



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
October 27, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Paul Buddenhagen, City Manager

Submitted by: Jennifer A. Louis, Chief of Police

Subject: Revenue Grant: California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) for the 2026-2027
"Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP)" Grant

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager or designee to accept the "Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP)" grant and execute any resultant revenue agreements and amendments with the California Office of Traffic Safety. This OTS grant is \$200,000 for the period of October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027, which corresponds to Federal Fiscal Year 2027.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The total of this project will not exceed \$200,000. Grant revenues will be deposited into budget code 309-71-703-812-0000-000-000-431110- to fully offset associated expenditures. The STEP grant will fund overtime, related benefits, equipment purchases, and training costs, thereby reducing additional General Fund obligations.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Securing OTS grant funding is a Strategic Plan Priority Project that advances the City's goal of fostering a resilient, safe, connected, and prepared community.

The Traffic Bureau within the Berkeley Police Department is currently staffed by two motor officers, one traffic data analyst, one Sergeant, and one Lieutenant. Motor officers are responsible for injury-collision investigations and traffic enforcement; however, their availability is often limited due to ancillary duties and ongoing personnel shortages within the Operations/Patrol Division.

OTS grant funding strengthens the City's traffic-safety initiatives by enabling both patrol and motor officers to address critical traffic safety concerns—most notably impaired driving—outside of their regularly scheduled duties. In addition to enhancing impaired-driving enforcement, the grant supports leadership development and specialized training in traffic safety and DUI/impaired-driving enforcement. Collectively, these improvements bolster the department's mission to promote public safety for all roadway users.

BACKGROUND

Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) rankings place the City of Berkeley number one for seven of the last eight years in pedestrian and bicycle related injury collisions when compared to sixty-two other cities with similar populations. Each year, hundreds of people are injured in traffic collisions in Berkeley. The City also consistently ranks high in total fatal and injury collisions, hit-and-run injury collisions, speed-related collisions, nighttime collisions, and motorcycle-involved collisions. With assistance from the 2027 Office of Traffic Safety Grant, the department will continue our efforts to reduce the number of community members injured in collisions —whether they walk, roll, drive, bike, or ride a motorcycle in our city.

In 2023, OTS data shows Berkeley ranked:

- 1st out of 62 cities for injury collisions involving pedestrians
- 2nd out of 62 cities for collisions involving bicyclists
- 3rd out of 62 cities for collisions involving pedestrians age 65+
- 8th out of 62 cities for collisions involving motorcyclists

Based on these rankings, Berkeley remains one of the most dangerous cities in California for pedestrians or bicyclists.

Between 2015 through 2025, The City experienced 34 fatal auto collisions. Of these fatalities, 20 involved pedestrians, 4 involved bicyclists, and 4 involved drugs or alcohol as contributing factor.

The OTS Grant directly aligns with the City Council's Vision Zero Program, which aims to eliminate severe and fatal traffic injuries. The grant supports two of Vision Zero's three core tenets: Public Awareness/Education and Traffic Enforcement. Public awareness efforts include social media messaging, departmental updates, and direct engagement with community members in the field and at public meetings. Traffic enforcement is conducted through data-driven strategies focused on primary collision factor violations in areas where they are most likely to occur. Together, these efforts strengthen Berkeley's commitment to roadway safety and injury prevention.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

The City of Berkeley continues to have one of the highest bicycle and pedestrian usage rates in the Alameda County. As a result, a significant number of bicyclists and pedestrians regularly share the roadway with motorists. This grant supports the City's efforts to promote sustainable transportation choices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while also advancing the goal of reducing traffic-related injuries and fatalities across all modes of transportation.

Revenue Grant: California Office of Traffic Safety Grant
for the 2026 STEP Grant

CONSENT CALENDAR
October 27, 2026

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Police Department requests approval of this funding to enhance our current mission of providing a safer environment for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists, and motorists on all City of Berkeley roadways and highways.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

The California Office of Traffic Safety currently provides the only known grant funding specifically to traffic enforcement and related education. If the City were to decline this grant, the Police Department would need to rely on additional General Fund overtime resources to maintain current enforcement and education efforts. Without these grant-supported activities, the overall level of traffic safety in Berkeley could be reduced, potentially increasing the risk of injuries and fatalities for community members.

CONTACT PERSON

Lieutenant Rashawn Cummings, Police Traffic Bureau, (510) 981-5983

Attachments:

Resolution: Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) Grant from The Office of Traffic Safety to Fund Strategies to Reduce the Number of Injuries and Deaths Related to Traffic Collisions in The City of Berkeley

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

SELECTIVE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM (STEP) GRANT FROM THE
OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY TO ADDRESS THE INJURIES AND DEATHS
RELATED TO TRAFFIC COLLISIONS OCCURING IN THE CITY OF BERKELEY

WHEREAS, the Police Department is committed to providing a safe and secure environment through law enforcement within the City of Berkeley; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) has made grant funding available to the Police Department to assist in its mission of increasing traffic safety; and

WHEREAS, this grant will provide funding to support efforts to reduce injury and fatal collisions involving pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists, and motorists on all City of Berkeley roadways and highways; and

WHEREAS, grant revenues will be deposited into budget code 309-71-703-812-0000-000-000-431110-, in the DUI Enforcement Education Program Fund.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager or designee is authorized to accept the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) Grant and enter into the resultant grant agreement and any amendments, with the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to fund increased levels of impaired or distracted driving enforcement, nighttime seatbelt enforcement, motorcycle safety enforcement, and educational programs regarding bicycle and pedestrian collisions, in the amount of \$200,000 for the period of October 1, 2026 to September 30, 2027.