



City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 24-4549, **Agenda Item #:** 51.

5/2/2024

Posting Language

Approve a resolution authorizing the application for and acceptance of grant funding of an undetermined amount up to \$501,000 from the Texas Motor Vehicle Crime Prevention Authority to continue the Austin Police Department Auto Burglary and Theft Interdiction Project.

Lead Department

Austin Police Department.

Fiscal Note

Funding is available from the Texas Motor Vehicle Crime Prevention Authority for the project period of September 1, 2024 - August 31, 2025. The City match of 20% will be met by accounting for the base salary and fringe benefits of existing City positions.

Prior Council Action:

May 18, 2023 - Council approved Resolution No. 20230518-028, which authorized the application for and acceptance of the grant funding from the Texas Motor Vehicle Crime Prevention Authority to continue the Austin Police Department Auto Burglary and Theft Interdiction Project.

For More Information:

Jeff Greenwalt, Chief of Staff, Austin Police Department at 512-974-5030.

Additional Backup Information:

The purpose of this grant is to continue the Austin Police Department (APD) Auto Burglary and Theft Interdiction Project. Through enforcement and outreach, the project will focus on reducing the rate of auto theft and burglary of vehicles in the City of Austin.

The budget for the September 1, 2024 - August 31, 2025, project period will cover personnel and fringe costs for existing positions (three detectives, one full-time administrative specialist, a part-time neighborhood liaison, and a part time investigative support specialist). The City match of 20% will be met by accounting for the base salary and fringe benefits of existing City positions assigned in part to the project.

A sample resolution is included as an attachment. The resolution must state:

- Funds will be used for the Texas Motor Vehicle Crime Prevention Authority (MVCPA) purpose provided in Texas Transportation Code Chapter 1006.
- Funds will assist with combatting motor vehicle theft, motor vehicle burglary and fraud-related motor vehicle crime, and funds will be returned in the event of loss or misuse.
- Designate the Authorized Official (Assistant City Manager), Financial Officer (Financial Manager), and Project Director (APD Lieutenant).

APD has partnered with the Texas MVCPA, formerly the Auto Burglary and Theft Prevention Authority, since the late 1990s. With the assistance of MVCPA grant funding, the APD Auto Burglary and Theft Interdiction

Project has been successful in implementing a variety of strategies to reduce auto thefts, recover stolen vehicles, and prosecute offenders. Proactive crime analysis assists in identifying problems involving commercial auto thefts and in targeting “theft for profit” offenders. Examples of commercial auto theft activities occurring in Austin include VIN switches, vehicle cloning, chop shops, illegal part dealings, and international smuggling operations. Continued population growth in Austin generates an increased number of vehicles, naturally leading to additional opportunities for criminal activity.

MVCPA-required measures include the number of: vehicles recovered, vehicle theft cases cleared, persons arrested for vehicle theft, burglary cases cleared, persons arrested for burglary, groups of offenders identified, identified/documented offenders, cases where law enforcement officers collaborated with prosecutors, bait vehicle deployments, covert operations/general operations, agency assists, internal contacts, external law enforcement contacts, cases investigated, intelligence meetings attended, crime analysis bulletins disseminated, 68A inspections, vehicles inspected, collaborations related to fraud, businesses inspected and value of parts recovered, "round up" operations, outreaches, presentations, etching events, advertisements, report cards issued, postings in social media outlets, classes, and participants.