



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Michael Martinez, Chief of Police

**BY:** Zak Ayala, Police Commander  
Jeremy Burns, Police Sergeant

**SUBJECT:** Consideration of a Resolution Approving a Grant Agreement with the Office of Traffic Safety for Traffic/DUI Enforcement

**DATE:** September 13, 2022

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### SUMMARY OF ACTION:

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the Chief of Police to execute an agreement with the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) for the receipt of grant funding through the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP), which will be used for traffic and DUI enforcement.

### IMPACT ON FINANCIAL AND PERSONNEL RESOURCES:

There is no adverse financial impact to the City of Arroyo Grande to accept the OTS grant. The annual grant award is for \$58,000. The cost of this program will fall into the following categories: equipment and educational materials (\$8,750); training/travel costs (\$3,450); and overtime staffing for operations (\$45,800). The cost of equipment purchases, training, and overtime staffing for operations will be directly reimbursed through the grant. The cost of time for grant management will be absorbed into the regular duties of the Police Department Administration and Administrative Services Division of the City.

### RECOMMENDATION:

1) Adopt a Resolution authorizing the Chief of Police to execute a grant agreement with the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to help address ongoing traffic safety concerns and appropriate the funding for the activities; and 2) Approve a Budget Amendment Request for FY 2022-23 in the amount of \$58,000 to account for the additional revenue and expenditures related to the grant.

### BACKGROUND:

The Arroyo Grande Police Department has accepted grant funding from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) intermittently in the past. For instance, the Police Department has hosted the county-wide AVOID the 14 Driving Under the Influence (DUI)

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grant program funded through OTS and participated as a member of that program every year it was available. In 2014, OTS restructured its grant programs and eliminated the large, county-wide grant programs due to the significant costs involved. OTS now offers smaller grants to the individual agencies with the goal of a more focused program with easier program management and greater financial accountability. In Fiscal Years 2015-16, 2020-21 and 2021-22, the Arroyo Grande Police Department received OTS funding and managed one of these grants, the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP).

In Fiscal Year 2021-2022, the City received funding of \$50,000 in the form of a STEP grant. This STEP grant provided funding for enforcement activities including DUI checkpoints, DUI saturation patrols, distracted driving enforcement, and pedestrian safety enforcement. The STEP grant also provided funding for traffic enforcement and training for officers, and funding for the purchase of traffic enforcement equipment, including a new hand-held LIDAR device and radar trailer.

#### **ANALYSIS OF ISSUES:**

The City of Arroyo Grande currently hosts a resident population of approximately 17,924. However, the City experiences a significant increase in daily population and traffic due to employment, business and service providers located within Arroyo Grande. Additionally, the City's service population is also impacted by the cities immediately adjacent, making up the "Five Cities" area. The larger Five Cities area population is approximately 45,000 residents, not including the tourist population, which is estimated at approximately 35,000 a year. Because of the City's location situated half-way between Los Angeles and San Francisco, directly west of Bakersfield, near the beach and the Oceano Dunes Vehicular Recreation Area, significant increases in traffic, pedestrian and alcohol related incidents occur within the City's service area. In addition, the City of Arroyo Grande hosts the only public high school in the Five Cities area, servicing over 2000 high school students daily. This causes an increase in the number of inexperienced drivers on the road as well as bicyclists and pedestrians. Finally, the City has traditionally hosted several special events throughout the year, such as the Harvest Festival, Halloween, and Christmas in the Village, which also increase the number of driver's bicyclists and pedestrians on City roadways. With the resident, student, and transient tourist populations impacting the City's total service population, traffic collisions and traffic incidents have also increased over the last several years.

An annual review of DUI collisions reveals that DUI incidents usually increase during the end of summer vacation/Labor Day period, Memorial Day, Independence Day weekends and the holiday period, Thanksgiving through New Year's. Other times with identified increased DUI crimes and collisions include Halloween, Super Bowl Sunday, and local festivals/events.

Specific to the City of Arroyo Grande, alcohol involved traffic incidents represent a significant threat to the community. These incidents do not consider factors such as age

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or economic status and affect the community as a whole; thus law enforcement efforts need to target the safety of all drivers. The City of Arroyo Grande and the surrounding beach communities are a desirable destination for tourists and residents. In particular, the historic Village area consists of numerous restaurants, shops and bars. These qualities draw large crowds, both vehicular and pedestrian. The community is safer by reducing the number of DUI drivers on City streets.

Significant progress is made in reducing the frequency of DUI crimes and collisions when law enforcement agencies conduct awareness campaigns and enforcement efforts. At a nationwide level, there has been a significant downward trend in traffic deaths over the last 20 years. However, DUI deaths have not dropped as dramatically. With continued efforts between law enforcement, community-based organizations, and the media, the number of DUI fatalities could be decreased.

Through grant funding from OTS, the Arroyo Grande Police Department will be more successful in educating the public and curbing the problems associated with drunk driving, traffic violations, and distracted driving. This will increase the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists within the City. Accepting the OTS grant will allow for the purchase of equipment and reimburse overtime staffing directly relating to training, traffic safety, enforcement of DUI laws, and public education. This will be accomplished through a variety of means including but not limited to: speed and distracted driving enforcement operations, advanced training in DUI detection for officers, DUI checkpoints and public awareness campaigns through educational presentations, and participation in OTS programs such as the AVOID Campaign (DUI), Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Awareness Months, Click-it-or-Ticket, and Distracted Driving Awareness Month.

In the past, grant funding has allowed for the purchase of specialized equipment such as a DUI Command Trailer, lighting, and safety equipment, and funded overtime positions for enforcement programs and public education. The goal of the OTS-funded program is to decrease traffic collisions and incidents of driving under the influence by increasing public awareness of traffic related incidents including driving under the influence and increased enforcement of traffic and DUI laws.

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

The following alternatives are provided for the Council's consideration:

1. Adopt the Resolution authorizing the Chief of Police to execute the grant document and appropriate the funding for the activities;
2. Do not adopt the Resolution;
3. Provide other direction to staff.

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**ADVANTAGES:**

Accepting the OTS grant will have several advantages. It will fund additional training in the area of traffic enforcement, DUI detection, and drug impaired driving detection. This will enhance the knowledge, skills, and abilities and, as a result, the overall effectiveness of officers in these areas. More importantly, it will reduce City liability by having more competent officers on daily patrol and participating in enforcement programs.

It will fund equipment not currently in the budget. With the grant funds, additional equipment can be purchased such as flashlights and lighting equipment, speed determination devices, and safety equipment such as OSHA approved traffic safety vests.

It will fund overtime for officers to conduct specialized enforcement operations in the identified areas of concern, such as speed and distracted driving enforcement, DUI saturation patrols, and DUI checkpoints.

Most importantly, the grant will help fund a continuous public awareness campaign for the year to educate the public on traffic safety issues and driving under the influence.

**DISADVANTAGES:**

No disadvantages are identified if the recommended action is approved. By not accepting the grant, the Police Department will not receive additional funding to enhance its current training programs in the identified areas. This will limit the Police Department's additional enforcement programs, training, and equipment and enhanced public education that can be accomplished with grant funding.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

No environmental review is required for this item.

**PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND COMMENTS:**

The Agenda was posted at City Hall and on the City's website in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2.

**Attachments:**

1. Proposed Resolution
2. Grant Agreement