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**Sponsor:** County Attorney's Office and Sheriff's Office

**Meeting Date:** 6/15/2021

**Title:** Grant Award from Minnesota Dept of Commerce for Minnesota Auto Theft Prevention Program - Dedicated Personnel & Training

**File Number:** 2021-299

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**Background and Rationale:**

This board action is one of three requests related to auto theft prevention grants from the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Commerce Fraud Bureau, Minnesota Auto Theft Prevention Program. Both the Sheriff's Office and County Attorney's Office applied for and were awarded grant funds from the Minnesota Auto Theft Prevention Program for the next two state fiscal years (July 1 to June 30).

The Minnesota Automobile Theft Prevention Program is intended to reduce auto theft and auto theft related crimes. Under this state program, grant funds are awarded for programs and services that aid in the reduction of auto thefts, increase education and awareness of the community, respond to auto theft incidents and prosecute offenders. This grant, administered by the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Commerce Fraud Bureau, provides financial support to communities that (1) engage in collaborative efforts to reduce auto theft and (2) have the greatest rates of automobile theft.

Ramsey County has some of the greatest auto theft rates in the state:

- Ramsey County accounts for 9% of the state's population, but 28% of its auto thefts.
- Of the 417 law enforcement agencies in Minnesota, only six agencies responded to more auto thefts in 2019 than the Sheriff's Office.
- In the past year, approximately 40% of persons involved in auto thefts in Ramsey County were under the age of 25.
- Recent data suggests an increase in auto vehicle thefts accompanied by a more serious charge of aggravated robbery or assault (i.e., "car-jacking").
- Incidents of car-jacking in Ramsey County have mostly involved individuals operating as a group
- From 2018-2020, the number of juvenile auto-theft cases referred to the County Attorney's Office increased nearly 25%, accompanied by an increase in repetitive criminal conduct.

This board action approves the General Auto Theft Prevention Grant for the County Attorney's Office. This grant provides funding for dedicated personnel (an Assistant County Attorney, Deputy Sheriff, and Paralegal) and training. With this grant, dedicated personnel will handle all auto theft and auto theft related offenses presented to the County Attorney's Office for formal charging, including conducting follow-up investigations. The Deputy Sheriff will be embedded in the County Attorney's Office to improve case outcomes, similar to both the Dedicated Sexual Assault Investigator and the Dedicated General Crime Deputy Sheriff already assigned to the County Attorney's Office.

**Recommendation:**

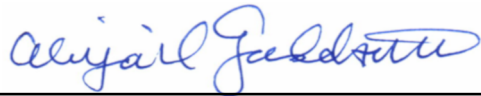
The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Accept a grant award of \$568,969.60 and approve a grant agreement with the Minnesota Department of Commerce for Auto Theft Prevention - Dedicated Personnel & Training for the period of July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2023.
2. Authorize the Chair and Chief Clerk execute the grant agreement.
3. Approve an increase in the personnel complement of the Sheriff's Office by 1.0 Full Time Equivalent Deputy Sheriff.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner MatasCastillo, seconded by Commissioner Reinhardt.

Motion passed.

Aye: - 7: Carter, Frethem, MatasCastillo, McDonough, McGuire, Ortega, and Reinhardt

By:   
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Abby Goldsmith, Interim Chief Clerk - County  
Board