



# MEMORANDUM

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**To:** Mayor and Members of the City Council

**From:** Rich Olson, City Manager  
Eddie M. Buffaloe, Jr., Chief of Police

**Date:** February 23, 2018

**Subject:** Consideration – Authorize Application of FY 2017-2018 One-Time Governor’s Crime Commission Law Enforcement Grant for Purchase of In-Car Cameras

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***BACKGROUND:***

The Elizabeth City Police Department continues to seek grant funding opportunities through outside sources and private entities for the purpose of enhancing operations and furthering the department’s mission of the pursuit of excellence. In February 2018, an announcement was released to local law enforcement agencies from the North Carolina Governor’s Crime Commission, a division of the North Carolina Department of Public Safety, advising there was an appropriation of money that could be used for in-car cameras. The department wishes to utilize this special, one-time grant to purchase sixteen (16) in-car cameras to be installed in police vehicles and used in the field. This is an excellent opportunity to purchase these cameras, which would complete the updating of the department’s in-car camera program.

The state appropriation will expire June 30, 2018, which means that the cameras would need to be purchased within the current fiscal year. There is a 50% local match; and, because this is a one-time, special grant, the match would need to be appropriated in the FY 17-18 budget.

***ANALYSIS:***

In February 2018, the following announcement was released from the North Carolina Governor’s Crime Commission, “We have received state appropriation to help local law enforcement across our state with body and in-car cameras. This is a 50/50 match and an agency can apply for up to \$100,000 (\$50,000 state and \$50,000 local match). This state appropriation will expire June 30, 2018. Our GEMS system will remain open until May for these applications. These grants are non-competitive and will be approved on a first-come first-served basis until all funding is obligated. Grant should be able to be awarded within 2-3 weeks of request provided agency’s turnaround time with signing special conditions.”

The cost of the in-car cameras is \$4,995.00 each; a total of sixteen cameras would be \$79,920.00. The local agency match needed is \$39,960.00 (1/2 half of \$79,920.00) and, if the grant is awarded, the cameras would need to be purchased by *June 30, 2018*. Should the City receive funding, staff would need determine where our match would come from.

Staff believes this a cost effective means to complete updating of the current in-car camera program. Digital in-car cameras enable officers to memorialize arrests in the field and suspect actions; and to provide an accurate account of the officers' actions regarding complaints made by citizens. This equipment is important to remain transparent and have accountability of our officers while in the field. This equipment has become a standard in 21<sup>st</sup> century policing and there are no other viable options to achieve this standard, which is also enhanced by body-worn cameras. The in-car camera program and body-worn camera program go hand-in-hand and promote the efficiency and effective of daily operations.

***FINANCIAL:***

The Finance Committee discussed this matter during their February 22, 2018 meeting. Upon motion made by Councilwoman Young, seconded by Councilwoman Hummer, the Committee unanimously recommended approval by the City Council.

***STAFF RECOMMENDATION:***

By motion, approve submission by the Elizabeth City Police Department to the Governor's Crime Commission for a preliminary grant application for the purchase of sixteen (16) In-Car Cameras to be installed in police vehicles.