



CITY OF CLEARLAKE

City Council

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Adopt Resolution 2026-39 Renewing Ordinance 261-2022 and Approval of the Clearlake Police Department Military Equipment Report

MEETING DATE:
October 15, 2026

SUBMITTED BY: Tim Hobbs, Chief of Police

PURPOSE OF REPORT: ☐ Information only ☐ Discussion ☒ Action Item

WHAT IS BEING ASKED OF THE CITY COUNCIL/BOARD:

The City Council is being asked to adopt resolution 2026-39, renewing Military Equipment Policy Ordinance 261-2022 and to approve the Clearlake Police Department Annual Military Equipment Report in accordance with state law requirements as set forth in Assembly Bill No. 481.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:

On September 30, 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law Assembly Bill 481 ("AB 481"), adding Chapter 12.8, "Funding, Acquisition and Use of Military Equipment", to Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code (sections 7070 – 7075), relating to the use of military equipment by California law enforcement. The law requires that agencies utilizing or seeking to acquire military equipment, as defined, must have a policy approved by the City Council by ordinance and review it annually thereafter.

The police department does not currently utilize former military equipment; however, the law's definition of "military equipment" is comprehensive and includes many items commonly used in law enforcement. The proposed policy identifies two items currently owned by the City: a mobile command unit and an unmanned aerial system (drone). The Department is also seeking approval to acquire four additional smaller drones and one armored rescue vehicle.

1. The mobile command unit, a converted ambulance, is used as a field command post for major incidents in the city. In recent years, these incidents have primarily been fires, public events and crime scenes.
2. The Department's existing drone is utilized to enhance the Department's mission of protecting lives and property when other means and resources are not available or are less effective. Uses may include but are not limited to search and rescue, suspect apprehension, crime scene documentation, tactical operations, scene security, hazard monitoring, identification and mitigation, response to emergency calls, crisis communications and legally authorized surveillance.

The Department currently utilizes mutual aid to obtain special weapons and tactics (SWAT) resources. Given the variety of agencies that could potentially respond, the proposed policy provides that those agencies are required to comply with their respective military equipment use policies. Determining what resources they may bring to a particular incident is impractical; restricting them in advance would unnecessarily jeopardize public safety.

The Department is also seeking approval to acquire four additional smaller unmanned aerial systems (drones), such as DJI Mini or Air series models, for patrol operations and officer training. While the Department currently possesses a larger, more advanced drone, deploying that equipment for routine operations and training is not always necessary or cost-effective. Smaller drones would provide a more practical option for everyday patrol needs while preserving the capabilities of the larger drone for incidents requiring its specialized equipment. Additionally, having multiple drones would improve availability across patrol shifts, allowing officers to have access to this resource at all times rather than relying on a single aircraft.

In evaluating future needs, the Department also recognizes the potential benefits of acquiring an armored rescue vehicle. While the term “armored vehicle” can sometimes carry a military connotation, the primary purpose of such equipment is officer and community safety. These vehicles are designed to provide critical protection in the most dangerous situations, such as active shooter incidents, high-risk warrant services, or situations involving heavily armed suspects.

An armored rescue vehicle would serve not as an offensive tool, but as a shield allowing officers to approach dangerous situations safely while reducing exposure to gunfire or other threats. The enhanced protection it offers not only increases officer safety but also ensures that officers can more effectively safeguard residents during dangerous situations.

Equally important, armored vehicles provide the ability to rescue injured officers or civilians who might otherwise be unreachable due to hazardous conditions. In many jurisdictions, armored rescue vehicles have been used to extract wounded individuals, deliver emergency medical assistance, and evacuate community members from dangerous areas. In this way, the equipment directly supports the Department’s mission to enhance public safety while minimizing risk to both first responders and the public.

By incorporating this capability, the Department would be better positioned to respond decisively in rare but high-consequence events, where minutes matter and safety is paramount.

The Department posted the Military Equipment Use Policy and Annual Military Equipment Report on its internet website in September of 2026. A public meeting was held on October 15, 2026, at 2 pm at City Hall to gather public input on the policy and the annual report.

OPTIONS:

1. Adopt Resolution 2026-39 and approve the 2025-26 Military Equipment Annual Report
2. Other direction

FISCAL IMPACT:

☒ None ☐ \$ Budgeted Item? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Budget Adjustment Needed? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, amount of appropriation increase: \$

Affected fund(s): ☐ General Fund ☐ Measure P Fund ☐ Measure V Fund ☐ Other:

Comments:

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPACT:

☐ Goal #1: Make Clearlake a Visibly Cleaner City

☒ Goal #2: Make Clearlake a Statistically Safer City

☐ Goal #3: Improve the Quality of Life in Clearlake with Improved Public Facilities

☒ Goal #4: Improve the Image of Clearlake

☐ Goal #5: Ensure Fiscal Sustainability of City

☐ Goal #6: Update Policies and Procedures to Current Government Standards

☐ Goal #7: Support Economic Development

SUGGESTED MOTIONS:

1. Adopt Resolution 2026-39: A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CLEARLAKE
RENEWING ITS MILITARY EQUIPMENT POLICY
2. Approve the 2025-26 Military Equipment Annual Report

☒ **Attachments:**

- 1) Resolution 2026-39
- 2) 2025-26 Military Equipment Annual Report