COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: **GOVERNOR'S TRAFFIC SAFETY BUREAU NIGHTTIME SEAT BELT ENFORCEMENT GRANT PROGRAM**

BACKGROUND:

In February 2021, City Council authorized the Police Department to apply and participate in a traffic safety grant from the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau (GTSB) for enforcement of traffic laws. That program is designed with both enforcement and educational components to improve driver safety and protection, to reduce impaired driving, and to enhance overall traffic safety.

Following implementation of the grant, GTSB approached the Police Department with an additional proposal to participate in a traffic safety program that would focus on seat belt usage, particularly during hours after sunset. This is the same program the Council approved last year. A National Highway Traffic Safety Administration ten-year study of crash data shows that nighttime seat belt usage rates are 18% lower than daytime compliance rates. The program would include a public education component regarding seat belt usage and safety.

This grant would provide $5,000 to support officer overtime for an estimated five enforcement events during the grant period. The Police Department will determine where and when those events would take place. Nighttime enforcement creates unique safety concerns that would be addressed by using an observer and enforcement officer model that requires two or more officers for each event. There is no local match required with this grant.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the Police Department's participation in the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau Nighttime Seat Belt Enforcement Grant program.

2. Do not approve this grant program.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Participation in this program allows the Police Department to devote additional resources to seat belt enforcement without additional local costs. These funds improve traffic safety for the residents of Ames.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council approve Alternative #1 as described above.