



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
September 10, 2024

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: LaTanya Bellow, Interim City Manager

Submitted by: Jennifer A. Louis, Chief of Police

Subject: Revenue Grant: California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) for the 2025
"Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) Grant

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the Chief of Police to accept the "Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP)" grant and enter into the resultant grant agreement and any amendments, with the California Office of Traffic Safety. This OTS grant is for \$255,000 for the period of October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2025, which is Federal Fiscal Year 2025.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The total of this project will not exceed \$255,000. Grant revenues will be deposited into budget code 309-71-703-812-0000-000-000-431110 to offset expenditures. Appropriation of the expenditures is being included in the Second Amendment to the FY 2025 Annual Appropriations Ordinance. This grant will fund overtime, benefits, equipment, training costs, and reduce additional General Fund expenditures.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Securing OTS grant funding is a Strategic Plan Priority Project, advancing our goal to create a resilient, safe, connected, and prepared city.

Currently the Traffic Bureau at the Berkeley Police Department is staffed by one Motor Officer, one Traffic Data Analyst, a Sergeant, and a Lieutenant. Motor officers' responsibilities include injury-collision investigations and traffic enforcement; however, resources often deplete rapidly due to ancillary duties and personnel shortages in the operations/patrol division. OTS funding builds upon our current traffic safety efforts by allowing patrol and motor officers opportunities to address traffic safety issues-most significantly pedestrian and bicycle safety, distracted and impaired driving- in addition to and outside of their regularly scheduled duties. Additionally, the funds provide opportunities for leadership development and learning in traffic safety and DUI/impaired driving enforcement, and enhance the department's overall mission of public safety. This grant year's funding also provides for the replacement of the department's electronic sign and radar trailer.

BACKGROUND

Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) rankings place the City of Berkeley in the top two for the past seven years in pedestrian and bicycle related injury collisions when compared to sixty other cities with comparable populations. Each year hundreds of people are injured in traffic collisions that occur in the City of Berkeley. Berkeley maintains a high ranking in total fatal and injury collisions, hit and run injury collisions, speed related collisions, nighttime collisions, and motorcycle involved collisions. With assistance from the 2025 Office of Traffic Safety Grant, the department will continue our efforts to reduce the number of community members injured in collisions whether they choose to walk, drive, bike or ride a motorcycle in our city.

In 2021, the City of Berkeley was number two (2/60) for injury collisions involving pedestrians; number one (1/60) for collisions involving bicyclists; number seven (7/60) for collisions involving pedestrians 65+, and fourteenth (14/60) for collisions involving motorcyclists. Based on these statistics and OTS rankings, the City of Berkeley is one of the most dangerous cities in the State of California to be a pedestrian or bicyclist.

Between 2012-2023, there have been thirty-three fatal auto collisions in the City of Berkeley. Sixteen of those involved pedestrians, and four of those sixteen were pedestrians 65+. Five fatal collisions involved a bicyclist, three involved DUI, and two involved a motorcycle.

The OTS Grant and the City Council's Vision Zero Program have shared ideologies. BPD's participation directly supports two of three of Vision Zero's tenets. BPD's efforts directly support Public Awareness Education and Traffic Enforcement. Public Awareness through our social media, departmental messaging, and direct contact with the public (in the field and at community meetings) and data-driven enforcement of primary collision factor offenses in areas where they have the highest probability of occurring.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

The City of Berkeley continues to have one of the highest bicycle and pedestrian usage rates in the County of Alameda and, as a result, there are a large number of bicyclists and pedestrians sharing the roadway with motorists. This grant will support the City of Berkeley's efforts to promote more sustainable forms of transportation, reducing greenhouse gas emissions-with the goal of reducing traffic injuries and fatalities related to all modes of transportation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Police Department requests this funding be approved 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 specific to traffic enforcement and related education. Not accepting this OTS grant would require additional overtime expenditures from General Fund resources or could result in a decrease in the overall safety of the citizens of Berkeley

CONTACT PERSON

Ben Cardoza, Berkeley Police Traffic Bureau, (510) 981-5982

Attachments:

1: Resolution

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

REVENUE GRANT: 2025 SELECTIVE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM (STEP)
GRANT FROM THE OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY

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 them in their 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 Chief of Police is authorized to accept the 2025 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 \$255,000 for the period of October 1, 2024 to September 30, 2025.