



**CITY OF NOVI CITY COUNCIL**  
**FEBRUARY 10, 2025**

**SUBJECT:** Approval to purchase 134 rifles plates for the Novi Police Department from On Duty Gear, LLC., through an existing cooperative purchase agreement with North Carolina Sheriff's Association Fire Responder Supplies and Equipment Procurement Program (Contract #NCSA 25-02-0521) in the amount of \$47,690 and amend the budget.

**SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT:** Public Safety

**KEY HIGHLIGHTS:**

- In 2023 the Novi Police Department transitioned to a load bearing external vest system.
- The Novi Police Department currently supplies its officers with critical response vests that have a ballistic rating for rifle rounds. These critical response vests are only worn when an officer expects an increase likelihood that they will be shot and not during routine operations.
- Directive 740 mandates that officers "shall" wear these vests during certain high-risk situations. This has created a situation where officers are forced to wear a critical response vest over their external vest during certain incidents creating multiple safety and operational problems.
- Current situation causes loss of less lethal force options, loss of evidence as body cameras are blocked, loss of communication equipment as well as other additional problems.
- Amend the General Fund budget to move \$47,690 from the vacancy savings in the Economic Development department (101-728.00-705.000) to cover the cost of the rifle vest plates in the Police Department (101-301.00-986.057).

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

|                                              | FY 24/25            | FY 25/26    | FY 26/27    | Total               |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------|
| <b>EXPENDITURE REQUIRED</b>                  | <b>\$ 47,690.00</b> | <b>\$ 0</b> | <b>\$ 0</b> | <b>\$ 47,690.00</b> |
| <b>BUDGET</b>                                |                     |             |             |                     |
| 1. Rifle Vest Plates<br>(101-301.00-986.057) | \$ 0                | \$ 0        | \$ 0        | \$ 0                |
| <b>APPROPRIATION REQUIRED</b>                | <b>\$ 47,690.00</b> | <b>\$</b>   | <b>\$</b>   | <b>\$</b>           |
| • Net effect to Fund Balance \$0             |                     |             |             |                     |

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

In 2023 the Novi Police Department began to transition to a loadbearing vest system. Prior to this transition the majority of an officer's equipment (pistol, radio, Taser, magazines, baton, pepper spray, handcuffs etc.) was located on their belts. The hips are an unnatural location to carry such a heavy weight which resulted in adverse health conditions for our officers. The loadbearing vests allowed officers to move their equipment off their belts and distribute the weight more naturally across their torso and onto their shoulders. This was a positive and necessary change to improve the health and longevity of our officers.

The Novi Police Department has an expectation that its officers will promptly respond to and address high risk events such as an active shooter incident. According to the National Institute of Justice 25.1% of mass casualty incidents involved an assault rifle. Additionally, Department of Justice statistics on officers feloniously killed from 2010-2019 shows that nearly 20% of the 511 fatalities occurred using a rifle. Unfortunately, the soft body armor that our officers currently wear does not offer protection from rifle rounds.

The Novi Police Department currently supplies its officers with critical response vests that have a ballistic rating for rifle rounds. These critical response vests are only worn when an officer expects an increase likelihood that they will be shot and not during routine operations. Directive 740 mandates that officers "shall" wear these vests during certain high-risk situations. This has created a situation where officers are forced to wear a critical response vest over their external vest during certain incidents creating multiple safety and operational problems. This was not an issue when officer carried their equipment on their belts because the critical response vests did not prevent access to equipment. These problems are explained in detail on the attached memorandum.

The recommendation is that we purchase rifle plates for our external load bearing vests. This purchase will provide protection from rifle rounds when they are on routine patrol as well as for critical incidents.

The purchase will be made off the North Carolina's Sheriffs' Association First Responders and Equipment Procurement Program (NCSA – Contract #25-02-0521). Our current vest provider, On Duty Gear, LLC., is also our preferred vendor for this purchase based on the history of our relationship, length of the relationship (13 years), quality of product and customer on site services as well as providing an additional discount from the pricing provided off the NCSA Contract.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Approval to purchase 134 rifles plates for the Novi Police Department from On Duty Gear, LLC., through an existing cooperative purchase agreement with North Carolina Sheriff's Association Fire Responder Supplies and Equipment Procurement Program (Contract #NCSA 25-02-0521) in the amount of \$47,690 and amend the budget.