CITY COUNCIL REPORT

Meeting Date: **July 7, 2022**
General Plan Element: ***Neighborhoods***
General Plan Goal: ***Enhance and Protect Neighborhoods***

ACTION

Authorize Resolution Number 12531 authorizing:

1. Acceptance of a FFY2021 DNA Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction Program formula grant from the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs in the amount of $249,804;
2. The Chief of Police or designee(s) to conduct all negotiations and to execute and submit all documents and other necessary or desirable instruments in connection with the acceptance of the grant; and
3. A $249,804 budget transfer from the adopted Fiscal Year 2022/23 Future Grants Budget and/or Grant Contingency Budget to a newly created cost center to record the related grant activity.

BACKGROUND

The Scottsdale Police Department Crime Laboratory (Department) is responsible for the analysis of evidentiary material associated with criminal activity within the City of Scottsdale and Salt River Indian Community for investigative purposes. The DNA Unit is in charge of screening physical evidentiary items and the DNA analysis of biological evidence.

As technology advances, the ability to extract DNA samples from items that were previously eliminated from processing increases, resulting in an increase in submitted items (samples) to be processed by examiners. The advancement in technology and number of cases submitted to the lab is not necessarily the challenge for the DNA Unit. The challenge is analyzing the number of submitted cases with the goal to begin the process within 30 days of submittal, which is best practice.

While the number of DNA cases submitted to the lab continues to increase, so does the number of backlogged DNA cases. A DNA case is considered "backlogged" if analysis does not begin within 30 days. At the end of calendar year 2021, the number of cases backlogged remains exceptionally high.
Cases in backlog at the end of calendar year:

2018 – 53 cases
2019 – 194 cases
2020 – 176 cases
2021 -290 cases

The Department applied for and received Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2019 DNA Capacity Enhancement Backlog Reduction formula grant funds to support an additional DNA scientist and necessary licenses and equipment to focus on the backlogged cases. Due to the specific qualifications necessary to perform DNA analysis, the

temporary/grant funded forensic scientist position took several months to hire, and several additional months to train. This delay left one DNA scientist to analyze all DNA submitted cases, resulting in an additional number of backlogged cases.

The department also received FFY 2020 DNA Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction Program formula grant funds to support the scientist and equipment to reduce the number of backlogged DNA cases.

IMPACT ANALYSIS

The FFY2019 and 2020 formula grant awards allowed the Crime Laboratory to add a full-time, temporary 1.00 FTE Forensic Scientist II position while not impacting the general fund. Acceptance of the FFY 2021 formula grant award will continue to fund the salary and benefits of the Forensic Scientist II whose primary focus is reducing backlogged DNA cases. Grant funds will also cover annual maintenance agreements for license/equipment originally purchased with grant funds necessary to process cases, as well as annual training/travel required for the scientist to maintain certification. Finally, FFY2021 grant funds will allow all DNA Forensic Scientists to work an additional 10 hours per week (paid at straight time) to process DNA cases, further reducing the number of backlogged cases.

Resource Impacts

The Department of Justice Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction program is a formula grant program. The Department will continue to apply for and receive the formula grant each year to support the temporary/grant funded position. In the event funding is no longer available, the Department will look for alternative funding. If alternative funding is not found, the position will be eliminated.

Staffing, Workload Impact

Approval of the grant will reduce the backlog of DNA cases waiting to be analyzed and provide a balance of workload for all DNA Scientists.

OPTIONS & STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Recommended Approach

Adopt Resolution No. 12531 authorizing:

1. Acceptance of a FFY DNA Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction Program formula grant from the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs in the amount of $249,804; and
2. The Chief of Police or Designee(s) to conduct all negotiations and to execute and submit all documents and other necessary or desirable instruments in connection with the acceptance of the grant; and
3. A $249,804 budget transfer from the adopted Fiscal Year 2022/23 Future Grants Budget and/or Grant Contingency Budget to a newly created cost center to record the related grant activity.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT(S)

Public Safety – Police Division

STAFF CONTACT(S)

Jeff Walther, Chief of Police, jwalther@scottsdaleaz.gov

APPROVED BY

Jeff Walther, Chief of Police — Date: 6/13/22

(480) 312-1900, jwalther@scottsdaleaz.gov

Judy Doyle, Budget Director for contingency & impact analysis — Date: 6.13.22

(480) 312-2603, jdoyle@scottsdaleaz.gov

Jim Thompson, City Manager — Date: 6-15-2022

(480) 312-2811, JThompson@scottsdaleaz.gov

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution No. 12531

RESOLUTION NO. 12531

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF SCOTTSDALE, MARICOPA COUNTY, ARIZONA, ACCEPTING A GRANT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE FOR DNA CAPACITY AND BACKLOG REDUCTION GRANT

WHEREAS, the Scottsdale Police Department wishes to reduce the number of DNA cases in backlog status due to the large number of DNA samples submitted for processing; and

WHEREAS, the Scottsdale Police Department wishes to decrease the turnaround time to complete DNA sample analysis; and

WHEREAS, the City has been awarded grant funding in the amount of $249,804; and

WHEREAS, the Future Grants Budget in the Grant Fund allows the City the budget authority to accept grants throughout the fiscal year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Scottsdale, Maricopa County, Arizona, as follows

Section 1. Acceptance of a FY2021 DNA Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction Program formula grant from the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs in the amount of $249,804;

Section 2. The Chief of Police or designee(s) to conduct all negotiations and to execute and submit all documents and other necessary or desirable instruments in connection with the acceptance of the grant; and

Section 3. A $249,804 budget transfer from the adopted Fiscal Year 2022/23 Future Grants Budget and/or Grant Contingency Budget to a newly created cost center to record the related grant activity.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Scottsdale this ____ day of _____, 2022.

CITY OF SCOTTSDALE, an
Arizona municipal corporation

ATTEST:

_____
Ben Lane, City Clerk

_____
David D. Ortega, Mayor

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

_____
Sherry R. Scott, City Attorney
By: Luis E. Santaella, Deputy City Attorney

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