

STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY SAFETY CONCEPT PAPER
Concept Paper Summary

Applicant Information

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| Applicant Agency: | City of Tampa |
| Implementing Agency: | Tampa Police Department |
| Concept Paper Title: | Sit Tight and Belt Right |
| Priority Area for Concept Paper: | Occupant Protection and Child Passenger Safety |
| Amount Requested: | \$258,000.00 |
| Type of Project: | Local |
| Type of Request: | Continuation - 2022 |
| Previous Year's Project Number (if Continuation): | OP-2022-00283 |

Head of Agency

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
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Project Contact

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|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
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Statement of the Problem:

The City of Tampa is located within Hillsborough County and is the third most populous city in the State of Florida. Tampa has an estimated 384,959 residents with approximately 6.4% of residents being children under five years of age (United States [U.S.] Census Bureau, 2021). The city boasts over 100 elementary schools and daycare facilities to accommodate its younger residents. Tampa is also home to Busch Gardens, Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Tampa Bay Lightning, and several other popular locations that attract thousands of visiting families daily, resulting in increased traffic volume.

The City of Tampa has consistently remained at the top of the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) Highway Safety Matrix under the Occupant Protection category. In fiscal year (FY) 2023, the City of Tampa ranked third for occupant protection-related serious injuries and fatalities out of thirty-six cities with a population

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of 75,000 and above (this is one position worse/lower when compared to the FY 2021 Matrix). The City of Tampa also continues to report safety belt usage rates below the State of Florida average (82.6% vs 89.8%-the survey result from 2019 since 2020/2021 wasn't completed). Tampa Police Department believes that the low number of safety belt usage could be directly attributed to the lack of targeted enforcement and education.

Although child safety seat usage rates declined in 2021 when compared to 2019 (94% vs 100% - statistics weren't available for 2020), this percentage represents Hillsborough County/Tampa and not just the City of Tampa. Due to this, the usage rate percentage doesn't exactly represent the City of Tampa, which boasts a larger population in poverty (18.6%) vs Hillsborough County (11.9%). Purchasing the proper child safety seat is not feasible for a lot of residents in the City of Tampa and because of this, we believe the actual child safety seat usage rates for the City of Tampa are significantly lower than the surrounding area.

Tampa Police Department had 2,147 occupant protection-related contacts in 2021 (537 citations and 1,432 warnings for safety belt violations / 107 citations and 71 warnings for child safety seat violations). This is an increase in contacts by 70.13% when compared to contacts in 2020. The increase in traffic contacts/violations could be directly attributed to Tampa PD's targeted enforcement and an increase in traffic following COVID 2020. This led to the number of safety belt/unrestrained related fatalities increasing to 13 and injuries increasing to 114 during 2021. Due to the economy resuming "normal" operation, which will see a greater amount of traffic on local roadways, it's imperative that Tampa Police Department have grant funds available in order to allow officers to educate and enforce safety belt/child safety seat violations as well as provide child safety seats to those in need.

Tampa Police Department officers participating in Occupant Protection Enforcement Operations and CIOT, as well as community events/child seat installation operations, lack the "High Visibility" equipment that would allow the community to be aware of the operational purposes. Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPSTs) also lack the equipment needed to transport numerous child safety seats at a time, in addition to the equipment needed to install the child safety seats. The use of a marked vehicle (with TPD, CIOT, and Safety Belt decals/wrap) which would be used for the sole purpose of Occupant Protection-related activities is needed.

Supporting Data:

Table 1.0 Child Restraint Usage Tampa Area (Hillsborough County) 2019-2021

Year Age: 0-3 Age: 4-5 Age: 6-12

2019/Tampa 100% 84% 73%

2019/Florida 94% 75% 77%

2020/Tampa No survey was completed for 2020

2020/Florida No survey was completed for 2020

2021/Tampa 94% 85% 75%

2021/Florida 94% 79% 78%

Source: 2019 Child Restraint Survey Final Report (Tampa/Hillsborough County)

Table 2.0 Safety Belt Usage City of Tampa 2019-2021

Year City of Tampa State of Florida

2019 87.0% 89.8%

2020 84.0% (not completed for 2020)
 2021 82.6 % (not completed for 2020)

Source: NHTSA and City of Tampa Click It or Ticket Campaign Reporting (2019)
 TPD Seat Belt Surveys completed September of 2020 (2020/2021)

Table 3.0 Violations 2019-2021

| Year | Safety Belt Warning | Safety Belt Citation | Child Restraint Warning | Child Restraint Citation |
|------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2019 | 1,078 | 273 | 123 | 142 |
| 2020 | 852 | 243 | 66 | 101 |
| 2021 | 1,432 | 537 | 71 | 107 |

Source: TPD Records Management

Table 4.0 Highway Safety Matrix - City of Tampa Rankings Out of 31 Cities, Population of 75,000 and Above

FY2021: 4th Overall, Occupant Protection (Serious Injuries & Fatalities)
 FY2022: 4th Overall, Occupant Protection (Serious Injuries & Fatalities)
 FY2023: 3rd Overall, Occupant Protection (Serious Injuries & Fatalities)

Source: Florida Department of Transportation, State Safety Office

Table 5.0 Persons In Poverty

18.6% of persons below poverty level in Tampa

Source: US Census Bureau – 2021v

Table 6.0 Fatalities-Unrestrained and Injuries-Unrestrained 2019-2021

Year Fatalities Injuries

| | | |
|------|----|-----|
| 2019 | 13 | 125 |
| 2020 | 8 | 59 |
| 2021 | 13 | 114 |

Source: Signal Four Analytics

Proposed Solution:

Tampa Police Department will implement strategies covered in the NHTSA Countermeasures That Work guide , specifically from Chapter Two – Seat Belts and Child Restraints .

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CHAPTER 2 (SEAT BELTS AND CHILD RESTRAINTS), SECTION 2 – SEAT BELT USE LAW ENFORCEMENT, COUNTERMEASURE 2.1, SHORT TERM, HIGH VISIBILITY SEAT BELT LAW ENFORCEMENT: Officers will participate in the annual “Click It or Ticket” campaign and will conduct targeted enforcement throughout the city at least four times during the campaign period. Each operation will consist of officers targeting intersections known for traffic crashes and lower safety belt usage rates. A patrol-ready SUV, complete with emergency lights, siren, radio, and decals will be utilized for the storage/transport of child safety seats, for enforcement during Occupant Protection targeted enforcement, and for “High Visibility” purposes to attain the goals outlined in this concept paper. The SUV will be outfitted with custom decals representing TPD, CIOT, and safety belts.

CHAPTER 2 (SEAT BELTS AND CHILD RESTRAINTS), SECTION 2 – SEAT BELT USE LAW ENFORCEMENT, COUNTERMEASURE 2.3, SUSTAINED ENFORCEMENT: Officers will conduct targeted enforcement details thirty-six times throughout the funding period (averaging one per week, including the operations during the CIOT campaign period), focusing on safety belt and child safety seat violations. Each operation will consist of officers targeting intersections known for traffic crashes and lower safety belt usage rates. The decaled SUV will be utilized for storage, transport, and “High Visibility” purposes to attain the outlined goals.

CHAPTER 2 (SEAT BELTS AND CHILD RESTRAINTS), SECTION 3 – COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH, COUNTERMEASURE 3.1, SUPPORTING ENFORCEMENT: Tampa Police Department will communicate the importance of properly using safety belts and child safety seats through news releases and through social media. The agency will also provide details on upcoming targeted enforcement as well as information on the child safety seat program. The decaled SUV will be prominently featured in the agency’s social media posts and will be utilized during parades.

CHAPTER 2 (SEAT BELTS AND CHILD RESTRAINTS), SECTION 5 – CHILD RESTRAINT/BOOSTER SEAT LAW ENFORCEMENT, COUNTERMEASURE 5.1, SHORT HIGH-VISIBILITY CR LAW ENFORCEMENT: This countermeasure will be completed in combination with the sustained enforcement countermeasure listed above. The decaled SUV will be utilized for storage, transport, and “High Visibility” purposes to attain the outlined goals.

CHAPTER 2 (SEAT BELTS AND CHILD RESTRAINTS), SECTION 7 – OTHER STRATEGIES, COUNTERMEASURE 7.1, SCHOOL PROGRAMS: Officers will provide resource materials obtained from NHTSA and Florida Occupant Protection Resource Center, to local daycares/age-appropriate schools and will also provide information relating to safety belt and child safety seat use while in combination with the events listed in the proceeding countermeasure. The decaled SUV will be utilized for storage, transport, and “High Visibility” purposes to attain the outlined goals.

CHAPTER 2 (SEAT BELTS AND CHILD RESTRAINTS), SECTION 7 – OTHER STRATEGIES, COUNTERMEASURE 7.2 INSPECTION STATIONS, AND OTHER ISSUES-PROGRAMS TO MAKE CHILD SEATS AVAILABLE AT LOW COST: CPS Technicians from Tampa Police Department will conduct child safety seat inspections and issue child safety seats obtained from the Occupant Protection Resource Center at a minimum of six special events as well as at the Tampa Police Department District Offices weekly. CPS Technicians will issue a minimum of twenty child safety seats and conduct a minimum of forty child safety seat inspections during the funding period. The decaled SUV will be utilized for storage, transport, and “High Visibility” purposes to attain the outlined goals.

Sustainability:

At the conclusion of the initial funding period, Tampa Police Department will continue its standard enforcement of safety belt and child safety seat violations; however, the Tampa Police Department will not be able to support overtime officers for any targeted enforcement. Tampa Police Department will also continue the child safety seat program (offering seats based on supply from the Florida Occupant Protection Resource Center); however, child safety seat fittings will be very selective based on time availability and by appointment only. Child safety seat inspection events at local schools/daycares would be limited if at all conducted. The decaled SUV will be utilized for safety seat inspection events, any targeted enforcement during CIOT or other Traffic Enforcement Operations, and during the City of Tampa's annual parades.

Project Objectives:

A. Strive to decrease occupant protection-related injuries and fatalities in the City of Tampa by 5% when compared to the previous three-year average.

B. Conduct a minimum of thirty-six occupant protection high visibility overtime enforcement operations during the project period, where the Decaled SUV will be utilized for "High Visibility" showing the operational purpose .

C. Participate in the National Click It Or Ticket campaign through overtime enforcement operations and/or educational/community activities by conducting four occupant protection high visibility overtime enforcement operations during the campaign period. The decaled SUV will be utilized for "High Visibility" showing the operational purpose.

D. Conduct and/or participate in six educational/community outreach events to increase occupant protection awareness during the project period, where child safety seats will be installed and/or provided. The decaled SUV will be utilized for "High Visibility" showing the operational purpose as well as for transporting the child safety seats and installation supplies.

E. Provide occupant protection information and education to the public through the use of social media at least five times during the project period. The decaled SUV will be prominent in our social media posts.

F. Conduct at least twenty child safety seat checks and install at least twenty child safety seats during the project period. The decaled SUV will be utilized for "High Visibility" showing the operational purpose as well as for transporting the child safety seats and installation supplies.

Evaluation:

A. Occupant protection-related injuries and fatalities are reduced by 5% citywide, compared to the previous three-year average.

B. The number of occupant protection high visibility overtime enforcement operations conducted during the project period, where the decaled SUV was utilized.

C. The number of occupant protection-related overtime enforcement operations conducted and/or

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education/community activities conducted/participated in during the National Click It Or Ticket campaign, where the decaled SUV was utilized.

D. The number of educational/community outreach events conducted or participated in, with the use of the decaled SUV, to increase occupant protection awareness during the project period.

E. The number of instances that occupant protection information and education is provided to the public through the use of social media during the project period.

F. The number of child safety seat checks and installed child safety seats during the project period.

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| BUDGET CATEGORY | NARRATIVE: | FEDERAL FUNDS | MATCH | TOTAL | INDIRECT ELIGIBILITY |
|---|--|------------------|------------|------------------|----------------------|
| A. Personnel Services | | | | | |
| Overtime | Overtime salaries for enforcement. | \$200,000 | \$0 | \$200,000 | |
| Subtotal | | \$200,000 | \$0 | \$200,000 | |
| B. Contractual Services | | | | | |
| Subtotal | | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| C. Expenses - Any purchase with a per item unit cost of \$200 or more from any line item within this Category, excluding software, must have FDOT State Safety Office written approval, prior to purchase. | | | | | |
| Subtotal | | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| D. Equipment Costing \$5,000 or More | | | | | |
| Sport utility vehicle | SUV with Decals/Wrap (Seat Belt/Occupant Protection/CIOT) and police package/related equipment | \$58,000 | \$0 | \$58,000 | |
| Subtotal | | \$58,000 | \$0 | \$58,000 | |
| E. Indirect Cost | | | | | |
| % | | \$0 | | \$0 | |
| Subtotal | | \$0 | | \$0 | |
| Total Cost of Project | | \$258,000 | \$0 | \$258,000 | |