



METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
of Nashville and Davidson County

John Cooper, Mayor

John C. Drake
Chief of Police

December 17, 2021

Vice Mayor Jim Shulman
Members of the Metropolitan Council
101 James Robertson Parkway
Historic Courthouse
Nashville, TN 37201

Dear Vice Mayor Shulman & Council Members:

I write today to ask for your support of a recommendation pending before you for the purchase of 128 vehicles for the police department from CARES Act funding. Our police fleet is aging (180 vehicles have in excess of 100,000 miles; 393 have in excess of 75,000 miles) even as we are working diligently to recruit new police officers, including law enforcement professionals from other jurisdictions who want to transition to Nashville.

An adequate fleet is essential for many reasons, including ensuring that officers are not waiting to swap vehicles at shift change, helping reduce response times, allowing for detectives to have a department vehicle with appropriate equipment to respond to investigative scenes, and, importantly in this era of COVID, allowing officers adequate time to clean and sanitize vehicles between uses or transports. It is our belief that this request aligns with President Biden's goals for use of American Rescue Plan Act funding.

It is very important to our public safety mission that we have reliable vehicles for our officers, both as we increase our numbers through recruiting, and as we implement an important new strategy to better serve families throughout Davidson County.

Over the last couple months, many employees of the MNPd have been engaged in the annual rebid process, through which officers, consistent with Civil Service Rules and MNPd policy, bid for precinct and shift preference by seniority. On February 1, 2022, the MNPd will implement its annual rebid, which will be different than ever before.

Unique to this 2022 rebid is the implementation of 10.5 hour shifts with 4-day work weeks for many MNPd employees. This modification to the previous 8.5 hour shifts with 5-day work weeks creates several benefits to employees and the community. Under this plan, officers would actually work 10 hours and 37 minutes. Thus, the shift hours are:

Day Shift: 6:00am to 4:37pm
Afternoon Shift: 3:00pm to 1:37am
Overnight Shift: 9:00pm to 7:37am



The significant result is three periods of overlapping shifts/details within a 24 hour period during peak hours for calls for service. This overlap results in an increased number of officers during peak hours. Those overlaps are:

6:00am to 7:37am

3:00pm to 4:37pm

9:00pm to 1:37am

This equates to almost 8 hours per day of overlap. During the periods of overlap, the number of officers in each precinct will almost double. For example, on the overlap, the expected increase will be from 65 officers to approx. 125. Officers on both shifts are immediately available to respond to calls for service, effectively doubling the number of men and women available to provide a proactive presence and answer calls. This ensures continued coverage throughout the day, particularly during times of high call volume. This results in reduced likelihood of overtime and this approach tends to be preferred by the officers.

By aligning the overlap with the busiest periods of the day, it is designed to dramatically impact issues that typically occur during shift transition, including crime issues, traffic rush hours, school start or end times, changing traffic patterns, and related factors that traditionally delay responses.

A National Institute of Justice study¹ has also shown that the switch to this shift pattern improved morale, improved officer quality of life, and improved job performance. Findings included “Officers working 10-hour shifts averaged significantly more sleep than those working 8-hour shifts“, “officers working 10-hour shifts reported significantly higher quality of work life than those on 8-hour shifts.” This study also found a cost savings in regard to overtime.

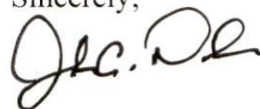
Since the longer shifts provide one additional day off each week, this time can be used for personal care, family time, doctor's appointments, or other personal business. This results in increased benefits to the employee that affect job satisfaction, retention, quality of life and related factors that employees often indicate as a reason for separation. During a time when law enforcement, and private enterprise alike, are struggling to recruit and maintain the most qualified employees, this move improves the quality of life for officers while benefiting the department as well.

Reliable police vehicles are absolutely essential to our public safety mission as we work to put more officers on the streets during peak times as well as hire new officers. Your approval of the proposed vehicle purchase through CARES Act funding would allow us to receive at least some new vehicles during the first half of 2022. Due to the inherent risk of sharing cars for multiple shifts and multiple officers each day, additional vehicles will allow us to reduce COVID risks to our officers as well as victims and suspects transported in MNPd vehicles.

Accompanying this letter, as a means of additional information, is the justification document submitted to review committee for the acquisition of 128 police vehicles.

Thank you for your support of our police department and public safety.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J.C. Drake". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

John C. Drake
Chief of Police

Attachment

¹ <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/10-hour-shifts-offer-cost-savings-and-other-benefits-law-enforcement-agencies>