

Agenda Report

October 23, 2023

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Finance Committee

FROM: Police Department

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE TASK FORCE FOR REGIONAL AUTO THEFT PREVENTION AND AMEND THE POLICE DEPARTMENT'S FY 2024 OPERATING BUDGET BY RECOGNIZING REVENUE AND APPROPRIATING \$247,595

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the project proposed herein is exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15061 (b)(3), the "Common Sense" exemption that CEQA applies only to projects that may have an effect on the environment;
2. Authorize the City Manager to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Task Force for Regional Auto Theft Prevention (TRAP); and
3. Amend the Police Department's Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Operating Budget by recognizing revenue and appropriating \$247,595 in the General Fund (101) as detailed in the Fiscal Impact Section of this report.

BACKGROUND:

In the past twelve months (September 2022-August 2023), approximately 292 vehicle thefts have been reported to the Pasadena Police Department. Thus far in this calendar year (January – August), 190 vehicle thefts have been reported.

Despite technological advances intended to prevent auto theft, organized criminals have adapted and discovered new ways to steal vehicles. Today's organized vehicle thieves are adept at exploiting weaknesses in certain makes and models of vehicles in order to

steal them. They also employ fraudulent documents in order to illegitimately register stolen vehicles and then sell them, making significant amounts of money from the stolen vehicle. Thieves also use social media scams to sell stolen vehicles to unsuspecting buyers and employ hacking devices to defeat or clone vehicle key fobs. Stolen vehicles are also oftentimes used in the commission of additional crimes.

The Task Force for Regional Auto Theft Prevention (TRAP) is a state-funded, multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency task force whose goal is to create a coordinated effort and encourage maximum cooperation between law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies in response to the described vehicle thefts in Los Angeles County.

TRAP's mission is to reduce the incidents of auto theft, increase the recovery rate of stolen vehicles, identify trends & patterns in auto theft, provide training and expertise to law enforcement partners, and coordinate a deterrence program with the private sector.

TRAP is primarily staffed and led by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and the Los Angeles Police Department. In addition to their personnel, the task force is supplemented by individual officers from 14 other Los Angeles County law enforcement agencies (participating agencies). Three Deputy District Attorneys are also assigned to the task force to handle prosecutions.

TRAP is organized into six enforcement teams that are assigned to geographic areas. The Pasadena Police Department has the opportunity to join TRAP as a participating agency, and the Pasadena Police Officer will join the team that is responsible for Pasadena and the surrounding area. The Pasadena Police Department previously had an officer assigned to TRAP but has not had an officer with the task force since approximately 2005.

TRAP is funded by an assessment added on to vehicle registrations of \$2 per car and \$4 per commercial vehicle (California Vehicle Code 9250.14). This money is placed in a separate TRAP program operating fund which is overseen and administered by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

TRAP will reimburse the basic salary, benefits, and approved overtime costs of an officer from a participating agency (Pasadena PD). TRAP will also provide the officer with a vehicle, including fuel, maintenance, and liability.

A participating agency may terminate its participation in TRAP by providing sixty calendar days advance written notice.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

The proposed action is consistent with the City Council's Strategic Plan Goals to ensure public safety. Assigning an officer to TRAP will ensure the Pasadena Police Department has access to all the resources the task force offers, including expertise in navigating complex cases involving fraudulent purchases, registrations, and VIN switching. It is also a force multiplier, in that the Pasadena Police Department will assign one officer to

the task force but receive the full investigative support of the entire TRAP team on any Pasadena investigations.

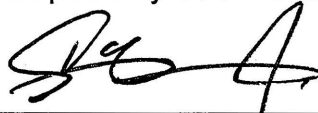
ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

The proposed purchase order contract has been determined to be exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 (b)(3), the "Common Sense" exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Such is the case with the proposed Memorandum of Understanding with TRAP.

FISCAL IMPACT:

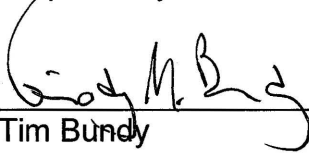
This action will amend the Police Department's FY 2024 Operating Budget by recognizing revenue and appropriating \$247,595 in the General Fund (101). The Department will be utilizing one (1.0) unbudgeted sworn officer FTE for the TRAP team, which will reduce the number of available unbudgeted FTEs in the Police Department from five sworn to a total of four sworn officers. Should the Department choose to exit the TRAP program, the officer will revert to their previous position and the number of unbudgeted sworn officers will return to five. The Department will budget future revenue and appropriations during the annual Operating Budget cycle. There are no anticipated indirect or support costs such as maintenance and IT support.

Respectfully Submitted,



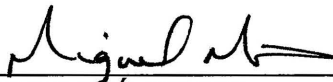
EUGENE HARRIS
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Pasadena Police Department

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MIGUEL MÁRQUEZ
City Manager