

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: **STORY COUNTY SAFE SEAT PROJECT**

BACKGROUND:

In mid-August the Police Department learned of an opportunity to work with Story County Decategorization Board to distribute child car safety seats to qualifying families as part of the Story County Safe Seat Project. The department currently has five officers certified in the evaluation and installation of child car seats. These officers regularly meet with parents to assist them with instruction, review and installation of child car seats.

Under the project guidelines, selected social services agencies in Story County would refer at-risk families, as defined by the Department of Human Services, to the Police Department for assistance with a child car seat. The Decategorization Board would purchase and supply the child cars seats to the Police Department for distribution to these families. There would be no cost to the family. The Board would initially purchase seven car seats for the department to distribute. The Board views this as a pilot project and, depending on the success of the initial offering, additional car seats could be made available to the department.

The project requires no financial match from the City. A Memorandum of Understanding would be executed between the City and the Decategorization Board to provide documentation of the project.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Authorize the Police Department's participation in the Story County Safe Seat Project.
2. Do not authorize the Police Department's participation in the Story County Safe Seat Project.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

This project presents a unique opportunity to promote safety for children of Ames and Story County. The installation and maintenance of child safety seats is often more complicated than it first appears, and this project will allow trained officers to provide expertise to parents and guardians to insure that the child passengers in their vehicles are safe. In addition, it will allow those officers to actually provide an appropriate and safe seat for children when car owners are not otherwise able to do so.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, thereby authorizing the Police Department's participation in the Story County Safe Seat Project.