

SUBJECT: APPROVAL TO PURCHASE UNDERCOVER VEHICLES

SOURCE: Police Department

COMMENT: During the month of April 2012, the Porterville Police Department created a three-person unit assigned to the Investigations Division. The unit, designated as the Special Enforcement Team, or SET, is tasked with addressing the problems of auto theft within our community. SET works closely with the Tulare County Auto Theft Task Force (TRATT), on our vehicle theft investigations and assists them with their investigations. The first year of this program has been successful, but staff has identified one notable area for improvement.


SET was initially established as a uniformed position that utilized marked units. During numerous auto theft investigations in the past year, there has been the need to utilize unmarked vehicles for various aspects of an investigation, most commonly surveillances. While SET officers have "dress-down" gear available, when the need for an unmarked vehicle arises they have to rely on either the TRATT investigators' availability or our department's Special Investigations Unit detectives' availability to conduct the surveillances. Even when TRATT investigators or Special Investigations detectives are available, it is time consuming to make the request, give them time to respond, brief the incident(s), and set up the surveillances. At times, this hinders the investigation due to the fact that the requested assistance is either not available, or the time response is so long that the suspect(s) have left the area.

To mitigate the above issues, the Police Department is recommending the purchase of two unmarked vehicles, along with associated emergency equipment, in order for SET to have immediate access to undercover vehicles. This will allow SET officers to minimize their need to contact TRATT or the Special Investigations Unit when they need unmarked vehicles to further their investigations.

Due to the direct relation to auto theft, the Police Department submitted a request to the Tulare County Auto Theft Fund Board of Control and the Board has authorized the expenditure of \$80,000 which will cover the purchase of two undercover vehicles and the purchase/installation of associated emergency equipment.

D.D.



C.M. 

Appropriated/Funded



Item No. 13

The Porterville Police Department requests approval to purchase two vehicles under the following criteria:

- Vehicles must be purchased from a local car lot;
- Vehicles must be 2011 or newer;
- Vehicles must have less than 20,000 miles;
- Vehicles must pass inspection from City Shop.

Upon purchase of the vehicles, emergency equipment would be purchased and installed from the Police Department's current vendors for such equipment.

RECOMMENDATION: That the City Council:

- 1) Accept \$80,000 from the Tulare County Auto Theft Fund;
- 2) Authorize a budget adjustment to the Police Equipment Replacement Fund in the amount of \$80,000;
- 3) Authorize Police Staff to identify and enter negotiations for the purchase of the two vehicles under the criteria set forth above;
- 4) Authorize the purchase/installation of emergency equipment on the vehicles; and
- 5) Authorize payment upon satisfactory delivery of the vehicles/equipment.