

STAFF REPORT

Date: February 12, 2025

To: Mayor and City Council

Through: Jackie Bryant, City Manager

Subject: Staff Report (For Possible Action): Acceptance of Grant Award from the State Farm Good Neighbor Citizenship Company Grant to the Reno Fire Department for the Reno Home Wildfire Fuels Reduction Program totaling \$28,000.

From: Samantha Steere, Management Assistant

Department: Fire Department

Summary:

In 2021, the Reno Fire Department established the Reno Home Wildfire Fuels Reduction Program. With this program, residents in the Wildland Urban Interface received one dumpster rental to remove vegetation from their property to create defensible space. Defensible space increases the chance of home survival and provides a space for firefighters to safely defend the home during a wildfire event. Staff recommends Council accept the State Farm Good Neighbor Citizenship Company Grant to the Reno Fire Department for the Reno Home Wildfire Fuels Reduction Program totaling \$28,000. This is a non-matching grant.

Consent Review	Yes	No
1. Is this item an annual or standard item that comes before Council for regular approval?	X	
2. Is this item an agreement required based on an item previously approved by Council?		X
3. Is this item included in the current budget approved and adopted by Council?		X
Other Considerations		
What percent of the total City budget does this item represent?	<1%	

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

Fiscal Sustainability

Public Safety

Previous Council Action:

There is no recent Council action relevant to this item.

Background:

In 2020, the Reno Fire Department (RFD) was awarded the FY 2019 Fire Prevention and Safety Grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to develop a hazardous fuel reduction program. This funding led to the creation of the Reno Home Wildfire Fuels Reduction Program, which was successfully implemented in 2021 and 2022. In 2024, with additional support from State Farm, RFD continued the program's efforts.

The program involved the rental of two dumpsters, provided by the local waste management company, Waste Management. These dumpsters were used for the disposal of vegetative waste, including yard debris and refuse, such as plants growing on the homeowner's property. Property owners were eligible to participate through an online application process, followed by a review by Fire Prevention personnel.

Once approved, dumpsters were delivered to qualifying properties on Thursdays, where homeowners would load them with various fire hazards, including brush, ladder fuels, and invasive weeds such as cheatgrass. Upon reaching capacity or when the homeowner completed the debris removal, Waste Management would pick up the dumpsters and dispose of the waste at the local landfill.

Discussion:

Due to its proximity to high desert areas, the City of Reno has experienced numerous wildland fires over the years. Notably, the most recent and devastating incidents include the Gold Ranch Fire (2024), Davis Fire (2024), which destroyed 14 homes, Pinehaven Fire (2020), which destroyed five homes; the Caughlin Fire (2011), which destroyed 26 homes; the Washoe Fire (2012), which destroyed 29 homes; and the Little Valley Fire (2016), which destroyed 23 homes. In response, the Reno Fire Department (RFD) has consistently collaborated with the University of Nevada Reno Cooperative Extension and various City of Reno Homeowner Associations to implement defensible space programs and enhance emergency preparedness.

The State Farm Good Neighbor Citizenship Company Grant aims to foster safer, stronger, and better-educated communities by providing funding to develop programs that enhance safety, build community strength, and expand educational opportunities. This invitation-only grant supports initiatives that directly benefit the communities it serves.

In October 2024, the RFD was invited to apply for the State Farm Good Neighbor Citizenship Company Grant and was awarded \$28,000 to fund the Reno Home Wildfire Fuels Reduction Program. This program assists homeowners in the wildland-urban interface areas of Reno by helping them create defensible space around their properties. Looking ahead, the 2025 Dumpster Program aims to expand these mitigation efforts to neighboring jurisdictions, including Truckee Meadows Fire and Rescue and Sparks Fire Department.

Financial Implications:

None, this grant requires no funding match.

Legal Implications:

Legal review completed for compliance with City procedures and Nevada law. The City, by accepting this grant, agrees to comply with the terms of the grant application, provide information for evaluation to the granting organization, and provide progress and financial reports on program activities, which will be completed by the Reno Fire Department. Failure to adhere to the grant requirements could affect future funding.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends Council accept the State Farm Good Neighbor Citizenship Company Grant to the Reno Fire Department for the Reno Home Wildfire Fuels Reduction Program totaling \$28,000.00.

Proposed Motion:

I move to approve staff recommendation.

Attachments:

Notice of Award