

Agenda Report

DATE: September 17, 2001
TO: City Council
THROUGH: Public Safety Committee
FROM: City Manager
SUBJECT: The Purchase of Six New Vehicles for the Special Investigations Section of the Pasadena Police Department.

RECOMMENDTION:

It is recommended that the City Council approve a journal voucher amending the FY2002 operating budget by appropriating \$150,000 from the unappropriated Asset Forfeiture Fund balance to Budget Account 8505-207-407500, Asset Forfeiture.

BACKGROUND:

The Special Investigations Section (SIS) of the Pasadena Police Department is responsible for investigating vice and narcotic activity in the City of Pasadena. The personnel assigned to SIS work in a full-time undercover capacity and drive undercover vehicles that allow them to blend in with the general environment. These undercover vehicles are the everyday work cars of the SIS officers and are used for such things as conducting narcotic surveillances, buying narcotics in an undercover capacity, alcohol and prostitution enforcement programs as well as all other assignments the officers are tasked with. Additionally, officers from other sections, typically the Special Enforcement Section (SES), Detectives and Patrol, ask to borrow undercover vehicles on a regular basis for enforcement programs that they are involved with.

With one exception vehicles assigned to SIS are acquired in one of two ways. They are either purchased with funds from the Asset Forfeiture account or are seized under state and federal asset forfeiture laws as the result of criminal investigations. (The one exception is a tactical van that was purchased with General Fund monies in 1996).

Currently there are 24 vehicles assigned to the Special Investigations Section. Of the 24 vehicles 13 were purchased and 11 were seized. Seven have in excess of 100,000 miles

and another seven have more than 75,000 miles. The average age of the fleet is 8 years, with half of the vehicles being 1994 to 1997 vintage while the other half is 1993 or older, the oldest being a 1987 model.

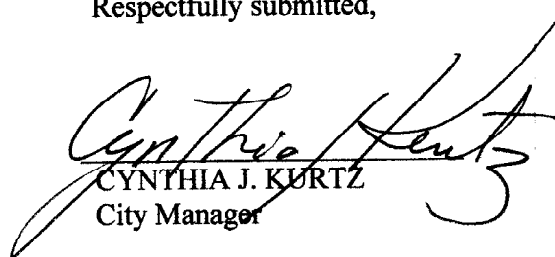
Several of the vehicles are in questionable condition, require a substantial amount of repair and maintenance (which is paid for out of the Asset Forfeiture account) and lack basic safety features such as airbags. Compounding the problems associated with an aging fleet is the fact that all vehicles seized via state laws, which the overwhelming majority of police department seized vehicles are, must now be sold for the proceeds rather than placed into police service as undercover vehicles, as was previously the case. The result is that there are no newly seized vehicles available to replace older, unsafe vehicles that should be taken out of service.

The remedy is to purchase vehicles and to pay for them with monies from the Asset Forfeiture account, as was last done in 1997. The police department is proposing the purchase of six new vehicles at a total cost not to exceed \$150,000, and use them to replace six vehicles from the current SIS fleet. Since vehicle prices fluctuate from month to month the \$150,000 purchase price is based on an average price of \$25,000 per car. The actual purchase price will be determined at the time of sale. The six replaced vehicles would be auctioned with the proceeds returned to the Asset Forfeiture account.

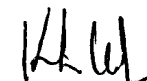
FISCAL IMPACT:

If approved the unappropriated Asset Forfeiture Fund balance would decrease by an amount not to exceed \$150,000, leaving a balance of \$165,367. However, that amount would be offset to a small degree by funds generated by the auction of six older vehicles, and to a greater degree by a significant decrease in repair and maintenance costs that would no longer be necessary or would be covered by the new car warranty.

Respectfully submitted,

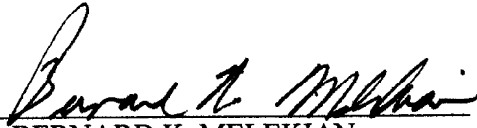

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