



City of Sebastopol

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: May 5th, 2026

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To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
Requestor: Sean McDonagh, Police Chief
Responsible Department: Police Department
Subject: Introduction of Ordinance to Adopt Surveillance Use Policy for Safe House Security System at Police Station and Budget Amendment for Safe House Security System

This item was continued from the April 21st 2026 City Council meeting.

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RECOMMENDATION(s):

That the city council:

1. Introduce and waive first reading of an ordinance to adopt surveillance use policy for Safe House Security System at the police department
2. Approve the budget amendment for the police department security camera system purchase/installation in the amount of \$13,875; and
3. Authorize expenditures from the Police Endowment Fund; and
4. Authorize the Interim City Manager signing authority for related purchase and installation

PROCESS OF AGENDA ITEM:

- Presentation of agenda item by the responsible department
 Questions and discussion from councilmembers
 Public comment period
 Council discussion and deliberation
- Council action

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Sebastopol Police Department is requesting city council approval of a budget amendment in the amount of \$13,875 to cover installation costs for the police department’s new video security system and to reimburse the general fund using the Police Endowment Fund.

The city council previously approved the purchase of the new video security system in June 2025, authorizing \$46,008.42 to be transferred from the Police Endowment Fund to reimburse the general fund for the equipment purchase. However, installation costs totaling \$13,875 were not included in that prior transfer request and are necessary to complete the system upgrade.

The upgraded system will replace the police department’s outdated surveillance system installed around 1991 and will improve facility security, incident documentation, and protection of city assets.

Approval of this item will authorize the transfer of funds from the Police Endowment Fund, ensuring no fiscal impact to the general fund, and will authorize the Interim City Manager to execute purchase and installation documents necessary to complete the project.

In accordance with Sebastopol Municipal Code section 8.80.030, the city council must adopt, by ordinance, a Surveillance Use Policy for any new technology. Because the existing surveillance system at the police department does not have the ability to record, this Safe House Security System qualifies as a new technology.

Background:

The Sebastopol Police Department facility currently operates with an outdated camera system installed around 1991. The existing system produces low-quality images and lacks modern recording and retrieval capabilities, limiting the department's ability to:

- Protect officers and staff.
- Ensure the safety of visitors.
- Secure city owned property.
- Document incidents for investigations.
- Support transparency and accountability.

Additionally, the Safe House security system requires a budget adjustment to ensure sufficient coverage, reliable monitoring, and modern recording capabilities to protect occupants and staff.

Modern surveillance systems have been and are now the standard and best practice in police and secure facilities nationwide, providing critical support for operational safety, incident documentation, and asset protection, with an impact on reducing risk to city owned assets and liability.

Discussion:

1. Police Department Camera System (The city council previously approved \$46,008.42 in June 2025 to be transferred from the Police Endowment Fund to reimburse the general fund for the purchase of the new video security system.)

The proposed system includes:

- High-definition cameras with night/low-light capability
- Secure digital storage for recordings. Video Retention: Recorded video footage will be retained for approximately 90 to 365 days (depending on the camera), after which it will be automatically deleted unless it is required for an investigation, evidentiary purposes, a public records request, or other legal retention requirement. Any footage associated with an incident may be retained longer in accordance with police evidence retention procedures and applicable records laws
- Coverage of entrances, lobby, exterior grounds, and parking areas

Installation Cost: \$13,875

This system will greatly improve the department's ability to document incidents, deter criminal activity, and provide reliable evidence when needed.

2. Safe House Security System Amendment

The Safe House system requires a budget adjustment to ensure:

- Full coverage of entrances and key areas
- Reliable monitoring and recording capabilities
- Enhanced safety for occupants and staff

3. Authorization for Interim City Manager

To streamline administration and ensure timely implementation, the council is asked to authorize the Interim City Manager signing authority for the purchase and installation of the system and for related payment of invoices using

the Police Endowment Fund. This authorization will allow for efficient project implementation while maintaining city council oversight.

4. Funding Source

Both the equipment purchase previously approved by council and the installation costs identified in this agenda item will be funded entirely through the Police Endowment Fund, consistent with its intended use for public safety initiatives, equipment, and programs.

The requested budget amendment will reimburse the General Fund for installation costs that were not included in the prior fiscal year's transfer request.

Section 8.80.030 requires the city council to approve (by ordinance) a surveillance use policy before the city can do any of the following:

- Seek funds or accept donations for surveillance technology
- Acquire or borrow new surveillance technology
- Use new surveillance technology
- Use existing surveillance technology for a purpose, in a manner or in a location not previously approved by the city council
- Entering into an agreement, including a written or oral agreement, with a non-city entity to acquire, share or otherwise use surveillance technology

The proposed ordinance adopts a surveillance use policy for the new Safe House System that complies with the requirements of Chapter 8.80.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

Upgrading the police department camera system and ensuring a fully functional Safe House security system are critical investments in public safety infrastructure.

Benefits include:

- Improved officer and public safety
- Enhanced investigative and evidence-gathering capabilities
- Reduced liability exposure
- Protection of city assets
- Support for transparency and accountability
- Reduced risk and liability to city assets and liability

Funding through the Police Endowment Fund allows these improvements to be completed without creating a financial burden on the General Fund. The proposed budget amendment ensures that the full cost of the project, including equipment and installation, is funded through the Police Endowment Fund consistent with the intended purpose of the endowment.

Authorizing the Interim City Manager to execute necessary purchase and installation documents will ensure timely completion of the project and efficient administration.

Sebastopol has adopted a Surveillance Technology Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 8.80) requiring city council approval for certain surveillance technology uses and upgrades. The proposed ordinance is consistent with the city's surveillance policies and operational guidelines governing the use, storage, and retention of surveillance data.

This action will allow the city to complete the security system upgrade, enhance safety and accountability at the police department facility, and align with best practices for municipal facility security. Without approval of the amendment, installation would be delayed and the General Fund would remain responsible for the unreimbursed installation costs.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS/PRIORITIES; AND/OR GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:

This agenda item represents the City Council goals/priorities as follows:

PUBLIC SAFETY

Strengthen the public's safety and improve the quality of life. Includes supporting our first responders (police, fire, public works), responding to emergencies, protecting people, property, and businesses, and engaging in emergency preparedness community outreach, public education and prevention activities.

- *Restoring public trust*

Fiscal Impact:

There is no fiscal impact to the General Fund.

The requested amount of \$13,875 will be transferred from the Police Endowment Fund (Account No. 128-00-00-4999) to reimburse the General Fund (Account No. 100-00-00-3999) for installation costs associated with the police department video security system.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

This item has been noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was made available for public review at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting date. The city has also promoted the council meeting and agenda items through its social media platforms.

As of the writing of this report, the city has not received public comments. Any additional comments received after publication will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials prior to or at the meeting.

RESTATED RECOMMENDATION:

That the city council:

1. Approve the budget amendment for the police department security camera system purchase/installation; and
2. Authorize expenditures from the Police Endowment Fund; and
3. Authorize the Interim City Manager signing authority for related purchase and installation

OPTIONS:

1. Do not approve the budget amendment, resulting in delayed installation of the new security system and an unreimbursed expense to the General Fund; or
2. Provide other direction to staff.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Ordinance
2. Resolution for budget amendment

APPROVALS:

Department Head Approval:

Approval Date: 4/23/26

CEQA Determination (Planning):

Approval Date: N/A

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect

physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines.

Administrative Services (Financial)

Costs authorized in City Approved Budget:

Approval Date:

Yes No N/A

Account Code (if applicable)

City Attorney Approval:

Approval Date: 4/13/26

City Manager Approval:

Approval Date: 4/14/26