

**MOORPARK CITY COUNCIL  
AGENDA REPORT**

**TO:** Honorable City Council  
**FROM:** Ron Nelson, Captain *RN 2074*  
**DATE:** October 20, 2008 (CC Meeting of 11/5/08)  
**SUBJECT:** Consider Purchase of Alternative Fuel Vehicle for the Moorpark Volunteers in Policing Program

**SUMMARY**

The City of Moorpark's adopted Fiscal Year 2008/09 budget includes \$30,000 for the Police Department to purchase a new patrol vehicle for the Volunteers in Policing (VIP) Program. The VIP program currently has one patrol vehicle, but is in need of a second patrol vehicle in order to provide consistent and meaningful services to the residents of the City of Moorpark (City). If approved, this would add a new Ford Escape Hybrid SUV using Transportation System Management (TSM) Funds (2001), which were allocated for this purchase during the adoption of the Fiscal Year 2008/09 budget. It is projected that over the life of the new vehicle, the City would save substantially, both in terms of dollars and air quality, when compared with the cost of adding additional patrol deputies to serve a growing community.

**BACKGROUND**

The VIP program annually provides thousands of hours of donated time in which VIP members patrol the City. These VIP members provide basic police support services, such as report writing, parking enforcement, and traffic control at accident scenes, thus freeing up sworn officers to handle more specialized law enforcement matters. The VIP program currently has seventeen volunteers who stagger their hours of service, sharing one vehicle to patrol the City. During the twelve month period of May 2007 through April 2008, VIP members provided 2,381 hours of patrol time.

Until May 2008, the City had a 1996 Ford Crown Victoria that was used as the volunteer patrol vehicle, which saw over 85,000 miles of service. The City obtained the Crown Victoria in year 2000, as a used loaner vehicle through the Ventura County General Services Agency, Fleet Services Division (County), with an associated monthly cost billed to the City. Because the vehicle was considered to be a loaner, there was no up-

front cost to purchase the vehicle. This was a great initial benefit to the City to get the volunteer patrol force mobilized, however the down side was that there was no cost provision for a replacement for the vehicle at the end of its service life. During fiscal year 2007/08, the City was billed for the vehicle at a rate of \$739 per month, plus .24 cents per mile, which covered the cost of fuel and minor maintenance. At this rate, the cost of maintaining this older vehicle in the fleet amounted to \$8,868 annually, plus mileage. According to Kelley bluebook estimates, this vehicle would be worth approximately \$3,000 if sold at retail prices.

In March 2008, the Volunteers in Policing program obtained a new patrol vehicle through generous donations from the community, a 2008 Dodge Charger. During the months of March and April, volunteers were able to patrol the City in both the Crown Victoria and the Charger, further enhancing their services to the residents of Moorpark. Because the new Charger was added to the fleet, the loaner vehicle (Crown Victoria) was eventually returned to the County at the beginning of May.

The Police Department and the residents of Moorpark have come to depend a great deal on the services provided by the volunteers who patrol and assist the officers with basic law enforcement functions in the field. As witnessed during the months of March and April, the addition of one more patrol vehicle would further enhance the program and the services provided to our residents, at minimal cost.

## **DISCUSSION**

A Ford Escape Hybrid SUV was selected by the Police Department as a useful patrol vehicle because of its environmentally friendly motor design, and its ability to provide a covered cargo or seating area that would facilitate the protected delivery of materials and/or staff. It is intended that the Hybrid vehicle would be used by City Police volunteers for patrol, and while responding to assist at various police related incidents such as crime scenes, and natural and man-caused disasters.

Police Department staff solicited bids from five local dealers for a 2009 Ford Escape Hybrid SUV. Bids for the Ford Escape were returned by Simi Valley Ford, Barber Ford, and Vista Ford of Oxnard. The bid responses are as follows:

<u>Bidder</u>	<u>Dealer Quote</u>
Simi Valley Ford	\$27,372.35
Barber Ford	\$30,053.55
Vista Ford of Oxnard	\$30,566.25

The lowest responsible bidder is Simi Valley Ford.

With the adoption of the FY 2008/09 budget, the Council approved \$30,000 out of the TSM Fund (2001) for the purchase of the 2009 Ford Escape Hybrid SUV. Purchase of

alternate fuel vehicles for the City Fleet was included in the City Council adopted TSM program and has been used in the past for such purpose. TSM funds are used for the purpose of addressing air quality in our community, and hybrid vehicles qualify as alternate fuel vehicles. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that the 2009 Ford Hybrid Escape SUV, driven 10,000 miles per year, produces approximately 3.6 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>, compared to the 1996 Ford Crown Victoria, which produces approximately 10.2 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Throughout the time the Ford Crown Victoria was in use, the monthly cost to rent the vehicle from the County has continued to rise each year. As an example, in FY 2004/05, the City was billed at a rate of \$527.77, plus mileage, each month for use of the vehicle. With the cost of fuel and labor maintenance costs continuing to increase, it is safe to assume the cost to maintain this 12-year-old vehicle in the Police Department fleet would continue to increase. Additionally, a 1996 Ford Crown Victoria averages 15-18 miles per gallon of gasoline when driven in the city. EPA estimates that the 2009 Ford Hybrid Escape will average 34 miles per gallon of gasoline when driven in the city, approximately twice that of the Crown Victoria. By purchasing the fuel-efficient Ford Escape Hybrid, the City would realize a substantial savings in the monthly cost to own and operate the vehicle over the service life of the vehicle. At the present day price of \$8,868 annually, the amount to maintain the Crown Victoria would pay for a new Escape Hybrid in about three years, which is approximately 1/4<sup>th</sup> of the expected service life of twelve years.

Because a new Ford Hybrid Escape SUV would be used to patrol the City and respond to emergency incidents, the vehicle would need to be outfitted with a two-way communication radio system in order to communicate with other police patrol vehicles, emergency flashing amber lighting system, and appropriate decals/markings identifying it as a police volunteer patrol vehicle (emergency equipment). It is estimated that the labor and materials to add this equipment will cost approximately \$4,500. After purchasing the vehicle at the bid price of \$27,372, there will be \$2,628 available toward the purchase and installation of the emergency equipment. For the remainder of the approximately \$1,900 needed for the emergency equipment, the VIP program has received several donations from private individuals in the community, a private business foundation, and the Rotary Club of Moorpark, which should cover the cost of the needed emergency equipment.

Maintenance/service costs for the first year are estimated to be approximately \$600, which includes basic oil changes and scheduled maintenance visits. Any major repairs would be covered under the initial manufacturer's warranty. Additionally, funds associated with the maintenance costs were approved for such use when the Fiscal Year 2008/09 budget was adopted.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

- 1) Award the purchase of the 2009 Ford Escape Hybrid SUV to Simi Valley Ford, the lowest responsible bidder; and
- 2) Authorize the City Finance Department to process the necessary purchase order to obtain the vehicle with the allocated funds.