



CITY OF COSTA MESA

77 Fair Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

Agenda Report

File #: 26-267

Meeting Date: 5/19/2026

TITLE:

FACILITY USE AGREEMENT WITH THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

DEPARTMENT: OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

PRESENTED BY: DELCIE HYNES, EMERGENCY SERVICES MGR.

CONTACT INFORMATION: DELCIE HYNES, EMERGENCY SERVICES MGR. 714-754-5189

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends City Council:

1. Approve the Facility Use Agreement with the American National Red Cross for use of City facilities during disaster-related activities at no cost (Attachment 1).
2. Approve the Pet Addendum to the Facility Use Agreement with the American National Red Cross to allow clients' pets in designated areas.
3. Authorize the City Manager, or designee, to execute both the Facility Use Agreement and Pet Addendum on behalf of the City to ensure ongoing cooperation and coordination of emergency disaster shelter and resources.

BACKGROUND:

In 1998, the City entered into a contract (1998 Contract) with the Orange County Chapter of the American Red Cross (Red Cross) to provide care and shelter in the event of a man-made or natural disaster impacting Costa Mesa residents and to support shelter preparedness efforts. Since that time, the Red Cross has provided free training to City staff, conducted facility site surveys, and been a key partner in planning and preparing for mass care and shelter operations in the community.

The existing contract allows the Red Cross to request access to City facilities (Balearic Community Center, Downtown Recreation Center, Costa Mesa Senior Center, and Norma Hertzog Community Center) for disaster-related activities such as shelter, service centers, storage, or parking. The City retains discretion over facility use.

The Red Cross no longer uses the contract format and has replaced it with a Facility Use Agreement. Like the prior 1998 Contract, the proposed Facility Use Agreement (Agreement) with the Red Cross establishes a framework for the Red Cross to request temporary use of the named City facilities (Attachment 2). Additionally, the Agreement continues to ensure that facility use is at the City's discretion and only activated upon Red Cross request during a disaster.

Further, the Pet Addendum was added to ensure compliance with California Senate Assembly Bill 781 (AB 781), which requires municipalities to designate a shelter location where household pets can be “accommodated” during a disaster.

ANALYSIS:

The Agreement term begins upon signing and ends 30 days after written notice by either party. The Red Cross has confirmed to staff that this Agreement will replace and supersede the provisions of the 1998 Contract.

The Agreement outlines responsibilities, including joint facility inspections before and after use to document conditions, and requires the Red Cross to exercise reasonable care and obtain written approval for any modifications. The Red Cross will designate a manager to oversee operations, while the City will appoint a Facility Coordinator to ensure coordination.

No fee will be charged for facility use during disaster operations, but the Red Cross will reimburse the City for damages (beyond reasonable wear and tear) and reasonable costs for custodial, food service, or utilities (water, gas, electricity, waste disposal) incurred due to its activities. For federally declared disasters, the City may seek reimbursement through the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Public Assistance Category B program.

In accordance with AB 781, the Pet Addendum allows clients’ household pets, including service and assistance animals, in designated areas, with the Red Cross being responsible for pet welfare compliance through an Animal Welfare Organization. The City maintains the authority to determine which facility may accommodate pets and where pets may be allowed.

The Red Cross has entered into similar agreements with local jurisdiction partners, as well as the Newport-Mesa Unified School District, to ensure the timely offering of disaster services at facilities owned by other entities that may also support City residents.

Should the City Council authorize the City Manager or designee to execute the Agreement with the Red Cross, the Red Cross will be able to establish and offer shelter or other support at one of the named City facilities in a timely manner. If the City Council elects not to authorize execution of the Agreement in advance, it will delay shelter support to the community. The Red Cross will still respond when requested and available; however, a Facility Use Agreement will still be required prior to establishing services at the indicated location. Waiting until a disaster occurs will delay the provision of services to residents in need.

This Agreement strengthens the City’s emergency response capabilities by formalizing a partnership with the Red Cross, aligning with the City’s commitment to public safety and effective disaster management.

ALTERNATIVES:

The City Council could choose not to participate in the Agreement with the Red Cross, in which case the Red Cross would not be able to open a Red Cross Shelter at a City facility. In the event the City opens a shelter without the Red Cross, the City will assume all financial and legal responsibility. During a disaster or other emergency in which the City requires shelter assistance from the Red

Cross, they would require the Agreement be signed at that time which may delay shelter opening and establishment of services.

FISCAL REVIEW:

There is no fiscal impact to the City by entering into this Agreement with the Red Cross.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City attorney's office has reviewed this report and the Agreement and approves them both as to form.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS AND PRIORITIES:

Participating in the Facility Use Agreement with the Red Cross supports City Council's Goal to Strengthen the Public's Safety and Improve the Quality of Life.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends City Council:

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