



**Honorable Mayor and Members of the Hermosa Beach City Council**

**APPROVE GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE CALIFORNIA OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY THROUGH THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION FOR THEIR SELECTIVE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM**

(Police Chief Paul LeBaron)

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**Recommended Action:**

Staff recommends City Council:

1. Approve grant agreement of \$80,000 from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, for their Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) (**Attachment 1**);
2. Add estimated revenue of \$80,000 in the Grant Fund; and
3. Appropriate \$80,000 in the Grant Fund for traffic enforcement operations to reduce alcohol-related accidents and other primary crash factors.

**Executive Summary:**

The Hermosa Beach Police Department (HBPD) applied for the OTS-STEP grant in January 2024. Staff recommends City Council approve the grant agreement authorizing the acceptance of \$80,000 from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to reduce alcohol-related accidents and other primary crash factors.

**Background:**

Every year, OTS offers a variety of grant funding to law enforcement agencies to support efforts to reduce alcohol-related and preventable crashes by enforcing traffic measures. The OTS-STEP grant specifically focuses on reducing the number of persons killed and injured in crashes involving alcohol and other primary factors. It supports law enforcement strategies such as impaired driving enforcement; enforcement operations focusing on primary crash factors; distracted driving; night-time seat belt enforcement; special enforcement operations encouraging motorcycle safety; enforcement and public awareness in areas with a high number of bicycle and pedestrian crashes; and educational programs.

HBPD continues to look for opportunities to enhance the safety and wellbeing of the community and applied for the OTS-STEP grant to support its efforts in conducting enforcement details by utilizing best techniques to keep Hermosa Beach the safest little beach city.

### **Discussion:**

The Hermosa Beach Police Department is dedicated to promoting traffic safety by enforcing laws and educating the public on primary crash factors, such as distracted and impaired driving. With the increase in special events and the approaching holiday season, HBPD anticipates higher vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

In recent years, the City experienced a notable rise in traffic crashes. In 2021, HBPD responded to 421 traffic-crash related calls for service, which increased to 491 in 2022, and 500 in 2023. This represents a 15.8 percent increase in traffic crash calls for service between 2021 and 2023. While DUI arrests decreased by 10.5 percent over the same period, driving under the influence remains a significant issue in Hermosa Beach. In 2023 alone, there were 12 alcohol-related crashes, including one fatality and 14 injuries.

To address these concerns, HBPD's Traffic Unit conducted research to identify effective strategies for improving traffic safety throughout the community. The OTS-STEP grant offers the Traffic Unit the opportunity to implement targeted traffic enforcement efforts to reduce crashes and associated injuries by focusing on primary crash factors in the City of Hermosa Beach.

The OTS-STEP grant outlines several objectives for HBPD during the grant period. The Grant Agreement (**Attachment 1**) includes the full list. Key objectives include:

- Training law enforcement personnel through National Highway Traffic Safety Administration programs such as Drug Recognition, Standardized Field Sobriety Testing, and Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement.
- Developing and maintaining a program to alert patrol and traffic officers repeat DUI offenders with suspended or revoked licenses due to DUI convictions.
- Conducting highly publicized enforcement operations focused on distracted driving, motorcycle safety, and pedestrian/bicycle enforcement.
- Conducting DUI/Driver's License Checkpoints.
- Providing educational presentations on traffic safety topics, including distracted driving, DUI, speed, bicycle and pedestrian safety, seat belts, and child passenger safety.

Staff recommends City Council approve the grant agreement, authorizing the acceptance of \$80,000 from OTS to help reduce alcohol-related accidents and other primary crash factors.

### **Environmental Review:**

This agreement has no potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, and as such, is not a "project" subject to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) 14 Cal. Code Regs Section 15378.

### **General Plan Consistency:**

This report and associated recommendation have been evaluated for their consistency with the City's General Plan. Relevant Policies are listed below:

#### *Public Safety Element*

### **Goal 5. High quality police and fire protection services provided to residents and visitors.**

Policies:

- **5.1 Crime deterrence.** Regularly evaluate the incidence of crime and identify and implement measures to deter crime.
- **5.2 High level of response.** Achieve optimal utilization of allocated public safety resources and provide desired levels of response, staffing, and protection within the community.
- **5.3 Use of technology.** Provide and use smart surveillance technology and communication systems to improve crime prevention and inform the community regarding actions to take in case of emergency.
- **5.5 Crime prevention outreach program.** Offer youth programs, recreation opportunities, educational programs and other services to encourage crime prevention behavior.
- **5.9 Police and Fire enforcement grants.** Pursue grant funding and other outreach programs to minimize and abate nuisances.

### **Fiscal Impact:**

The California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration approved HBPD's funding request, granting the City a total of \$80,000 to reduce alcohol-related accidents and other primary crash factors.

If approved, estimated revenue of \$80,000 would be added to the Grant Fund and \$80,000 would be appropriated in the Grant Fund for the above operations and equipment. The grants coordinator will keep track of all expenditures made during the grant period and submits requests for reimbursement to OTS.

### **Attachment:**

OTS-STEP Grant Agreement

**Respectfully Submitted by:** Garrett McDermott, Police Sergeant

**Concur:** Paul LeBaron, Police Chief

**Noted for Fiscal Impact:** Brandon Walker, Administrative Services Director

**Legal Review:** Patrick Donegan, City Attorney

**Reviewed by:** Angela Crespi, Deputy City Manager

**Approved:** Suja Lowenthal, City Manager