DATE: January 21, 2020

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Chief of Police

SUBJECT: Adopt a Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of a StarChase Pursuit Management System

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts a resolution (Attachment II) authorizing the purchase of a StarChase Pursuit Management System, which will facilitate the installation of these devices on fifteen of the Hayward Police Department's marked patrol vehicles.

SUMMARY

The Hayward Police Department (HPD) recommends a pursuit management system to assist in crime reduction, increase safety for our community and police officers, and reduce financial exposure. The StarChase Pursuit Management System (StarChase) is a GPS tagging and monitoring system that is deployed from marked police vehicles. Staff recommends outfitting fifteen police vehicles with this technology.

On October 23, 2019, the Council Infrastructure Committee (CIC) discussed the StarChase system and recommended Council consideration and approval.

BACKGROUND

High speed police pursuits are inherently dangerous not only to the public, but also to the police officers who engage in them. Many police departments across the state have modified their pursuit policies over the years, restricting the type of crimes that are pursuable.

Currently, HPD Policy 307 allows officers to pursue vehicles under the following circumstances:

Officers may engage in vehicular pursuits only when the officer can articulate the following factors are present:

a. *When a violator is driving in a non-hazardous manner but willfully failing to yield to emergency lights and siren, the officer may continue to follow the vehicle unless the driving behavior or circumstances change that would make it unsafe to continue, or*
b. *When the violator is believed to be a violent felon who poses a significant, ongoing threat to public safety.*
c. *When the violator is believed to be a violent misdemeanant, armed, and poses a significant and ongoing threat to public safety.*
d. *Pursuits of suspected intoxicated drivers where the driving of the subject PRIOR to the attempted stop already presented an intolerable risk of injury or death to persons other than the subject. The seriousness of the offense and the threat posed by the fleeing suspects(s) must justify the vehicle pursuit.*

The seriousness of the offense and the threat posed by the fleeing suspects(s) must justify the vehicle pursuit.

While police departments continue to balance the need to protect public safety with the need to apprehend violators of the law, they are looking to alternative methods to create that balance. Some larger departments have dedicated air support units to monitor and follow offenders from safe distances with no threat of injury to the public or officers. It is not unusual for the suspect to resume normal operation of their vehicle in order to attempt to blend in with surrounding traffic because they perceive they are not being pursued by law enforcement.

Air Units in the Bay Area region are limited and seldom available to engage in vehicle pursuits. StarChase provides HPD a technological solution to apprehend offenders who do not meet current vehicle pursuit policy parameters.

DISCUSSION

StarChase is a pursuit management tool that allows an officer to deploy a non-lethal GPS tracking tag via a compressed-air launcher from the front grille of a patrol vehicle, with the intent of affixing an adhesive-tipped tag to the rear portion of a vehicle in pursuit. Once attached, the tag broadcasts secure Web-based, real-time position mapping data to mobile data terminal devices and to the police communications center. Police personnel can then use this mapping data to monitor and locate the vehicle once it comes to a stop.

StarChase is comprised of three separate components: the deployment system, the GPS tracking tags, and a control console. The deployment system utilizes compressed air to deploy the GPS tagging device, which is housed in a tube-like structure mounted to the front of the police vehicle. The GPS tracking tag is a small cylindrical shaped object that contains adhesive allowing the tag to adhere to the vehicle. The GPS tags create little to no damage to the vehicle and are retrievable for refurbishment and redeployment. Once the GPS tag is adhered to the vehicle, it begins to give five second updates of the vehicle's location.

LAUNCHER

ADHESIVE DART

ADHERED DART

CONTROLLER

Currently, StarChase is being utilized by police departments throughout the region, including Pittsburg, Brentwood, San Pablo, and the Contra Costa Sheriff's Department.

Prior to recommending StarChase, HPD staff visited Pittsburg PD for to get an overview of the system and obtain independent data regarding its success/failure rate. Pittsburg has utilized StarChase for over a year, with nearly half of its fleet outfitted with the devices. In a six-month period (March 2018 to September 2018) Pittsburg PD has deployed an estimated 60 StarChase devices, resulting in the recovery of 52 stolen vehicles or vehicles used in violent crimes, including a total of 54 arrests.

On October 23, 2019, the Council Infrastructure Committee (CIC) discussed StarChase and recommended Council consideration and approval.

FISCAL IMPACT

The initial vehicle deployment cost is estimated at $94.883. To offset some of the cost, staff applied for and was awarded a Bay Area Urban Area Security Initiative grant in the amount

of $30,000, leaving a balance of $64,883. Currently, adopted FY 2020 Capital Improvement Plan Budget includes funds to outfit fifteen police vehicles.

The ongoing operating costs are estimated at $14,250 annually and will be included in the FY 2021 budget requests for Council consideration.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

This agenda item is not directly related to City Council's Strategic Initiatives.

NEXT STEPS

If approved, HPD will purchase the pursuit management system and begin implementation of the StarChase program in 15 patrol vehicles.

Prepared by:	David Dorn, Lieutenant
Recommended by:	William Deplitch, Captain
	Tony Chaplin, Police Chief

Approved by:

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Kelly McAdoo, City Manager