approved by City Council on December 9, 2013, after several months of meetings between the developer and HOA and public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council.
81. Porter's Fabrication obtained approval on December 9, 2013, for the construction of a future manufacturing facility on 23 acres of land in Mount Holly's South Gateway. Charles Saleh would eventually sell the company, but the land was retained for future medical office projects.
82. CaroMont Health opens Emergency Department Medplex on January 13, 2015.
83. Duke Energy Lake Management approves Riverfront Greenway plans on January 23, 2014; FERC approval was given March 19, 2015
84. Duke Energy signs remaining Riverfront Greenway easement agreement for their property, which was over 7 years in the making, recorded on June 30, 2015.
85. Ben Arnold, developer, begins construction in the summer of 2015 for the Marina Bay project at Tailrace Marina in the Riverfront Subdivision.
86. Vintage Next expands into the former movie theatre (current location) with a grand opening on September 19, 2016, with the assistance of a small business incentive grant.
87. The Riverfront Greenway finally begins construction in May 2017, having been the recipient of $880.000 in grant funding for this shared Federal Highway Administration and NCDOT project; the City contributed nearly $600,000 more dollars toward this project.
88. Strategic Vision Plan Update (June 12, 2017): City Council awarded the contract for services for the long-awaited Strategic Vision Plan Update to Arnette Muldrow & Associates for $132,000. The first kickoff meetings were held in October 2017.
89. Mountain Island Trail: The 1.6 mile (total length) of trail was completed by City staff from Parks and Rec, Maintenance and the Streets Department, including several pedestrian bridges in January 2018, saving the City tens of thousands of dollars in construction costs.
90. Bee City USA: City Council approves a resolution to become a Bee City on February 12, 2018, with the Tuck Park Pollinator Garden project (Foundation, Rotary Club, City) starting in April 2018.
91. JackBeagles begins construction in June 2018, through a lease agreement from the City for outdoor dining in front of the Annex Building.
92. Lantern Parade: Mount Holly holds its first annual Lantern Parade on October 20, 2018, with Emily Andress's Awaken Art Gallery opening on April 9, 2018.
93. North Main Parking Lot project was completed in October 2018 at a cost of $550,000, creating 80 new parking spaces with overhead lighting.
94. Greenway Award: The Mount Holly Riverfront [River Hawk] Greenway was chosen as the Excellence in Planning for Quality-of-Life award winner within the 9-County Charlotte Metro Area by Centralina on November 20, 2018.
95. Strategic Vision Plan Update was adopted by City Council on January 13, 2019, having over 850 citizens and stakeholders provide feedback on this important document.

96. Dutchman's Creek Greenway was completed in October 2020 through a donation from CaroMont Health; the MHCDF held a ribbon cutting for this 0.75-mile section of greenway on May 15, 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
97. The Public Art Advisory Commission (PAAC) was created on May 10, 2021 as a Mayor-appointed committee, Council appropriated $50,000 for public art projects for the 2021-22 fiscal year, $55,000 for the 2022-23 fiscal year and $60,000 for the 2023-24 fiscal year.
98. Coca-Cola Mural was completed on June 15, 2021, at a cost of $12,500, which was the City's first publicly-funded piece of art.
99. OMB is awarded as the most qualified economic development project for 725 Elm Street in June 2021 by Council. Groundbreaking is set for first quarter of 2024.
100. Penler receives conditional rezoning approval on September 13, 2021 for 315 Class A upscale apartments and a waterfront restaurant on 31-acres at the end of Caldwell Drive. The first three of nine buildings have been given final certificates of occupancy as of this date for this $75 million project.
101. Woodlawn Mill was given rezoning approval for a conditional mixed-use site in October 2021, and plans call for 64 upscale loft-style apartments and 7,500 square feet of commercial space. Awaiting State approval to National Register at this time.
102. My Niche Apartments/Lat Purser and Associates receive conditional rezoning approval for 200 Class A upscale apartments and townhomes on May 9, 2022; construction plans have been approved for this $50+ million project. Awaiting approval of the connector road.
103. Muddy River Distillery, having received conditional rezoning approval from the City, purchased the Mount Holly Cotton Mill in late June 2024 for $1.2 million and is underway with final permits pending. Scheduled to open in spring 2024.
104. Density Credit Ordinance is approved in September 2022, which enables two more buildings, a $30+ million investment, on the Davis Moore Healthcare tract. Currently CNSA and OrthoCarolina are under construction.
105. Firehawk Brewpub: This former City Fire Station, opened its doors to the public on May 20, 2023, having gone through over a year worth of renovations at an estimated $1.25 million.
106. Gateway Medical Center: Permits were issued in September 2023 for Building One, housing Carolina Orthopedic, as the majority holder (21,000 sq ft) of its 62,000 square feet of space. This is the first of three planned buildings.

Regular Meeting
Agenda Action Form

Meeting Date	From
June 23, 2025	Matt Black, Economic Development Director Economic Development

PRESENTATIONS Item # 3

Consideration of 131 S. Main Street, Request for Proposals

Will this require a public hearing?

No

Background/Purpose of Request

A committee has independently reviewed and scored submitted RFPs for 131 S. Main Street. This presentation will highlight the process and recommendations from the committee.

Fiscal Impact

Will Item affect current budget?	No
Reviewed by Finance Director?	No
Preaudit Certification Required?	No
Capital Project Ordinance Required?	No
Budget Transfer Required?	No
Total City Dollars:	N/A
Budget Code:	N/A
Reviewed by City Attorney?	N/A

Manager/Staff Recommendation

N/A

Attachments

1. 131 S. Main Presentation

131 S. Main Street RFP

City of Mount Holly

February 23, 2025

1

About G.S. 158.7-1

An economic development tool that allows a public entity to dispose of publicly owned property through negotiation.

-Must create jobs
-Must grow existing tax base
-Must be assigned performance measures
-Can relate to strategic vision plan

2

Statutes Process for Disposal of Property

Designation of Property - Resolution
- Vote on Resolution

RFQ Creation & Submittals
- Released upon approval of resolution
- Committee or Staff Evaluates

Review and Negotiate
- Negotiate Terms
- Call for hearing is needed

Final Sale Agreement
- Agreement For Purchase and Sale consideration

3

The City Received 3 Proposals

The MUNI

J& M Holding

RTR Property Management

4

Evaluation of the RFPs

A Review Committee composed of internal staff independently evaluated each proposal on the following criteria:

Relevant Experience (30 points)
Proposed Use and Downtown Vision Alignment (10 points)
Proposed Approach (25 points)
Developer Qualifications (20 points)
Financial Capacity (15 points)

5

Developer Proposal Overview

Developer	Main Use Vision	Basement Use Plan
RTR Property Management	Mixed-use: • Anchor restaurant • Residential upper floor • Office or tenant mix	• Office suites & possible restaurant kitchen expansion • Plans new egress via adjacent property (old jail area) • Exploring added staircase to main floor
The MUNI	Coworking + Creative Studios: • Offices, studios, podcast space • Event and community space	• Artist/maker space (discounted rent) • Monthly art showcases upstairs • Rear access maintained; demo to address concerns
J & M Holding	Mixed-use: • Retail on main floor • Professional offices above • Flex/light commercial below	• Flex space for wellness, e-commerce, distribution, trades • Architect will address egress & code compliance • Asbestos remediation plan in place

6

Evaluation Summary

Proposal	Reviewer #1	Reviewer #2	Reviewer #3	Reviewer #4	Average
The Muni	95	98	87	86	91.5
J&M Holdings	90	93	82	91	87.75
RTR Property Management	**95**	**97**	**90**	**96**	**94.5**

7

Rationale for Highest Score

Local Expertise and Proven Track Record: RTR Property Management owns and manages six adjacent properties on South Main Street, totaling over 22,000 sq. ft. This longstanding commitment to Mount Holly demonstrates a deep understanding of the local market and building conditions.
Thoughtful Mixed-Use Plan: The proposed project includes possible restaurant anchor space, residential units on the upper level, and office space in the basement. This diversified use maximizes the building's functionality and enhances downtown vibrancy.
Historic Preservation and Building Integration: RTR's proposal prioritizes preservation of the historic structure while resolving known issues such as basement egress made possible through access from his adjacent properties.
Financial and Development Readiness: With an estimated $2.5 million project budget and a clear two-year redevelopment timeline, the team is prepared to proceed efficiently. The proposal is financially sound and supported by extensive project delivery experience.

8

Conclusion

While all three proposals offered unique strengths, the **RTR Property Management** proposal best aligns with the City's priorities of local reinvestment, economic vitality, and downtown cohesion. The selection of this team will ensure a successful and impactful reuse of 131 S. Main Street that supports the long-term vision for Mount Holly.

9

Regular Meeting
Agenda Action Form

Meeting Date	From
June 23, 2025	Jonathan Blanton, City Manager City Management

NEW BUSINESS Item # 1

City Manager Report

Will this require a public hearing?

No

Background/Purpose of Request

City Manager to update the Council and citizens

Fiscal Impact

Will Item affect current budget?
Reviewed by Finance Director?
Preaudit Certification Required?
Capital Project Ordinance Required?
Budget Transfer Required?
Total City Dollars:
Budget Code:
Reviewed by City Attorney?

Manager/Staff Recommendation

Attachments

None