

**CITY OF ALBANY
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Date: April 20, 2009

Reviewed by: BP

SUBJECT: Expenditure of State COPS Grant Funds to Implement a Mobile Computing Capability in Police Patrol Vehicles

**REPORT BY: Mike McQuiston, Chief of Police
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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends adoption of Resolution No. 09-18 authorizing the expenditure of COPS grant funds to purchase the equipment and services necessary to install mobile data computer (MDC) terminals in police patrol fleet vehicles, in an amount not to exceed \$100,000.00

BACKGROUND

The State Citizen's Option for Public Safety (COPS) Program provides money to local police agencies for the purpose of enhancing public safety by supporting front line law enforcement. These funds may not be used to supplant existing funds for law enforcement services already provided by the city and must directly support front line law enforcement personnel. The City has received a \$100,000.00 COPS award for the current fiscal year and police department staff wishes to utilize these funds to install Mobile Data Computers in all police patrol vehicles.

DISCUSSION

Currently, the police radio system is used as the primary means to dispatch officers to calls for service. Conversely, officers are dependant upon dispatchers for information retrieval for nearly all law enforcement activity, including; driver license checks, vehicle registration information, premise file information, probation/parole status, criminal history, arrest warrants, restraining orders, etc. In each case, a dispatcher must query the appropriate data system and relay the information via radio to officers in the field. These routine demands on our dispatchers have a diminishing effect on their ability to properly service other consumers of their time and attention (i.e. fire and medical units, telephone callers, public service counter, clerical duties, etc.).

Additionally, due to recent automation of the report writing process, when an officer authors a report he/she must now return to the police department to access the

department's computerized records and report writing system. Each time this happens (over 3,200 times during 2008) an officer is in the police station instead of "on the street" where he/she is visible to the public and better able to respond to calls for service.

ANALYSIS

The method currently in place for officers to access and receive information from these critical law enforcement data systems is antiquated, time consuming and cumbersome for dispatchers and officers. Installation of mobile data computers (MDC's) in the police patrol vehicles will allow officers to receive calls for service, have immediate access to the needed law enforcement telecommunications systems, including the ability to retrieve photo identification, receive real-time information and author reports while in the field. Such a system will free officers from spending time at the police station, reduce radio traffic and lower the amount of multi-tasking our dispatchers are currently required to perform. Dispatchers will be able to focus on incoming emergency and non-emergency calls, providing service at the police department front counter, and completing other required tasks. This proposal also establishes a communications network that will support similar improvements to communication with fire/medical field units in the near future.

Implementation of this project requires upgrades to our current telecommunications infrastructure, specifically, the purchase of hardware, software and licensing rights, and the costs associated with installation and maintenance of these systems. Due to the proprietary software already in use for police records management and dispatch, a small field of vendors was invited to bid on this project, based on their demonstrated experience with systems already in operation at other law enforcement agencies. **Panasonic, Datalux** and **RoboVu** responded with price quotes for the system hardware. Telephone inquires and site visits have been conducted to see various products in service and talk with current users. **Datalux** provided the lowest bid and has been selected as the vendor of preference. The cost for the desired Datalux MDC equipment is \$48,361.00.

Police department staff has also conducted performance research on infrastructure, communication technology, and compatibility, and has identified **Walsh Wireless, Sprint** and **NetMotion** as preferred sub-vendors for this project. Hardware, software and licensing costs for the required Virtual Private Network and Network Interface Server are \$34,931.89. Information Technology consulting services from **ExtraTeam** are projected to be approximately \$7,250.00. Various shipping charges and sales taxes total approximately \$6,060.65. The estimated cost to implement this project is \$96,603.54. Police staff requests Council authorize the project to proceed with an expenditure ceiling not to exceed \$100,000.00 (the amount of the COPS grant). This will allow staff the flexibility to authorize unforeseen costs directly associated with completion of the proposed project.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT

Staff anticipates the following sustainability impacts:

Officers will spend less time traveling to and from, and in the police station preparing reports. The ability to complete reports in the field increases visibility and reduces response times to calls for service.

Less radio traffic for the dispatch staff will allow them more time to address other needs, resulting in more efficient delivery of city services.

Lower paper consumption - Currently, officers in the field frequently ask the dispatcher to "print that" for later review when they receive information over the radio. These requests to print DMV records, criminal history, etc. during field investigations will likely be significantly reduced due to the availability of having the information sent directly to the officers in the field via the MDC.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no match requirement for this grant. Funding for this project will come from COPS grant monies.

Monthly recurring costs, estimated at \$702.91 through June 2011, will be paid from existing funds previously allocated for a \$985.49 monthly 9-1-1 service contract that was terminated in September 2008 with the installation of a new 9-1-1 system.

Monthly recurring costs, estimated at \$1,521.97 beginning July 2011, will be paid from future COPS grant funding. Under the recently passed California State Budget, future COPS grant funding (and other similar state public safety funding) has been designated to come from a 15% increase in state Vehicle License Fee funds, which moves these revenue streams outside of the state budgeting process to theoretically help ensure their reliability.

Other periodic licensing and warranty costs (as noted on the attached document) will be included in future biennial budget requests.

Attachments:

Resolution

MDC Project Cost Matrix

MDC Project Recurring Costs

City of Albany
Resolution

Resolution No.

A RESOLUTION OF THE ALBANY CITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZING THE USE OF CITIZEN'S OPTIONS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY (COPS) FUNDING TO PROVIDE FOR THE INSTALLATION OF MOBILE COMPUTING CAPABILITY IN POLICE PATROL VEHICLES IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$100,000.00.

WHEREAS, The State COPS grant program provides money to local police agencies for the purpose of enhancing public safety by supporting front line law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, the funds have been awarded to the City of Albany with no matching fund requirement; and

WHEREAS, the Albany Police Department has identified a need to install mobile computing capability in the patrol vehicle fleet; and

WHEREAS, police department staff has received a bid to provide equipment necessary to accomplish this system installation; and

WHEREAS, police department staff recommends installation and deployment of such a system using COPS grant funds;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Albany City Council hereby approves the appropriation of a new police patrol fleet mobile data computing system, related equipment and services, utilizing COPS grant funds in an amount not to exceed \$100,000.00.