

# INDIAN WELLS CITY COUNCIL

## October 16, 2025



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**To:** City Council  
**From:** Finance Department  
**Prepared by:** Kevin McCarthy, Finance Director  
**Subject:** **Funding Request from Eisenhower Health for Trauma Center Upgrade**

### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

Council **CONSIDERS** the \$1.0 million funding request from Eisenhower Health to support the hospital's effort to elevate its trauma center designation; and

**FINDS** the project to be exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15060.

### SUMMARY:

Eisenhower Health has requested \$1.0 million in City funding to assist with its planned upgrade of trauma services from a Level IV facility to Level III within the next year, and ultimately to Level II.

This request represents a significant potential investment in public health and emergency preparedness for Indian Wells and the broader region. At this stage, the Council is not being asked to approve funding, but only to decide whether to advance the request into the community engagement process required under City policy. This ensures that residents are fully informed, have meaningful opportunities to provide feedback, and that the City Council retains oversight before any final funding decision.

If the City Council advances this request, it should establish a Council Committee to conduct a comprehensive review and bring forward recommendations, ensuring that the process includes appropriate avenues for community input.

### BACKGROUND:

In September 2025, Eisenhower Health submitted a funding request to the City of Indian Wells in the amount of \$1.0 million. The funds would support the hospital's efforts to upgrade its trauma services, specifically by transitioning from a Level IV to a Level III trauma center, with the eventual goal of achieving a Level II designation.

## Trama Center Designations

- **Level IV:** Eisenhower's current level. 24/7 Emergency physician coverage with Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) protocols and training. Provides resuscitation and stabilization, as well as, when available, surgical and intensive care services.
- **Level III:** 24/7 immediate coverage by trauma surgeons, anesthesia, and emergency physicians. Can perform urgent operations and stabilize critical patients.
- **Level II:** 24/7 immediate coverage by trauma surgeons and most surgical subspecialties (e.g., orthopedics, neurosurgery, vascular surgery, etc.) with trauma ICU capacity.
- **Level I:** Similar to Level II in terms of clinical service requirements, but with added academic responsibilities to support research, education, and system leadership.

To achieve this upgrade, Eisenhower must make substantial investments in:

- **Highly Trained Personnel** – Trauma surgeons, subspecialists, and critical care staff available 24/7.
- **Specialized Equipment** – Advanced imaging and surgical technology for immediate diagnosis and treatment.
- **Expanded Space** – Additional trauma bays and operating room capacity to treat multiple critical patients simultaneously.

## **Policy Context**

Under the City's **Community Assistance Funding Policy**, requests of more than \$200,000 are subject to a special review process, independent of the standard policy requirements. These requests must:

- Be considered at a publicly noticed City Council meeting;
- Include direct participation by the applicant; and
- Undergo a City-led **Community Involvement process** before final Council action.

## **Community Involvement Process**

Should the City Council determine to advance this request, it is incumbent upon the Council to formally appoint a Committee of its members to undertake a thorough review of the funding proposal and to return with its recommendations. In fulfilling this responsibility, the Council-appointed Committee will bear the duty of ensuring transparency, accountability, and public trust by overseeing the following community engagement requirements:

1. **Public Meeting** – The City will organize at least one public meeting to present the proposal and accept resident comments. Eisenhower Health will attend but will not present independently. All materials must be prepared or approved by City staff.
2. **Resident Notification** – The City will prepare and mail notices to all Indian Wells households, summarizing the request and outlining fiscal considerations. The applicant will bear mailing costs.
3. **Community Feedback Collection** – At Council’s discretion, the City may administer a community survey (mailed or online). The applicant will fund all costs, while the City will design and control the process. Results will be compiled by staff and shared with Council.
4. **Final Deliberation** – After engagement activities are complete, the City Council will deliberate during a regularly scheduled meeting, considering community input, staff analysis, and applicant information prior to making a final decision.

## **OPTIONS:**

The City Council may consider the following alternatives:

1. Deny the request and take no further action.
2. Advance the request by directing staff to initiate the community involvement process, including scheduling the public meeting, preparing resident notification, and designing engagement activities.
3. Provide an alternative direction.

## **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with today’s action. The applicant is responsible for all costs related to resident notification and community engagement activities. Any future fiscal impact will be determined only if the City Council ultimately approves funding for the request.

## **CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA):**

This action has been reviewed per the authority and criteria contained in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the State and local CEQA Guidelines, and the City's environmental regulations. The City, acting as the Lead Agency, determined that the ordinance is not subject to CEQA pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2), 15060(c)(3), and 15061(b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines, because it will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change to the environment as there is no possibility that the action would result in a significant environmental impact, and because it does not constitute a "project" as defined in Section 15378 of the State CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3.

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Letter from Eisenhower Health
2. EH\_Trauma\_CIW
3. Sponsorship and Community Assistance Funding Policy