



Agenda Item No. \_\_\_\_\_

File Code No. 520.04

# CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

## COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

**AGENDA DATE:** March 27, 2012

**TO:** Mayor and Councilmembers

**FROM:** Investigative Division, Police Department

**SUBJECT:** Appropriation Of Asset Forfeiture Funds For The Purchase Of Printing Services For Nixle Utility Bill Inserts

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council appropriate \$1,480 in the Fiscal Year 2012 Police Department Police Asset Forfeiture and Grants Fund from available asset forfeiture reserves for the purchase of printing services for utility bill inserts about the Nixle alert system.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The Santa Barbara Police Department is encouraging its residents to sign up for Nixle alerts to receive important and timely public safety information. With no cost to the department or residents, Nixle offers agencies throughout the country a cost-effective public notification solution. Nixle Connect allows the Police Department to communicate with the public via text/SMS, e-mail, and Internet posts at no cost. Communications range from emergency alerts, such as severe weather information, to road closures, safety and emergency preparedness and other important information.

More than 4,800 government agencies have adopted Nixle for their means of real-time communications with residents, and more than 700,000 citizens have signed up to take advantage of the service. Year-to-year usage figures from August 2010 through July 2011 show that participating agencies created a total of 72,782 messages or 6,065 per month. Over 17 million SMS text messages were sent during the 12-month period for an average of 1.4 million each month, and over 43.8 million e-mails were sent by government agency users, over 3.6 million per month.

However, the key to increasing a userbase is by contacting as many residents, commuters and visitors as possible. One significant opportunity to increase the resident userbase is by providing an insert in the monthly City of Santa Barbara utility bill. By providing approximately 28,000 inserts to Santa Barbara residents it is anticipated that we will dramatically improve our outreach.

**BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:**

The City's General Budget is not affected by this request. The Police Asset Forfeiture and Grants Fund is a separate Special Revenue Fund. Asset forfeiture funds are regulated by the Health and Safety Code and cannot be mixed with the General Fund.

**PREPARED BY:** Alex Altavilla, Police Captain

**SUBMITTED BY:** Camerino Sanchez, Chief of Police

**APPROVED BY:** City Administrator's Office