



"Policing with a Purpose"

# Smyrna Police Department

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The City of Smyrna and the surrounding communities of Cobb County face a number of significant threats to their residents and critical infrastructure. These threats, such as terrorism, violent crime and mass shootings require our first responders to be constantly prepared for any critical incidents that may occur in the area. Additionally, natural disasters including extreme weather events, such as the catastrophic flooding that hit the area in 2009, bringing the Chattahoochee River to 500-year flood stage shows the severity of the threats facing the region.

To better help prepare for such incidents, the Smyrna Police Department sustains a highly trained SWAT Team to respond to all high risk critical call outs that occur within the city. In order for the team to effectively carry out our mission to protect the citizens and critical infrastructure of the region, we must have sufficient equipment to do the job. At this time, however, we lack access to a response vehicle capable of meeting our needs for responding to catastrophic incidents such as natural disasters, performing rescues in adverse conditions, allowing medics to treat the injured, or for protecting the team and civilians from ballistic attacks. Though we have the training and experience to protect against, mitigate the effects of, respond to and recover from terrorist attacks and natural disasters, we lack suitable equipment to sustain our capabilities to do so.

As SWAT is responsible for responding to all incidents that exceed the capability of patrol within our jurisdiction, including hostage situations, active shooters and barricaded gunmen, we hereby request **\$287,150** in funding to purchase a MedEvac Emergency Rescue and Response Vehicle with Advanced Life Support (ALS) features.

The MedEvac is a complete tactical ambulance with hardened walls and blast proof windows that protect passengers from the types of high caliber ballistic and projectile attacks seen in recent terrorist attacks, allowing our TEMS personnel to deploy directly into hot zones to respond to attacks and help the injured. The vehicle provides ALS features such as space for 2 emergency litters, adjustable overhead lighting, IV hookups and oxygen tanks that will allow our team to provide aid and safe transport to those wounded in critical incidents. On top of this, the vehicle offers 4-wheel drive capability, run flat tires and the potential to reach highway speeds, helping us to respond to calls throughout our jurisdiction quickly in all road conditions. These capabilities will allow us to work off road when responding to mutual aid calls in rural and remote areas of the county, while still allowing us to respond quickly to incidents taking place in the more densely populated communities of Smyrna. The off-road capabilities, along with the vehicle's heightened ground clearance, will enable us to maneuver over road debris in the aftermath of natural disasters such as wildfires and tornados and to navigate flood prone roadways along the Chattahoochee River, Nickajack Creek or any of the area's numerous other waterways. The vehicle can carry up to 10 officers in full tactical gear and can fit up to 20 civilians in need of rescue or evacuation from violent incidents or natural disasters.



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In addition to these life saving features, the MedEvac has a number of other capabilities that will help our team perform our job. This includes:

- 2 remote control spotlights that are capable of providing lighting in darkened areas and assisting us in search and rescue operations.
- A 14 foot hydraulic ram that can be attached to the front of the vehicle to allow officers to breach barricaded structures without exposing any personnel to potential gunfire.
- A Chemical Agent Resistant Coating (CARC) that will enable the vehicle to be decontaminated after exposure to hazardous materials, allowing it to be used in response to HazMat emergencies.
- A high capacity winch will assist us in rescue situations and will allow us to remove obstacles from roadways to mitigate delays in response time.
- A 4 way camera system will allow us to monitor all sides of the truck simultaneously, enhancing our situational awareness when dealing with mobile gunmen or other threats.

In addition to protecting officers and civilians from ballistic attack, the MedEvac Emergency Rescue Vehicle will also increase our cooperative efforts with other area first responders, improving our ability to respond to terrorist attacks, natural disasters or other mass casualty events. With this vehicle, we will be able to provide better protection in volatile areas while also giving our medics additional means to help those injured during such events. The vehicle's various features will also allow us to work with paramedics and area fire units in performing rescues in adverse conditions, such as during flooding events when standard emergency response vehicles aren't able to deploy due to their low ground clearance, or in the aftermath of tornados, wildfires or other natural disasters when our fire trucks and ambulances aren't able to access affected areas due to debris or damaged roadways.

Considering how many recent terrorist attacks in the united states have involved individuals carrying out mass shootings in crowded areas, the ability to utilize a vehicle capable of protecting officers and civilians from ballistic attacks could not be more important to LETPA efforts. Additionally, the vehicle can also support LETPA efforts by acting as a mobile means of target hardening. Due to its many protective features, the vehicle can be used to protect outdoor events from the type of vehicle based attacks that have been seen both domestically and internationally over the past several years.

We have chosen this investment both because it improves the effectiveness and the safety of our tactical unit and also because it is cost effective. Built on a Ford F550 chassis, the vehicle is inexpensive to service and maintain. Furthermore, the manufacturer has a GSA contract making it accessible through both the 1122 Counter Drug Procurement Program and the Cooperative Purchasing Agreement Schedule 84 permitting direct procurement while



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significantly reducing the cost of the vehicle to the government's guaranteed lowest price. The lives of first responders, innocent civilians and even violent suspects are priceless and protecting them is our highest priority. This vehicle will reduce liability, enhance capability and expand rescue options, allowing us to minimize personal injury and property damage.

The existing capabilities of the Smyrna Police Department support the goals we are hoping to achieve with the purchase of this equipment. SWAT is a type II tactical unit that conducts 16 hours of training per month. The team consists of 15 tactical operators, a number likely to grow as the city expands over the next 10 years, and includes personnel trained as marksmen and K9 handlers. When needed, the team can also deploy with a separate unit of crisis negotiators that are maintained by the department. Once received, the vehicle will be made available to all of the above listed personnel to help them perform their duties during tactical operations.

SWAT is responsible for performing all tactical operations within the City of Smyrna, a 15.4 square mile municipality with a growing population of 56,664 residents that is likely to grow substantially through annexation over the next decade. Through mutual aid agreement, the team can also be called upon to respond to emergencies and support local tactical teams anywhere throughout Cobb County, a 345 square mile region with 755,754 residents, including within the City of Atlanta.

There are numerous critical infrastructure points within this area that this vehicle could protect from terrorist attacks or other threats. This includes:

- Kennesaw State University has 35,846 students on a 581 acre campus.
- Smyrna is home to 21 schools, with 1 high school, 2 middle schools, 9 elementary schools, 3 alternate schools, 1 charter school and 5 private schools.
- SunTrust Park is a 41,000 seat capacity stadium that hosts MLB games, concerts and other events.
- Dobbins Air Reserve Base is a 3,087 acre facility with 2 runways and 1,600 air reserve personnel that sees over 14,000 air operations per year.
- The Cumberland Mall is a 1,040,000 square foot facility with 150 stores.
- The Cobb Galleria Centre is a 3 acre facility that consists of both a mall and a convention center.
- I-285 runs directly through the city.

SWAT has been involved in numerous high risk call outs that show this jurisdiction's vulnerability. This includes numerous call outs involving barricaded and active gunmen, with 2 such incidents taking place over the past 2 years, with the expectation that the team will see as much as a 40% increase in call outs as the city annexes new neighborhoods. In both cases, due to the lack of defensive capabilities on our current vehicles, the team was forced to approach the



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buildings without any cover in case of ballistic attack, greatly increasing the risks to the officers involved. Such events show the need for our area to obtain an up to date rescue vehicle that offers protection from ballistic and explosive threats in order to protect our operators and civilians.

The City of Smyrna suffers from a high violent crime rate and lies in a region considered "High Risk for Wildfire Damage" (AttomData 2017 U.S. Natural Disaster Housing Risk Report). Despite these facts, the only vehicle that SWAT has access to when performing tactical operations is a standard box truck. While this vehicle does provide the team with space to transport men and equipment on call outs, it lacks any protection from ballistic or projectile attacks, increasing the risk of serious injury or death to operators and civilians during critical incidents. Furthermore, the vehicle lacks the MedEvac unit's ALS features, preventing us from providing immediate medical care to those injured in ongoing critical incidents and greatly reducing its effectiveness as a rescue vehicle. Considering the recent terrorist attacks and mass shooting incidents in such places as Colorado Springs, San Bernardino, Orlando, Las Vegas and Parkland, this lack of capability fails to prepare our team to respond to and protect our citizens from the type of serious threats that could face our city at any time.

With the acquisition of a new MedEvac Rescue and Response Vehicle, SWAT will be better equipped to handle calls throughout our jurisdiction and will have better protection to help prepare us for any type of attack that may occur within the region. With the safety provided by the trucks' hardened walls and windows we will be able enter hot zones to protect our officers, rescue civilians and increase the likelihood of a quick and positive resolution to incidents, while also being better prepared to assist our fellow first responders by performing rescues and evacuations and providing aid in the immediate aftermath of natural disasters in areas that may be inaccessible using standard equipment.

To sustain the capabilities supporting this project, we will provide our team with regular training on this vehicle so that we can build and maintain a high level of proficiency. Our department will maintain the vehicle so that it remains in a constant state of operational readiness and we will use our own resources to provide regular upkeep so that the vehicle lasts its expected 10-15 years.

Multiple federal government agencies have complimented the effectiveness of this type of vehicle in responding to critical incidents. They affirm its capability to protect responding personnel and citizenry during HazMat and mass casualty incidents. Furthermore, these agencies and law enforcement agencies throughout the country currently use these vehicles as a key tool to prevent acts of terrorism. The Smyrna PD SWAT Team needs this equipment so that we can continue to protect against, mitigate the effects of, respond to and recover from terrorism and natural disasters. This investment will increase integration among first responders allowing us to protect against the widest variety of hazards so that we can fulfill our duty to safeguard our immediate and surrounding communities.



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Thank you for your time and consideration.