

**CITY OF PALM DESERT
STAFF REPORT**

MEETING DATE: September 28, 2023

PREPARED BY: Mindy Esqueda, Emergency Services Coordinator

REQUEST: ACCEPTANCE OF THE CITY'S CITIZENS OPTION FOR PUBLIC SAFETY/SUPPLEMENTAL LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES FUND (COPS/SLESF) EXPENDITURE PLAN AND FUNDING FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023/24

RECOMMENDATION:

Accept the City's Citizens Option for Public Safety/Supplemental Law Enforcement Services Fund (COPS/SLESF) expenditure plan and funding for Fiscal Year 2023/24.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

In 1996, the Legislature adopted Assembly Bill 3229 creating the Citizens Option for Public Safety (COPS) program allocating \$100,000,000 to local governments annually for front-line law enforcement activities. These funds are deposited into a Supplemental Law Enforcement Services Fund (SLESF). These grant funds supplement funding currently available for public safety including personnel, equipment, and programs. These funds cannot supplant any other existing funds and must be used exclusively for front-line law enforcement services.

The SLESF allocation will be for crime suppression programs and various equipment purchases. State law requires the City to receive a written request submitted by the Chief of Police. As the City contracts with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department for law enforcement services, the City's Chief of Police is the Palm Desert Station Captain. The Palm Desert Chief of Police recommends utilizing the FY 2023/24 COPS/SLESF funds as indicated below and estimated based on historic expenditures (these amounts may change).

ITEM	ESTIMATED AMOUNT
2023/24 Crime Suppression Programs	50%
Equipment, Services and Supplies	50%

Crime Suppression Programs

The Palm Desert Police Department recommends using the allocated funds towards various crime suppression programs throughout the year. Additional crime suppression programs will allow staff to focus their efforts on an identified problem that directly affects quality of life concerns for Palm Desert Residents. These programs can range from theft suppression, addressing a problem with commercial or residential burglaries, retail theft, and any other identified criminal activities that directly affect quality of life in Palm Desert.

Equipment, Services, and Supplies

These funds are used for multiple items, including but not limited to monthly vehicle rentals for undercover officers assigned to the Burglary Suppression Unit; the purchase of load bearing vests (LBV) for new special team members or the replacement of old, worn vests; Police Department golf cart maintenance; shoulder patches, police vehicle decals, safety supplies, training, cellular telephone and services for special teams. Additionally, funds can purchase computers, technology, and other support apparatus.

Legal Review:

This report has been reviewed by the City Attorney's office.

Strategic Plan:

This item is related to the Public Safety and Emergency Services section of the Palm Desert Strategic Plan, specifically under *Priority 1: Enhance the delivery of public safety services*. The priority's strategy is to expand the existing superlative services provided by the Fire and Police Departments to address future growth and safety concerns. Palm Desert's participation in the Crime Suppression Programs and the availability of SLESF revenues will assist in meeting this priority, by (1) having an increased law enforcement presence in mitigating any potential criminal activity and (2) providing funding for front line law enforcement activities throughout the fiscal year.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The allocation of COPS/SLESF monies will fund the program and items. The County Auditor allocates the annual grant award in the County's Supplemental Law Enforcement Services Account (SLESA). The funds are then deposited in a SLESA established by the City.

Cities are provided with a minimum front line law enforcement allocation of \$100,000 under the program and funds can carry over at the end of the fiscal year. The City of Palm Desert has an unencumbered carryover balance of approximately \$76,000 (as of 9/18/2023) to use on frontline municipal police services in FY 2023/24. Currently, based on prior year allocations, staff has budgeted \$109,000 in Account No. 2294210-4391400 for FY 2023/24 SLESF costs. Those funds along with any additional funding will be allocated to equipment and theft suppression programs. There is no impact to the General Fund.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Palm Desert Police Department SLESF Expenditure Plan
2. Citizens Option for Public Safety (COPS) Funds Reconciliation
3. California Government Code Section 30061