



New Prague Police Department

City of New Prague In the Counties of Scott & Le Sueur

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Tim Applen, Chief of Police

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Mayor, Charles Nickolay; Members of the City Council, Shawn Ryan, Maggie Bass, Bruce Wolf, Rik Seiler and City Administrator, Joshua Tetzlaff

From: Tim Applen, Police Chief / Emergency Manager

Date: April 15, 2026

Subject: Purchase/Implementation of two Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAV) Public Hearing

The New Prague Police Department is proposing the implementation of an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) program to support public safety operations. On December 15, 2025, Council approved the purchase of two UAV's. UAVs, commonly referred to as drones, are increasingly used by law enforcement agencies to enhance situational awareness, improve response efficiency, and reduce risk to officers and the public.

A public hearing is scheduled to gather community input and provide transparency regarding the proposed program, including its intended use, safeguards, and operational policies. In addition, MN Statute 626.19 subd. 9 requires law enforcement agencies to allow public comment prior to the purchase or use of a UAV. City staff advertised public comments to either City Administrator Tetzlaff or Police Chief Tim Applen electronically or by mail in addition to the public hearing. No comments were received either electronically or by mail to city staff with input on the UAV purchase or implementation. Consistent with statutory limitations, the UAV program would be used only for authorized purposes.

The program will **not** be used for generalized surveillance or routine monitoring of the public.

The department will adopt a UAV policy that ensures:

- Full compliance with Federal Aviation Administration regulations (14 CFR Part 107 and related rules)
- Alignment with Minnesota Statutes § 626.19 and Minnesota Government Data Practices Act
- Internal approval procedures and supervisory oversight
- Mandatory documentation of each deployment
- Audit and review mechanisms

A draft policy is included for review and public comment.

Recommendation: Approve implementation of two Matrice 4TD Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAV) from Vertex Unmanned Solutions for \$24,598.00.