

SAFER Fire Act Grant Application

This memo is a brief description of the Department of Homeland Security Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant. The SAFER grant provides funding to fire departments to [increase the number of fire fighters](#) in the department. We would use the additional firefighters to help meet minimum staffing requirements, particularly those set forth in National Fire Protection Association standard 1710.

[The SAFER grant requires the support of the elected officials prior to application.](#) Some jurisdictions refused to accept a SAFER grant after being awarded one in 2005. Only about 5% of the applications were funded last year. Therefore, there is a high likelihood that an application for the SAFER grant this year will have to be accompanied by a letter of support or official action from elected official(s). It is for this reason we are seeking direction from the City Council as to whether or not we should apply for this grant.

The firefighters hired under the grant must be employed for the entire five years or the federal share must be returned. The grant funds \$100,000 per fire fighter over five years. The MFD is asking for approval to apply for 12 additional fire fighters under this grant program. [Under this proposal, the federal government would pay \\$1.2 million dollars \(30% of the cost\) and the City would be responsible for the remaining \\$2.88 million dollars.](#) See the attached sheet for a complete breakdown of the financial details.

The 12 fire fighters would be used to put one engine company back in service at Fire Station 27. The Quint currently stationed at 27's will be converted to a ladder company at the same station, (Ladder 8 at Station 27 was lost during the severe budget cuts of 2003). As the attached map shows, there is an area of south Minneapolis that does not have adequate ladder truck coverage within 8 minutes or less (the area indicated in red).

Additionally, the City Gate report (upon which the MFD built our standard of coverage) recommends putting another ladder back in service as soon as economically feasible. This federal grant provides an opportunity to do this at a reduced cost to the city. [Even if the City Council decides not to recommend applying for the SAFER grant, we would urge adopting a five-year financial plan that includes putting a fire company back in service in south Minneapolis.](#) This one additional ladder would allow us to go from 82% coverage to a much-improved 93% coverage for a ladder arriving in 8 minutes or less. Our current standard of cover requires a performance standard of 90% for this performance measure.

Adding a ladder back in service in south Minneapolis will also allow us to shift one other ladder truck further north which also addresses the area of less than ideal ladder coverage in the northeast corner of the city.

[Please feel free to contact me at 673-2688 with any questions or concerns.](#)