SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY GRANT

SOURCE: Police Department

COMMENT: The City of Porterville has received tentative approval of a grant award in the amount of $144,600, from the California Office of Traffic Safety.

The purpose of the Office of Traffic Safety Grant is to provide local jurisdictions with opportunities to improve public safety through the use of the grant funds for a variety of traffic-related activities, from increasing personnel and equipment resources, to developing and supporting programs to provide increased traffic enforcement. The primary goals and objectives developed by the Police Department for this grant is to increase DUI enforcement, increase compliance in the areas of use of seatbelts and child restraint devices, reduce the number of collisions in Porterville through increased and directed traffic enforcement. This position would increase the sworn force to forty-seven officers. This is up from forty-four in 2003.

This grant will span a period of two years. During the first year, the Office of Traffic Safety pays 100 percent of the additional officer's salary and benefits. During the second year, the grant pays for fifty percent of the officer's salary and benefits, and the City would be expected to cover the remaining fifty percent. After this two-year grant period, it is expected that the City would retain this position.

This grant will also provide funds for overtime costs incurred during DUI Checkpoints, Saturation Patrols, and Occupant Safety Checkpoints. Funds are also provided for additional equipment, such as a laser radar device and a laptop computer.

Based on the proposed 2005/2006 Fiscal Year draft budget, currently the City does not have monies to cover second year and beyond costs for this position. They could be covered by a successful sales tax measure. If this money is not available, then it is likely that another program in Police, or another City department, will have to be curtailed to fund this position consistent with the agreement.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

1) Accept the terms of the Office of Traffic Safety Grant;
2) Authorize the Mayor to sign all necessary documents pertaining to the grant; and
3) Authorize an increase in the allocation of police officer positions from forty-six to forty-seven.