



City of Sebastopol

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: April 21<sup>st</sup>, 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

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**Recommendation:** That the City Council:

1. Introduce and waive first reading of and Ordinance to Adopt Surveillance Use Policy for Safe House Security System at Police Station
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

**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The upgraded system will replace the Police Department’s outdated surveillance system installed around 1991 and will improve facility security, incident documentation, and protection of City assets.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.

**PROCESS OF AGENDA ITEM:**

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

**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 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: 4/13/26

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)

Approval Date:

Costs authorized in City Approved Budget:

Yes  No  N/A

Account Code (if applicable)

City Attorney Approval:

Approval Date: 4/13/26

City Manager Approval:

Approval Date: 4/14/26

ORDINANCE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL ADOPTING A SURVEILLANCE USE POLICY AND IMPACT REPORT FOR THE PROPOSED SAFE HOUSE SECURITY SYSTEM AT THE POLICE STATION

WHEREAS, the City Council previously enacted the Surveillance Technology and Community Safety Ordinance, codified as Chapter 8.80 of the Sebastopol Municipal Code, to govern the City's use of surveillance technology; and

WHEREAS, Section 8.80.030 requires the City Council to approve (by ordinance) a surveillance use policy, and Section 8.80.050 requires the City Council to approve a surveillance impact report, before the City uses new surveillance technology or uses existing surveillance technology for a purpose, in a manner or in a location not previously approved by the City Council; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 8.80 defines "Surveillance technology" broadly to include both advanced technology and video cameras; and

WHEREAS, this Ordinance adopts a surveillance use policy and impact report for the safe house security system at the police station; and

WHEREAS, a draft version of the policy and impact report was presented to the City Council on consent during the November 18, 2025 Council meeting; and

WHEREAS, the policy and report have been made available to the public consistent with the requirements of Sebastopol Municipal Code section 8.80.050; and

WHEREAS, the City Council held a duly noticed public hearing to consider the proposed ordinance on April 21, 2026, at which time all interested parties had the opportunity to be heard.

NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1.      Recitals. The above recitals are true and correct and are incorporated herein by this reference.

SECTION 2.      Surveillance Use Policy. The City Council hereby adopts the following surveillance use policy for the safe house security system, or any similar security cameras, at the police station:

1. ***Purpose. The specific purpose(s) that the surveillance technology item is intended to advance.***  
The City's existing surveillance was installed in 1991 and lacks modern recording and retrieval capabilities. The purpose of the new system is to: Protect officers and staff; Ensure the safety of visitors; Secure city owned property; Document incidents for investigations; and Support transparency and accountability
2. ***Authorized Use. The uses that are authorized, and the rules and processes required prior to such use and uses of the surveillance technology that will be expressly prohibited.***

The surveillance system shall only be used for deterring crime, law enforcement investigations, and other official City business related to the protection of City assets and personnel. It shall not be used for any individual's personal use.

3. ***Data Collection. What types of surveillance data will be collected, captured, recorded, intercepted, or retained by the surveillance technology, what types of data may be inadvertently collected during the authorized uses of the surveillance technology, and what measures will be taken to minimize and delete such data.***

*The system includes high-definition cameras with night/low-light capability. It will provide coverage of entrances, lobby, exterior grounds, and parking areas. The system records all activity occurring. The system does not include any recognition technology, biometric monitoring, or any other type of advanced technology.*

4. ***Data Access. The category of individuals who can access or use the collected information, how and under what circumstances data collected with surveillance technology can be analyzed and reviewed, and the rules and processes required prior to access or use of the information.***

*The surveillance system shall only be access or used by individuals authorized by the Chief of Police and/or City Manager for the specific authorized uses identified herein.*

5. ***Data Protection. The general safeguards that protect information from unauthorized access, including encryption and access control mechanisms.***

*The system includes access control features allowing for restriction of access to only authorized users. The system supports multi-factor authentication, as well as audit logs to reveal what users have accessed the system. Regular audits will ensure only authorized users will have access to the system data.*

6. ***Data Retention. The limited time period, if any, that information collected by the surveillance technology will be routinely retained, the reason such retention period is appropriate to further the purpose(s) enumerated in the surveillance use policy, the process by which the information is regularly deleted after that period lapses, and the specific conditions that must be met to retain information beyond that period.***

*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*

7. ***Public Access. How collected information can be accessed or used by members of the public, including criminal defendants.***

*The City will not release the footage collected by the surveillance system to any member of the public, except when required by law, lawfully issued subpoena, or judicial warrant.*

8. ***Third-Party Data Sharing. Which governmental agencies, departments, bureaus, divisions, or units may receive data collected by the surveillance technology operated by the City department, including any required justification or legal standard necessary to share that data, and how it will ensure that any entity sharing or receiving such data complies with the surveillance use policy.***

The City will not release the footage collected by the surveillance system to any other governmental agencies except when required by law, lawfully issued subpoena, or judicial warrant.

9. ***Training. The training required for any individual authorized to use the surveillance technology or to access information collected by the surveillance technology.***

Any individual with access to the surveillance system will be trained on the City's applicable policies.

10. ***Auditing and Oversight. The mechanisms to ensure that the surveillance use policy is followed, including internal personnel assigned to ensure compliance with the policy, internal record-keeping of the use of the technology or access the information collected by the technology, technical measures to monitor for misuse, any independent person or entity with oversight authority, and the legally enforceable sanctions for violations of the policy.***

The Chief of Police is responsible for ensuring the surveillance use policy is followed. Individuals who violate relevant policies may be subject to disciplinary action. Any person who believes a violation of the policy has occurred may submit a complaint to the City Manager or Chief of Police. Such complaints may be submitted anonymously.

11. ***Complaints. What procedures will be put in place by which members of the public can register complaints or concerns, or submit questions about the deployment or use of a specific surveillance technology, and how the municipal entity will ensure each question and complaint is responded to in a timely manner.***

Any individual may submit a complaint, concerns, or questions to the City Manager or Chief of Police regarding use of the surveillance system, and may do so anonymously if desired. Such correspondence may be submitted in person or by email. Additionally, formal complaints regarding any member of the Sebastopol Police Department regarding the surveillance system may be submitted through the City's existing process for formal complaints (and may be submitted in person or by email)

**SECTION 3. Surveillance Impact Report.** The City Council hereby adopts the following surveillance impact report for the safe house security system, or any security system with the same capabilities, at the police station:

1. ***Information describing the surveillance technology and how it works, including product descriptions from manufacturers.***

The proposed system from SAFE HOUSE Modern Security Systems includes high-definition cameras with night capability and secure network storage. There is no facial recognition or predictive policing capabilities with this system. It is purely designed to be a better quality version of the security system in place at the department now, but with the ability to record.

2. ***Information on the proposed purpose(s) for the surveillance technology.***

To enhance safety for officers, staff, and visitors; deter criminal activity; protect city property; document incidents; and support accountability.

3. ***If applicable, the location(s) it may be deployed and crime statistics for any location(s).***

Deployment at entrances, lobby, outside of the police department and parking lots. The current

system does not capture/record and as such cannot provide usable footage, which the new system would address.

**4. *The fiscal costs for the surveillance technology, including initial purchase, personnel, and other ongoing costs, and any current or potential sources of funding.***

The security system has already been approved by the city council and was purchased via the police endowment fund, with no fiscal impact to the city’s general fund. The purchase cost of the system was \$46,008.42 and the cost to install is \$13,875, totaling \$59,883.42.

**5. *An assessment identifying with specificity any potential adverse impacts the surveillance technology might have on civil liberties and civil rights; and affirmative measures to safeguard the public***

Potential impacts: inadvertent recording, misuse of footage. Safeguards: posted signage, restricted access, retention limit (unless deemed to be evidence in a case and will be governed by the retention requirements specific to the type of crime to which it relates).

**6. *Whether use or maintenance requires third-party handling or storage of data***

All data stored on city servers; vendors only have supervised temporary access during installation/maintenance.

**7. *Summary of experience of other governmental entities with the proposed technology***

Security systems of this nature are standard for police departments, nationwide. Benefits include incident documentation, deterrence, and operational safety.

SECTION 4. CEQA. The City Council finds, pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 15378(b)(5), that this ordinance is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in that it is a governmental, organizational or administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect changes in the environment.

SECTION 5. Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance. The City Council hereby declares that it would have passed this Ordinance and each and every section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase not declared invalid or unconstitutional without regard to whether any portion of the ordinance would be subsequently declared invalid or unconstitutional.

SECTION 6. Effective Date and Publication. This Ordinance shall be and the same is hereby declared to be in full force and effect from and after thirty (30) days after the date of its adoption. Before the expiration of fifteen (15) days after said passage, this ordinance or a summary therefore as provided in California Government Code Section 36933, shall be published at least once in a newspaper of general circulation published and circulated in the City of Sebastopol, along with the names of the Council Members voting for or against its passage.

APPROVED FOR WAIVING OF FIRST READING AND INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE at the Regular City Council Meeting of April 21, 2026.

VOTE:  
AYES:  
NOES:  
ABSENT:  
ABSTAIN:

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor, Jill McLewis

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mary Gourley, Interim City Manager/City Clerk, MMC

APPROVED AS TO FORM: \_\_\_\_\_  
Alex Mog, City Attorney

RESOLUTION NO. XXXX-2026

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL APPROVING A BUDGET AMENDMENT TO THE FY25/26 BUDGET TO TRANSFER FUNDS FROM THE POLICE ENDOWMENT FUND INTO THE GENERAL FUND FOR INSTALLATION OF A NEW VIDEO SECURITY SYSTEM FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

WHEREAS, the existing video security system at the police department was installed when the construction of the building was completed in 1991; and

WHEREAS, the current video security system is antiquated and does not provide any recording or video retrieval capabilities and does not provide any useful value should an incident occur requiring the retrieval of evidence for a criminal investigation or a complaint against a member of the department; and

WHEREAS, the limitations with the current system expose the City to potential liability and expose police department employees and the public to possible risks; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, installation costs totaling \$13,875 were not included in that prior transfer request and are necessary to complete the system upgrade; and

WHEREAS, the request for this budget amendment is to authorize the transfer from the Police Endowment Fund, account number 128-00-00-4999 into the General Fund account number 100-00-00-3999 to allow for the system installation; and

WHEREAS, the installation of the new video security system will provide the police department, its employees and the public with the same margin of safety that is currently in use with video security systems currently in use at City Hall and Department of Public Works; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the City Council of the City of Sebastopol does hereby approve a budget amendment to the FY25/26 approved budget to transfer \$13,875 from the Police Endowment Fund into the General Fund to complete the installation of a new video security system for the Sebastopol Police Department building.

The above and foregoing Resolution was duly passed, approved, and adopted at a meeting by the City Council on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of April 2026 by the following vote:

**VOTE:**

Ayes:

Noes:

Abstain:

Absent:

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

Mayor Jill McLewis

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mary Gourley, Interim City Manager/City Clerk, MMC

APPROVED AS TO FORM: \_\_\_\_\_  
Alex Mog, City Attorney