



CITY OF LAKE FOREST PARK

CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA COVER SHEET

Meeting Date February 26, 2026

Originating Department Police Department

Contact Person Mike Harden, Police Chief

Title Resolution 26-2067/Revival of the Police Department Motors Unit, purchase of a traffic enforcement police motorcycle and training of one motor officer.

Legislative History

- First Presentation February 26, 2026 - Regular Meeting
-

Attachments:

1. Resolution 26-2067 Authorizing Purchase of One Traffic Enforcement Police Motorcycle, Establishing an Assignment of One Motor Officer at LFPPD, Authorizing Purchase of Motors Equipment, and Authorizing the Expense for Basic Training
 2. Quotation BMW Motorcycles Seattle
-

Executive Summary

Adopt a resolution authorizing the purchase of a traffic enforcement police motorcycle, additional enforcement equipment and protective clothing, as well as providing funding for officer training in an aggregate amount not to exceed \$50,000 and authorizing 5% pay increase (CBA rules) for the motor officer assignment, funded entirely from Traffic fund (002).

Background

Police motor units offer significant advantages over traditional patrol cars, including enhanced maneuverability in traffic, faster emergency response times, and the ability to access confined or off-road areas.

- *Improved Traffic Management & Enforcement:* Motor officers can easily navigate through gridlock to reach accident scenes and are highly effective at enforcing traffic laws, such as speeding, due to their ability to blend in and quickly turn around.

- *Operational Efficiency & Access:* Motorcycles are more fuel-efficient and can access areas that standard patrol cars cannot, including narrow streets, sidewalks, and off-road terrain, e.g. the Burke Gilman trail, Horizon View Park, and the parks around schools.
- *Faster Response Times:* Due to superior maneuverability in high-density or congested areas, these units often arrive at calls faster than patrol cars.
- *Community Policing Tool:* Officers on motorcycles are often more approachable, creating better, more positive interactions with the public. Great for community events and outreach.
- *Visual Deterrent:* The public is aware that traffic motorcycle officers' job is writing tickets. That awareness leads to less traffic violations when a motors unit is seen, and when pulled over, the expectation of a ticket is much more likely.

The City of Lake Forest Park operated a traffic motorcycle unit from 2002 through 2018, spanning approximately 15 years and staffed by three dedicated motor officers during that period: Officer Kokesh (May 2002–January 2005), Officer Huston (June 2005–September 2012), and Officer Wingrove (November 2013–May 2018).

Following 2018, no eligible officer was available to assume the motorcycle assignment. Just under two years later, the pandemic significantly impacted department operations, resulting in the suspension of both the Traffic and K-9 assignments due to staffing constraints and operational priorities.

This request does not seek authorization for an additional police officer FTE (full-time employee). An existing patrol officer would be assigned to the motorcycle unit. Patrol coverage would be maintained, with the added benefit of dedicated traffic enforcement. Motorcycle operations would be seasonal and weather-dependent; during non-riding periods, the officer would continue regular patrol duties.

The department would purchase a BMW police motorcycle which is the industry standard. BMW police motorcycles are purpose-built law enforcement platforms offering superior stability, integrated safety technology, officer ergonomics, and electrical capacity for modern policing equipment. Their design enhances officer safety, operational efficiency, and long-term fleet reliability, making them a leading industry standard for traffic enforcement units.

1. Built Specifically for Law Enforcement.

The RT-P is not just a civilian bike with lights added. It's factory-designed for police use — including integrated emergency lighting, radio wiring harnesses, reinforced charging systems, and switchgear laid out for one-handed operation while riding.

2. Superior Handling & Balance.

BMW's boxer engine design keeps the center of gravity low. That translates to exceptional stability at both high speeds and during low-speed maneuvering — critical for escorts, parades, congestion enforcement, and urban traffic work. Officers consistently report better balance during slow-speed cone courses compared to heavier alternatives.

3. Officer Ergonomics & Fatigue Reduction.

Traffic motors aren't short rides, they're full shifts in the saddle. The riding position, wind protection, heated grips/seat, and adjustable controls reduce fatigue and improve long-term comfort. Less fatigue equals better decision-making and safer operation.

4. Advanced Safety Technology - Modern BMW police motorcycles include:

- ABS Pro (cornering ABS)
- Traction control
- Dynamic stability systems
- Engine braking control

5. Performance.

The 1250cc engine provides strong torque for rapid acceleration when merging into traffic or initiating enforcement. It's smooth, predictable, and built for sustained highway speeds.

6. Electrical Capacity for Equipment.

Traffic units carry radar, radios, in-car video integration, emergency lighting, and MDT connectivity. BMW's upgraded alternator output is designed to support law-enforcement electrical loads without reliability issues.

7. Resale & Lifecycle Value.

Despite a higher upfront cost, BMW police motors often retain strong resale value and demonstrate long service life, helping offset total cost of ownership.

Included in the purchase of the police outfitted motorcycle, would be the required protective equipment necessary to safely deploy a motor officer. Motorcycle assignments expose officers to increased roadway risk, making specialized safety gear essential. Standard protective equipment includes a DOT-approved motorcycle helmet, armored riding jacket and pants, reinforced gloves, over-the-ankle riding boots, high-visibility outerwear, and body armor designed for motorcycle use. These items are purpose-built to reduce injury severity in the event of a crash while ensuring visibility and operational readiness. Providing proper protective equipment aligns with best practices for officer safety, risk management, and professional traffic-enforcement operations.

With the department's traffic units now rebuilt and stabilized, reinstating the motorcycle assignment would directly support the City's strong and ongoing emphasis on traffic safety. Given the ever-increasing commuter traffic traveling between the east and west sides of Lake Washington through Lake Forest Park city limits, a motorcycle unit would serve as an effective enforcement tool and a valuable force multiplier in a variety of response scenarios.

Reestablishing motorcycle enforcement (and potentially bicycle enforcement in the future) demonstrates the City's commitment to traffic safety and reinforces the Police Department's role in protecting the community.

Funding Source:

Total Cost: Not to exceed \$50,000 plus 5% salary increase for the traffic assignment established by the collective bargaining agreement (CBA).

The 5% salary increase is not included in the adopted 2025-2026 biennial budget. This will require a budget amendment, billing the additional pay to the Traffic Safety Fund 002.

Funding Source: Traffic fund (002)

City General Fund Impact: None

Alternatives

<i>Options</i>	<i>Results</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorize the purchases, training and pay raise. 	City will make the purchases and reestablish motorcycle enforcement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not authorize the purchases, training and pay raise. 	City will not move forward with purchases or reestablishing motorcycle enforcement.

Staff Recommendation:

Review and provide staff with any questions about reestablishing motorcycle enforcement in the City.