

MIAMI BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

NO. LTC # 088-2014

LETTER TO COMMISSION

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TO: Mayor Philip Levine and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager

DATE: March 18, 2014

SUBJECT: Replacement of Police Sedan Patrol Vehicles with Police Pursuit Rated Utility Interceptors (SUVs)

This letter to the commission is to inform you of the Miami Beach Police Department's intention to purchase 40 additional Ford Police Interceptor Utility vehicles (SUVs) to meet the vehicle demands of the agency.

Currently, the Miami Beach Police Department's fleet has a total of (317) Police pursuit rated vehicles. Of these, (21) are SUV's (utility vehicles) representing 6.6% of the patrol fleet. The Miami Beach Department will purchase new patrol vehicles to replace end-of-life vehicles within the next several months and a decision as whether these vehicles are sedans or SUV's needs to be made. Both vehicles are police pursuit rated and meet the basic needs of the Miami Beach Police Department. However, the SUV's are better suited to meet all of the operational demands of the Miami Beach Police Department in the current environment.

The uniqueness of the City of Miami Beach's continual flooding (although road and infrastructure repairs are underway) and exposure to Tropical Storms and Hurricanes dictate that the Police Department increase the allotment of utility vehicles to effectively traverse through the elements and meet operational demands. In the past, the police sedans have stalled in high water conditions and water intrusion into vehicles has occurred. The utility vehicles have a higher ground clearance and are designed to travel through adverse flooding conditions without the vehicle stalling.

There is a current nationwide trend in police agencies to replace police sedans with police utility vehicles. Demand for specially equipped SUVs is growing faster than sedans, because of their utility in adverse conditions, improved ergonomics, and enhanced interior configurations.

Police utility vehicles provide many advantages as compared to the police sedans such as: increased interior dimensions, higher seating position for improved driver visibility, an enhanced visual position for surveillance and observing traffic conditions. The space required for police installed equipment (i.e., laptop mount, ticket printer, shotgun rack, AR-15 rack, flashlight charger and the center console) within the passenger compartment of the Police utility vehicle is greater than that in the Police sedan thus allowing officers added space to operate more effectively and efficiently.

The utility vehicle passenger compartment is also larger, for both arrestees in the back, and for the officers and passengers in the front. There is increased head room, shoulder room, hip room and leg room. The cargo area is also larger than that of the sedan which allows storage for more specialized police equipment.

The cost of the Police utility vehicle as compared to the Police sedan is approximately \$2500 more per vehicle and fuel economy is two miles per gallon less for CITY driving and four miles per gallon less for HIGHWAY driving.

The Fleet Management Department evaluated the Police Departments FY13/14 vehicle replacement budget which can accommodate replacing (40) Police sedan type vehicles (currently scheduled for replacement) with Police utility vehicles without requesting additional funds. The procurement of 40 Police utility vehicles would increase the Police Department's SUV fleet to (61) vehicles, or 19.2% of the police fleet.

JLM/RAM/JB/JB/LB