TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER DEPARTMENT: POLICE

DATE: NOVEMBER 20, 2006 CMR:414:06

SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE OF BUFFER ZONE PROTECTION PROGRAM (BZPP) GRANT FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF $47,287 AND APPROVAL OF A BUDGET AMENDMENT ORDINANCE (BAO) TRANSFERRING $120,000 FROM THE BZPP GRANT, THE POLICE DONATION FUND, AND THE ASSET SEIZURE FUND INTO THE SWAT VAN REPLACEMENT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM PROJECT NUMBER PD-07001

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that City Council: 1) approve the acceptance of the Buffer Zone Protection Program (BZPP) Grant funds in the amount of $47,287 and 2) approve a Budget Amendment Ordinance (BAO) transferring $47,287 from the BZPP, $55,000 from the Police Donation Fund, and $17,713 from the Asset Seizure Fund into the SWAT Van Replacement Capital Improvement Program PD-07001.

BACKGROUND

In the late 1970s, the Police Department started a Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT). In 1992, the police departments in Mountain View, Los Altos and Palo Alto agreed to establish and participate in the North County Regional SWAT/Hostage Negotiations Team (HNT). Although Los Altos has since withdrawn from the regional team, the cities of Palo Alto and Mountain View have continued to work together under the terms of the original agreement.

The Palo Alto SWAT team is a specialized unit of 13 officers who are highly trained in tactical intervention and advanced weaponry. SWAT team members go through an extensive selection process and train a minimum of 180 hours per year. The SWAT team is on call 24-hours a day, seven days a week. The team responds to extraordinary incidents such as high risk arrest/search warrants, hostage rescue situations, barricaded suspects, dignitary protection, preventing terrorist attacks and engaging heavily armed criminals. As with all dynamic situations, the first few hours of an operation are critical and can dictate the outcome of an event. When the SWAT team is activated, personnel must be ready to go and must have equipment readily available and pre-loaded in order to expedite the team’s response.
The current SWAT van is a retired Palo Alto Fire Department medic van that the team obtained in 1997. The van is currently 16 years old. The van is not large enough to store all of the SWAT team equipment and does not have the capability to transport team members. When the team is activated, they need to find additional vehicles to transport personnel and excess equipment. Due to the age and constant use of the vehicle, it is continually in need of repair. There have been numerous times when the van would not start and recently it caught on fire due to electrical problems. Staff has been seeking funding opportunities that would avoid the use of the General Fund monies for the purchase.

**DISCUSSION**

The proposed SWAT van is a step side van with 22 feet of interior storage capacity. This amount of space will allow the SWAT team to store all of its equipment within the van and to transport team members to and from critical incidents. The van will also have enough room to store equipment for hostage negotiations and tactical dispatching. The van provides an outdoor canopy with lighting that covers a command station that will allow the team to run a tactical command post from the SWAT van.

The proposed van is the standard for SWAT teams. Staff has spoken with representatives from several other agencies that have similar vans and have no noted problems with reliability or maintenance.

The total cost of the new van is approximately $120,000. Recently, the Police Department was awarded $47,287 through the Buffer Zone Protection Program by the California State Office of Homeland Security specifically for the purchase of a SWAT tactical van. This grant, administrated through the County of Santa Clara, must be expended by March 31, 2007.

In addition, the Police Department received a donation of $50,000 from the Marc L. Andreessen Fund. The donation is restricted to the purchase of a SWAT van. Five thousand dollars from the existing Police Donation Fund and the $17,213 from the Asset Seizure Fund will complete the funding necessary to purchase and outfit the vehicle.

**RESOURCE IMPACT**

The attached BAO (Attachment A) reflects an increase in revenues and offsetting increase in expenditures of $120,000 into the SWAT Van Replacement Capital Improvement Program PD-07001. The purchase is being funded by the BZPP Grant ($47,287), the Police Donation Fund ($55,000), and the Asset Seizure Fund ($17,713). If staff recommendation is approved, a $4,568 balance in the Police Donation Fund and a $137 balance in the Asset Seizure Fund will remain. Ongoing maintenance costs are in the Police and Public Works Departments’ current operating budget and will be included in future proposed budgets.
POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Expenditure of funds are consistent with City policy.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This is not a project subject to CEQA requirements.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Budget Amendment Ordinance
Attachment B: CIP PD-07001 Project Description

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