



City of Emeryville

CALIFORNIA

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 7, 2025
TO: LaTanya Bellow, City Manager
FROM: Jeff Jennings, Police Chief
SUBJECT: Study Session - Emeryville Police Department's Use of Drones

RECOMMENDATION

This item offers the City Council the opportunity to discuss and provide direction to staff on the proposed use of drones by the Emeryville Police Department (Police Department) and whether to amend the City's Military Equipment Ordinance to authorize use.

BACKGROUND

Effective January 1, 2022, Assembly Bill 481 (codified in Government Code Section 7070, et seq.) requires legislative bodies to adopt ordinances approving military equipment policies before law enforcement agencies can continue to engage in specific activities related to the use of what the State Legislature has defined as "military equipment" in Government Code Section 7070. The Police Department's Military Equipment Policy was introduced and first read on July 19, 2022, and passed and adopted by the City Council by Ordinance No. 22-006, on September 6, 2022.

In addition, the Emeryville Police Department's existing Policy 606 establishes guidelines for the use of an unmanned aerial system (UAS) and for the storage, retrieval and dissemination of images and data captured by UAS. Any use of drones by the Police Department would be governed by Policy 606.

DISCUSSION

During the study session, the Police Department will present on the law enforcement use of drones and cover the following topics:

- Defining Drones
- Common Law Enforcement applications of Drone Use
- Benefits of Drone use
- Drone Capabilities
- Public Concerns and Transparency
- Prohibited Uses of Drones
- Other Local Agencies Using Drones
- Legal and Regulatory Considerations
- Training and Certification Requirements
- Next Steps Required for Acquisition

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact resulting from this presentation.

STAFF COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC

None.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends that the City Council review the information presented and provide direction to staff on the proposed use of drones by the Emeryville Police Department and whether to amend the City of Emeryville's Military Equipment Ordinance to authorize their use pursuant to AB 481.

PREPARED BY: Fred Dauer, Acting Captain
Jeff Jennings, Chief of Police

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EMERYVILLE:



LaTanya Bellow, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

- Emeryville Police Department Policy 606-Unmanned Aerial Systems