

Date February 25, 2019

WHEREAS, The City of Des Moines Police Department requests City Council approval for Mayor Cownie and Police Chief Dana Wingert to sign the grant application for the FY2020 Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau (GTSB) grant, and;

WHEREAS, the solicited funds will be utilized to raise public awareness of traffic, pedestrian and bicycle safety as well as purchase specified equipment, training, and;

WHEREAS, the application in the amount of \$204,700 does not require matching funds, and;

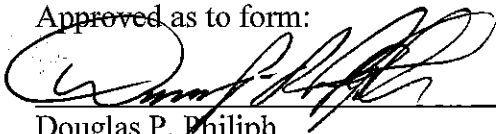
WHEREAS, should the grant be awarded, Chief of Police Dana Wingert will take any and all steps necessary for the timely implementation of said grant; and;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Des Moines, Iowa authorizes the Chief of Police and the Mayor to sign the application for grant funding from the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau for fiscal year 2020 with the City Clerk to attest to the Mayor's signature and the Chief of Police is directed to take any and all steps necessary to implement the grant if and when awarded.

(Council Letter Number 19-080 attached)

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ to adopt

Approved as to form:



Douglas P. Philip  
Assistant City Attorney

COUNCIL ACTION	YEAS	NAYS	PASS	ABSENT
COWNIE				
BOESEN				
COLEMAN				
GATTO				
GRAY				
MANDELBAUM				
WESTERGAARD				
TOTAL				

MOTION CARRIED

APPROVED

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

**CERTIFICATE**

I, DIANE RAUH, City Clerk of said City hereby certify that at a meeting of the City Council of said City of Des Moines, held on the above date, among other proceedings the above was adopted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal the day and year first above written.

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

### Statement of Problem

The City of Des Moines is home to the state government, regional business centers for several national insurance and financial companies as well as Drake University and Grandview College. The Police Department provides public safety services for more than 200,000 residents and approximately 40,000 daily commuters. The increase in traffic alone causes concern for public safety for citizens as well as law enforcement. The City has embraced the "complete streets" design concept and transportation policies where motorist, cyclist and pedestrians share space on the road. Lanes specifically marked for bicycles use have been added to several street. The lanes are positioned between traffic and parked vehicles. If a vehicle is turning, they cross the bicycle lane often without signal indication. Impairment or distracted driving makes this situation even more dangerous. LED lights have been added to crosswalks, school zones, and school buses in efforts to increase awareness and promote safety. Yet several pedestrians are injured or killed each year by motorists. Police officers encourage voluntary compliance with traffic safety laws through the issuance of citations. These efforts are reflected in the 23,437 citations and warnings for traffic violation such as speeding, stop light observation and texting as well as seatbelt and child restraint violations between October 2017 and September 2018. During the same period, there were 1331 individuals tested for suspected operation of a motorized vehicle while intoxicated or impaired which resulted in 789 OWI arrests. These statistic reflect a decline over the same period in the previous year. While the reduction is positive, further reduction is needed to support public safety through, additional enforcement, education and funding to encourage further voluntary compliance with traffic laws.

### Narrative

The City of Des Moines has a population of 215,472 residents according to the 2016 U.S. Census Bureau estimates. Every day more than 40,000 individuals commute to the city to work, dine or for entertainment and recreation. (Iowa Workforce Development 2013 report) The city hosts many high-profile events including the Iowa caucuses, NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament, numerous concerts, community events and high school championships. This increase in visitors and traffic creates public safety and law enforcement concerns for citizens and guests. Residents often express these concerns to the city police department with requests for heightened enforcement in their neighborhoods or a particular area of the city such as school zones and the downtown area.

Speeding, impaired or distracted driving, pedestrian and bicycle safety are the most common concerns expressed by citizens. The police department has responded with heightened enforcement and efforts to increase public awareness. Officers encourage voluntary compliance with traffic laws through continued enforcement, educational presentations and media messages. However, the number of accidents involving impaired and distracted drivers and bicyclist continues to rise. The number of citations issued for traffic law violations slightly decreased in 2018. However, there is still a need to continue efforts to increase compliancy with traffic laws and raise awareness of traffic issues that concern all who share the roads.

#### **Speeding:**

Des Moines Police officers issued 9,104 speed related citations and warning (not including citations issued as a result of speed cameras) between October 2017 and September 2018. Urban drivers often increase their speed when they see a stop-light begin to change color in efforts to "beat" the red light. This combined with issues of drivers "rolling" through a stop sign instead of coming to a complete stop or ignoring the sign completely has resulted in 1,383 citations and warning being issued from October 2017

through September 2018 for stop-light/sign violation. As a fast growing community, congestion can lead to more driver frustration resulting in accidents. Speed and the lack of seatbelt use are still leading causes for personal injury and fatal accidents. The Police Department issued 1,434 citations and warnings related to seatbelts and child restraints. This behavior risks the lives and safety of drivers, passengers, cyclists and pedestrians.

The number of citations and warnings for speeding, stop sign/light, seat belt and other traffic violations from October 2017 through September 2018 totaled 23,437. A decrease of 8% from the previous twelve month period. However, further encouragement for voluntary compliance to traffic laws is needed to change behavior and support safety for all who share the roads.

### **Impaired or Distracted Driving:**

The State of Iowa has seen a steady increase in the sale of alcohol over the last three years. Similarly, the police department has recorded an increase in the number of interaction with the public related to alcohol consumption in public, drug impairment/ possession and impaired/ distracted driving. From October 2017 to September 2018, there were 1,275 individuals tested for Operating While Impaired, (OWI) resulted in 789 arrests. The impairment includes alcohol as well as drug impairment. Public intoxication continues to be an issue of pedestrian safety as impaired individuals often ignore crosswalk and pedestrian crossing indicators at stop lights.

Increased reliance on electronic devices such as cell phones and computerized screens in vehicles, has increased the demand on drivers' attention. There are a number of benefits associated with vehicle technology and updated cellular devices have developed ways of operating "hands free" for drivers. However, not all devices are updated with the latest "hands free" technology and not all drivers are fully educated on the capabilities of the cellular phone or the vehicle technology. Even though the technology maybe "hands free." A drive may still be distracted based on conversation in the vehicle or on the cellular phone.

Law enforcement interactions with the public related to impaired/distracted driving coupled with the addition of technology related attention demands on drivers would indicate that further education and enforcement is needed to encourage a changes needed to support greater public safety.

### **Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety:**

The City of Des Moines is investing \$1 million per year to improve walkability throughout the city with the addition and maintenance of bike trails and roadway bike lanes which place bicyclists and drivers in very close proximity to one and other. The City has embraced the "complete streets" design concept and transportation policies. While designed to improve safety in the long-term, it is a change for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians alike who are all now sharing the same street space. Residents, commuters and visitors citywide have increased their participation in activities such as walking, running and bicycling. As more individuals enjoy outdoor activities year round, the concern for safety increases. Citizens have expressed concerns about motorist ignoring traffic directives such as traffic signals, crosswalk, school zones and stop signs.

The addition of flashing lights to crosswalk signage, school bus stop signs and school zone signs has helped raise awareness for some motorists. The addition of bicycle lanes on the main streets of downtown serves to remind motorist to be watchful of individuals choosing cycling as an alternative mode of transportation. Despite these extra efforts to raise awareness, several cyclist and pedestrians are injured or

killed in accidents involving a vehicle every year. Raising awareness through education and enforcement has proven to be effective but continuous efforts are needed.

### Objectives

The City of Des Moines Police Department's primary objective is to assist in making the roadways safe for drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

- Increased public awareness and education as it pertains to driving habits, seatbelts, child restraints, driving while distracted and/or impaired.
- Continue educational presentations on bicycle safety to include traffic laws, riding with or crossing traffic, proper use of helmets and bike trail safety.
- Continue educational presentation on child safety seats which included the correct installation of the seats as well as the danger of leaving a child in a vehicle.
- Increase OWI arrests by 5% through targeted enforcement conducted by officers working overtime during peak hours. Peak hours would be defined using statistical data.
- Additional enforcement in neighborhoods, school zones and on major streets with an emphasis on pedestrian, school bus and bicycle safety.
- Continuing education of officers to ensure they have up to date knowledge of innovative enforcement techniques and equipment to ensure officer safety.

### Activities

- Officers will provide educational opportunities at schools, workplaces, and neighborhood associations on the dangers of distracted and impaired driving as well as bicycle and pedestrian safety.
- Officers will provide safety seat instruction and installation demonstrations to parents as well as provide information on safety inside and around a vehicle.
- Current traffic enforcement directed towards impaired driving, distracted driving, aggressive driving, seatbelt usage, child restraints, speeding, and improper passing on highways will continue throughout the City.
- Current coordinated enforcement projects with Iowa State Patrol, Polk County Sheriff, and surrounding police departments will also continue with new projects to be implemented as they become available.
- Officers will work overtime to conduct targeted enforcement relating to pedestrian and bicycle safety, seatbelt violations, child restraint, speeding, railroad crossing violations, distracted and impaired driving.
- Officers will be directed to concentrate enforcement on specific violations. This will assure that specific problems are being addressed.
- Focused enforcement will be conducted based on statistical data with heavy concentration of efforts on weekends and holidays.
- Officers will position marked patrol vehicles in and around school zones allowing active enforcement of traffic laws. This will encourage voluntary compliance and assist in the protection of children using pedestrian cross walks, embarking, and disembarking from school buses.

- Continuing officer education will be achieved through attendance at GTSB conferences and the annual Lifesavers conference.

**Evaluation**

- A monthly report will be submitted documenting enforcement actions taken and presentations given.
- The number of citizen complaints and requests will be monitored for a decline in frequency as a result of the additional enforcement.
- Impaired driving arrests information will be made available to the public and media.

**Target Areas of Enforcement**

The Des Moines Police Department will utilize GTSB overtime funds to focus on the following areas of traffic safety and enforcement.

- Seatbelt/Child Restraint Enforcement
- Child safety seat check points
- Educational presentations to school children
- OWI and impaired driving Enforcement
- Speed and Aggressive Driving Enforcement
- I-235 Enforcement (Impaired Drivers, Speed, Aggressive Driving, Improper Passing)
- School Zones (Speed, Seatbelts, improper passing of school bus)
- Pedestrian and bicycle safety
- Traffic control devices (Stop signs, traffic signals, school bus, railroad crossings)

**Budget**

<b>Requested funding:</b>	<b>\$204,700</b>
<i>Overtime enforcement hours:</i> 3,026 hours per year @ \$62.94 per hours	\$ 190,500
<i>Equipment:</i> 2 Lidars @ \$3,000 each	\$ 6,000
<i>Equipment:</i> 12 PBTs @ \$450.00 each	\$ 5,400
<i>Training/ Travel:</i> Life Savers Conference	\$ 2,100
<i>Training/ Travel:</i> Governor's Traffic Safety Conference	\$ 700

Educational presentations are conducted during regularly scheduled hours

- Child Safety in and around vehicles
- School Zone safety
- Bicycle safety