



City of Grass Valley City Council Agenda Action Sheet

Title: UAV Purchase Approval per AB-481 Requirement

CEQA: Not a Project

Recommendation: That Council 1) approve the purchase of new UAV's for the Police Department, defined under AB-481 as Military Equipment, to replace outdated equipment and improve police services; and 2) authorize the Chief of Police to acquire new Skydio drones utilizing budgeted Police Department funds

Prepared by: Alex Gammelgard, Police Chief

Council Meeting Date: December 9, 2025 **Date Prepared:** December 4, 2025

Agenda: Consent

Background Information: The Grass Valley Police Department utilizes Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, "UAV's" commonly known as "drones," to aid in a multitude of circumstances; IE: criminal investigations, traffic investigations, public relations, and partnerships with inter-departmental groups or other first responder entities. In previous cases, GVPD UAV's have detected open flames against buildings allowing for suppression by ground fire-fighters, provided wildland fire situational awareness for incident command, assisted in crime scene documentation, provided search and rescue mutual aid, searched for at risk missing persons, as well as created cinematic community outreach material, among other missions and work product.

GVPD currently possesses four drones, of which three are outdated and/or non-functional and warrant replacement to ensure safe and effective critical operations. Drones fall among a very steep electronics and technology curve, in that older models of this technology often cost significant money to maintain and the technology, over time, becomes outdated and unsupported by the manufacturer. Therefore, acquiring new drones with new technology saves long-term costs in maintenance and increases the level of service we can provide the community.

UAV's are defined under state law as "military equipment" when used by law enforcement agencies, pursuant to AB-481 - codified at section 7070 - 7075 of the Government Code. The GVPD inventory of UAV's and other military equipment was presented to council with the AB-481 annual report in May of this year. At that time, the intent to purchase new UAV's in FY25/26 was incorporated in the report.

GVPD intends to decommission the outdated and non-functional equipment and will either trade-in the used equipment at the time of purchase of new equipment, or if no trade-in market exists, dispose of the equipment via traditional property surplus means, most likely via auction. The DJI Matrice 210 and DJI Spark will be surplus upon acquisition of replacement hardware. The DJI Mavic II Enterprise Pro and the Skydio SDRCV1 will be retained until replacement hardware is obtained and

operational - surplusing/disposal of that equipment will be evaluated thereafter. The police department will consider requests from other City departments for transfer of any usable equipment.

DJI drones for years have been an industry leader and generally more affordable, but questions continue to be raised about the use of foreign UAV use in domestic operations. Federal and State legislation continue to be discussed, and as such, DJI drones are not being considered to replace existing hardware. Rather, Skydio (a US based company) products are being sought. The quantity and make/model of UAV's sought is listed below:

QTY	PRODUCT	GENERAL PURPOSE
1	Skydio X10	Replacement for DJI Matrice 210 - General purpose UAV with optical and infrared camera capabilities. Commonly used for structure and wildfire overflight, crime scene documentation, tactical overflight, search and/or rescue operations, etc., and community outreach
1-3	Skydio R10	Replacement/enhancement to DJI Spark and Mavic platforms. Commonly used for confined space, interior clearing (i.e. alarm calls in commercial spaces, tactical entry, search warrant service, etc), training flights, and community outreach.

Existing FY25/26 Police Department budget funds, not to exceed \$40,000 in total, will be used for purchase. Purchases will be via competitive bids, seeking the most cost-effective purchase options for the City.

Council Goals/Objectives: The execution of this action attempts to achieve Strategic Goal #5 - Provide High Performance Government and Quality Service
Goal #6 - Provide Exceptional Public Safety

Fiscal Impact: Existing police department budget

Funds Available: Yes

Account #: Police 200-201

Reviewed by: ___ City Manager

Attachments:

N/A