



Agenda Report

October 16, 2023

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Police Department

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE CONTRACT WITH ROTORCRAFT SUPPORT, INC. FOR PURCHASE OF AND INSTALLATION OF ONE WESCAM MX-10 EO/IR CAMERA SYSTEM FOR A TOTAL OF \$496,000

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the project proposed herein is exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15061 (b)(3), the "Common Sense" exemption that CEQA applies only to projects that may have an effect on the environment; and
2. Accept the bid dated September 11, 2023, submitted by Rotorcraft Support, Inc. in response to specifications for one Wescam MX-10 camera purchase and helicopter installation; and authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract not to exceed \$496,000 which includes the base contract amount of \$489,000 and a contingency of \$7,000 to provide for any necessary change orders.

BACKGROUND:

The Pasadena Police Air Operations Section is a multi-disciplined aviation operation with the primary role of providing support to first responders. Additional functions include narcotic interdiction, search and rescue, fire operations, gang enforcement, and other inter-departmental operations. The unit operates five patrol helicopters, seven days a week, providing a much-needed safety barrier for our ground officers and other first responders. Frequently, multiple helicopters are required to be operated during various times of the day and the camera is used regularly during flights. Aside from Pasadena, the unit provides aerial responses to the Foothill Air Support Team (F.A.S.T.) and our two sister cities, Glendale and Burbank. This accounts for a coverage area of approximately 175 square miles between the 13 partner agencies. In addition, flight crews are frequently tasked with assisting other county, state and federal agencies in support of homeland security missions, infrastructure inspections, and critical incident planning.

In the field of Airborne Law Enforcement, the most effective piece of equipment on the helicopter is the gyro-stabilized, EO/IR (Electro Optical/Infra-Red) camera system. Since the camera must meet stringent FAA requirements for airworthiness, the costs for aerial use cameras are significantly higher than general use cameras. Furthermore, this technology allows the crew to safely respond to areas that are currently inaccessible in night or low-light conditions and improves their aerial observation capabilities. This ultimately gives law enforcement the advantage when searching for outstanding suspects, immensely adding to the safety of officers on the ground. The IR camera decreases unnecessary man-hours since flight crews are able to locate suspects faster and more efficiently during perimeter searches and large containments. With the latest advancements in technology, IR cameras currently on the market perform with exceptionally better Hi-Def imagery and zoom capability. This provides for much greater detail and allows for increased stand-off ranges, which in turn decreases the helicopter's noise signature. Department policy prevents this equipment from being used to violate personal privacy laws.

Following City Council approval in April of 2020, the Air Operations Section acquired its first Wescam MX-10 camera, starting the process of replacing antiquated imaging systems. Acquisition of another MX-10 camera will further efforts to standardize the fleet while minimizing the reliance on older, outdated systems. This standardization enhances operability and situational awareness for the flight crews.

Following City purchasing guidelines, a Notice Inviting Bids for a purchase and installation of thermal imaging camera system was advertised in The Pasadena/San Gabriel Valley Journal News and the San Gabriel Valley Tribune newspapers and posted on Open Gov procurement. The posting generated notices to 14 vendors who have previously registered with the City for this particular commodity class. Twelve bids were downloaded in which three applied and one bid was submitted. There are no vendors located in Pasadena that provide this equipment for airborne law enforcement.

Rotorcraft Support, Inc (RSI) bid was responsive to the specification and determined to be the lowest, responsive submission. RSI is a reputable vendor in the helicopter industry with years of experience performing aircraft modifications. The MX-10 camera system will improve situational awareness, while providing better interoperability and safety amongst first responders. From a proactive standpoint, the MX-10 camera will be utilized to provide security and proactively secure infrastructure sites more effectively and efficiently. Additionally, as the new equipment will allow for flying at greater altitudes, noise related complaints are likely to be reduced. As such, staff recommends the Council award Rotorcraft Support, Inc. to purchase and install the thermal imaging camera system to be completed at their facility in Fillmore, CA.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

By providing the Police Air Operations Section with upgraded equipment and technology to perform its function, the proposed purchase furthers the City Council's strategic planning goal of ensuring public safety.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

The proposed contract has been determined to be exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), the "Common Sense" exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Such is the case with the proposed contract authorization with a camera contract. No physical changes to the environment will result from the proposed contract authorization.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The cost of this action is \$496,000. Funding for this action will be addressed by utilization of existing budgeted appropriations of funds obtained through the Urban Area Security Initiative Fiscal Year 2021 Grant Award (23033001-850400-91531). It is anticipated that all funds will be spent during the current fiscal year with no indirect or support cost requirements. There is no impact to the General Fund.

Respectfully submitted,



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