

## STAFF REPORTS

CITY COUNCIL  
April 22, 2003

To: Mayor and City Council  
From: George J. Rodericks, City Manager

**SUBJECT: ESTABLISH A “COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (C.E.R.T.) PROGRAM” FOR VILLA PARK**

### **BACKGROUND**

**Citizen’s Emergency Response Team or C.E.R.T.** - C.E.R.T. is a national, citizens emergency response program that is well established and growing throughout the cities of Orange County as well as other areas of California and the nation. Most notably Anaheim, Huntington Beach, Irvine, Placentia and San Juan Capistrano all have active C.E.R.T. programs. Participants in the program learn basic survival skills such as light search and rescue, use of fire extinguishers, basic disaster scene management and first aid. The cadre of emergency volunteers has greatly augmented the overall emergency readiness in these cities and have participated in a variety of emergency activities including floods, earthquakes, fires, and the Placentia train wreck in 2002.

The primary goal of C.E.R.T. is for a city to have an established and trained force of volunteers to set up emergency response teams in neighborhoods without assistance of first responders or other city staff. Because of the impact on Emergency Services following a major disaster, citizens may have to be self-reliant for seventy-two hours or longer. C.E.R.T. members provide direct neighborhood support and help to bridge the gap until professional assistance can be provided.

How can C.E.R.T. be funded? The OCFA’s Structural Fire Fund Entitlement Fund is available to provide the necessary funding for a C.E.R.T. program in the City of Villa Park. The development, implementation and delivery of a C.E.R.T. program falls within the previously identified guidelines for the use of the SFFEF. Legally permissible expenditures include the direct costs of the program incurred by the city for city employee salaries, services, and supplies. The Fire Authority retains the right to determine allowable reimbursements.

**C.E.R.T. Program Delivery Options\_** - The establishment of a CERT Program to be available to the residents of Villa Park could be done through at least two methods. Either a local program for Villa Park residents and business owners or on a cooperative basis in conjunction with another city that already has an existing program with available space to accommodate residents from Villa Park into scheduled classes.

It would be the recommendation of staff that City Council empower the City Manager to determine the method of delivery of initial classes to be included in this new program.

## **FINDINGS**

The Orange County Fire Authority has identified CERT Programs as an authorized use of Structural Fire Fund Entitlement Fund "SFFEF" revenues. The establishment of a CERT Program by the City of Villa Park to be funded by the City's allocation from the OCFA's Structural Fire Fund Entitlement Fund would thus be an allowable program use as identified and approved by the OCFA. The Fire Authority would need to take concurrent action to approve this program once established by the City of Villa Park.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Total cost over four years would amount to approximately \$58,525, for the City of Villa Park's CERT Program. This program would be funded (reimbursed) as the single identified and approved project within the Villa Park SFFEF Program allocation of \$63,382.54, available as of January 31, 2003, approved uses. The projected program costs over the four years beginning July 1, 2003 and running through June 30, 2007 are anticipated to be \$58,525, with a requested budget of \$14,275., for the "CERT" Program in fiscal 2003-2004. The budget would cover first year start-up and course related costs. The remaining years would be anticipated to be funded at \$14,750 annually beginning July 1, 2004.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the Villa Park City Council authorize the establishment of a Community Emergency Response Team program to be funded by the available revenue allocated from the Orange County Fire Authority's Structural Fire Fund Entitlement Fund (SFFEF) Program. Such program will be operated within the guidelines approved by the Orange County Fire Authority Board of Directors and as a program of the City of Villa Park as authorized by the City Council.
2. Any remaining available funds within the City of Villa Park's SFFEF Program would be identified as Unallocated. As Unallocated Funds, these funds would not be able to be expended until such time as the City with Fire Authority Approval a revised their SFFEF Program to include allocations of any or all additional funds.
3. That the City request that the Orange County Fire Authority Board of Directors approve the Villa Park CERT Program as presented and appropriate the identified funds for this program to facilitate future reimbursements for allowable CERT Program expenses incurred in support of the CERT program.
4. Direct city staff to work with Fire Authority staff to establish a "CERT program for Villa Park residents within one of the identified alternatives. Alternative selected will be as directed by the City Manager at the discretion of the City Council.
5. Report back to the City Council quarterly on status of the "CERT" Program.

Attachment: Proposed C.E.R.T. Budget FY 2003/2004 through 2006/2007