

Narrative Statement

Narratives

Please provide your narrative statement in the space provided below.

Project Narrative for Brush Truck:

The Cherryville Fire Department does not presently have a brush truck. This situation is drastically becoming an operational problem. Our city has annexed a tremendous amount of area that contains many acres of woodlands. Consequently, the main threat of urban interface is growing each time an annexation occurs.

This condition leaves us at the control of apparatus belonging to volunteer fire departments. This renders a response time of 30 – 45 minutes. During this time, we rely on our first line engine to extinguish brush fires within a limited reach. The volunteer fire departments are facing financial hardship as well as decreased manpower within our surrounding area. Therefore, the limited apparatus that are now available are quickly becoming aged.

The Cherryville Fire Department has aggressively pursued budgeting for necessary apparatus. A city our size continues to feel the great impact caused by the present economic situation. The City of Cherryville is losing daily from its tax base. We are possibly facing a 10% budget cut from this year's budget alone. Budget cuts will not allow capital purchases. The money is only present to maintain the fire protection that we presently deliver leaving woodland/brush fires within our city totally dependent on our local volunteer fire departments.

The State of North Carolina is withholding \$160,000 from the next budget for the City of Cherryville. Our county officials are deliberating withholding revenue due to budget constraints they are enduring. Another factor that could economically destroy our budget centers around the fact that our county is preparing to vote in the next quarter to change the way sales tax is distributed to municipalities. This would drastically affect our revenue in the City of Cherryville. The losses of revenue coupled with the dwindling employment rates are directly affecting our daily operations.

The national average of unemployment currently stands at four percent. Gaston County alone has a rating of 7.6%. The City of Cherryville is uniquely located at the northwestern corner of the county, which is surrounded by Cleveland County and Lincoln County. The unemployment rate for Lincoln County is 6.8 and Cleveland County is 12.5. The actual job loss from the City of Cherryville is stated below:

CITY OF CHERRYVILLE INDUSTRY CLOSINGS (SINCE 1995)

INDUSTRY JOB LOSS ANNUAL PAYROLL

Bike Atheletic	160	\$ 2,500,000.00
Carolina Freight	2400	\$57,500,000.00
Carolina International	85	\$ 1,200,000.00
Dora Yarn, Plant #2	145	\$ 3,000,000.00
Pretty Paper, Inc.	120	\$ 2,040,000.00
SCT (Carlton Yarn Mills)	180	\$ 3,000,000.00
Varat Sportswear, Inc.	145	\$ 2,306,000.00
Dora Yarn, Plant #1	150	\$ 3,120,000.00
Gold Metal Homes	350	\$ 8,736,000.00
Travis Knits	105	\$ 1,890,000.00
GiGi of Carolina	80	\$ 1,200,000.00

If the Cherryville Fire Department receives grant money for the purchase of a brush truck, we will use this apparatus for multiple services. The city has agreed to fund their portion of the grant as well as maintain this apparatus throughout its years of service. This apparatus would enable the Cherryville Fire Department to offer a new service to our citizens. We also will be able to deliver mutual aide to surrounding volunteer fire departments that either do or do not have this type of apparatus.

There are two other reasons for the purchase of this piece of equipment. First, we have started offering medical services to our community at the EMT – D level. We provide a medical first-response program, recognized by the State of North Carolina, due to a 30 – 45 minute wait from County paramedics. The brush truck will be utilized as a first response vehicle. We would place a defibrillator and other medical supplies on the brush truck. This will keep our "first out pumper" remaining at the station for standby members to run fire calls.

The second reason for the purchase of the brush truck will allow us to transport our fire safety house we received this previous year. Presently, we rely on scheduling a large enough truck from our Public Works Department. This does not allow room for many scheduled fire prevention classes. If approved, this grant will enable us to transport the fire safety house to any location at any time.

In closing, we considered all categories and found the brush truck as the most important funding needed. Due to many textile plants closing along with one of the nation's top trucking companies, the City of Cherryville is in no shape to supply the necessary purchases. In the past seven years the City of Cherryville had 13 textile plants in operation; today we only have one in operation. We strongly urge you to consider the important services a brush truck would offer our community through immediate response to brush fires, first response vehicle, and transportation of our fire safety house for much needed fire prevention. Please help us maintain our vision of "safeguarding our community through exceptional service."

If you received a grant award in the 2001 process, does your current request relate to your 2001 award? Y