




Date: November 13, 2007

To: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

From: Councilwoman Gerrie Schipske 

Subject: AGENDA ITEM: Proposed Source of Funding for DARE Officers

### DISCUSSION

The DARE program has been historically staffed by two retired, non-career police officers, who are responsible for instructing over 1,800 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at more than 12 elementary schools. The officers commit a combined total of approximately 50 hours weekly (for 30 weeks of the year) to the program. Although the DARE program was eliminated in the FY06 Adopted Budget, the Police Department continued funding the program out of existing resources, which is estimated to cost approximately \$78,000 by the end of FY07.

The Police Department is anticipated to end FY07 at \$7 million over budget in the General Fund and therefore the DARE program was not funded.

The DARE Board has pledged approximately \$35,000 toward funding the cost of the officers. An additional \$13,000 is needed to fund the officers at current levels without any enhancements for the spring semester.

The Fifth District Council office has been working with DARE to find sources of funding and to enhance the program with a classroom component on "graffiti" as many young children do not know that doing graffiti is illegal.

### Potential Funding Sources

In discussions with the DARE Board, the Chief of Police and the City Prosecutor, several suggestions were raised on finding sources of funding for this program which focuses upon teaching school age children to resist drugs and alcohol (and eventually to teach resisting doing graffiti). Members from the DARE program suggested using some of the revenue from criminal fines imposed for offenses involving drugs, alcohol and/or graffiti. It was noted that the Penal Code restricts the allocation of this source of revenue, particularly monies collected through the County Court system, rendering this source of revenue unavailable for purposes of funding this program.

The DARE program members also suggested that a local fine could be added to any towing of a vehicle involved in an accident in which alcohol or drugs were involved. A surcharge of \$10 – 25 dollars might be appropriate.

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I suggested that since the DARE program is a "preventive program" that we should explore either setting aside or placing a surcharge of \$1.00 – 2.00 charge on all business licenses for businesses selling alcohol, tobacco and/or spray paint. This is a nominal charge to help fund the placement of police officers in the classroom to provide a positive interaction with students while at the same time delivering an important message.

The DARE program members pledged to also conduct an aggressive fund raising effort to match funds raised by the City.

### RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the City Manager to report back on the feasibility of developing a funding mechanism for the continuation of the DARE program at least at the FY07 level through:

1. The establishment of a surcharge on towing services in those cases in which the owner has been cited for use of alcohol and/or drugs; and
2. The establishment of a surcharge on business licenses for those businesses selling alcohol, tobacco and/or spray paint.