



Memorandum

Date: 7/19/2022

Meeting of: Committee of the Whole - Public Safety and Human Services

File No. CM 22-469

Type: Committee Memo

TO: Committee of the Whole - Public Safety and Human Services

FROM: Mayor Angela Birney

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR CONTACT(S):

| | | |
|--------|--------------------|--------------|
| Police | Chief Darrell Lowe | 425-556-2521 |
|--------|--------------------|--------------|

DEPARTMENT STAFF:

| | | |
|--------|-------------|---------|
| Police | Brian Coats | Captain |
|--------|-------------|---------|

TITLE:

Grant Award of \$50,000 from the Washington Auto Theft Prevention Authority for STARCHASE Pursuit Alternative

OVERVIEW STATEMENT:

Police department staff is requesting council approval to accept funding from the Washington Auto Theft Prevention Authority grant.

In mid-June 2022, the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) announced the availability of grant funding from the Washington Auto Theft Prevention Authority (WATPA) to purchase and deploy STARCHASE LLC's vehicle-mounted GPS tag and track system. This technology is designed to deter and apprehend auto theft suspects and recover stolen property without the need of a high-speed pursuit.

Fueled by a very restrictive pursuit law and lower priority of prosecuting property crimes, criminals have become more brazen. Drivers refusing to stop for the police is becoming a common occurrence. In one single day alone this Spring, three different vehicles refused to stop for Redmond officers and fled. It is generally not known at the time why drivers choose to flee but most of the time it involves a stolen car.

Auto theft is up across the region, including Redmond. From January 1, 2021, to June 28, 2021, the City had 58 reported auto thefts. During the same timeframe this year, the City had 120 reported auto thefts: a 107% increase.

Only a few select agencies were offered the opportunity to apply for this grant for pilot testing prior to WASPC's recommendation for broader use throughout the State. Police staff applied for the grant on June 15th, 2022, and on June 23rd learned the city was approved for funding in the amount of \$50,000. This grant funding will be used to purchase equipment, a GPS live tracking subscription, and on-site training. The grant award became effective July 1st, 2022 and expires on June 30th, 2023.

The City's purchasing policy mandates that grant acceptance is required by Council. WASPC required the grant funding to be approved immediately or risk losing the funding to another City. Staff accepted the award on June 27th along with a signed non-supplanting agreement. Council may refuse to accept the grant as no funding has been received.

☒ **Additional Background Information/Description of Proposal Attached**

REQUESTED ACTION:

☐ **Receive Information** ☒ **Provide Direction** ☐ **Approve**

REQUEST RATIONALE:

- **Relevant Plans/Policies:**
Language specific to this pursuit alternative strategy will be incorporated into the department's policy and procedure manual.
- **Required:**
N/A
- **Council Request:**
Approve
- **Other Key Facts:**
The legality behind "seizing" the suspect via a GPS tracker without a warrant has been reviewed by the ACLU and City legal staff. Neither sees a problem with respect to a 4th Amendment concern if the police officer has established probable cause that a crime has occurred. Probable cause exists as soon as a suspect obviously attempts to elude following the activation of the officer's emergency lights and siren. In this scenario, police officers do not have time to apply for a search warrant, which puts the circumstance into the exigency exception.

OUTCOMES:

The City applied for the WATPA grant under the category, "Innovative enforcement programs that leverage regional partnerships to combat auto theft." Redmond will be collaborating with other grant awarded law enforcement agencies on joint training opportunities and plan to meet quarterly to share experiences and best practices. The City of Redmond, in conjunction with our law enforcement partners have set realistic and obtainable outcomes:

- Increase successful apprehension rates
- Enforce existing laws under current pursuit constraints
- Increase community, officer, suspect and passenger safety
- Create a deterrence for non-compliance by safely apprehending offenders
- Improve the condition of stolen cars returned to their owners

COMMUNITY/STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH AND INVOLVEMENT:

- **Timeline (previous or planned):**
Summer 2022: Procure and equip 6 patrol cars with this technology
Fall 2022: Receive training with the technology and establish policies and procedures
Winter 2022 through Spring 2023: Use technology to successfully track and apprehend auto theft suspects.
Winter 2022 through
- **Outreach Methods and Results:**

N/A

- **Feedback Summary:**

N/A

BUDGET IMPACT:

Total Cost:

No budget impacts.

Approved in current biennial budget:

☐ Yes

☐ No

☒ N/A

Budget Offer Number:

228 Criminal Justice

Budget Priority:

Safe and Resilient

Other budget impacts or additional costs:

☐ Yes

☐ No

☒ N/A

If yes, explain:

N/A

Funding source(s):

General Fund

Budget/Funding Constraints:

N/A

☐ Additional budget details attached

COUNCIL REVIEW:

Previous Contact(s)

| Date | Meeting | Requested Action |
|------|--|------------------|
| N/A | Item has not been presented to Council | N/A |

Proposed Upcoming Contact(s)

| Date | Meeting | Requested Action |
|-----------|------------------|------------------|
| 7/19/2022 | Business Meeting | Approve |

Time Constraints:

N/A

ANTICIPATED RESULT IF NOT APPROVED:

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The City will not accept grant funding if Council does not approve the grant.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: STARCHASE Presentation

Attachment B: ACLU Statement