



City of Nampa Police Department Business Item

TO:	Mayor and Council
FROM:	Lieutenant Don Peck
NUMBER:	{{section.number}}-c
DATE:	November 18, 2024
SUBJECT:	Action Item: Authorize Police Department to publish a Declaration and Notice of Intent to execute a sole source contract for the purchase of a fixed-wing vertical take-off unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV – aka drone) and training in the amount of \$168,593.00. (Approved by City Attorney Todd Lakey) (Equipment costs of \$159,741.47 covered in grant from the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA Program; Training costs of \$8,851.53 covered under Department’s training budget; #25-7010-012A)

Background Summary:

The Nampa Police Department (NPD) has operated unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) for over a decade. The current technology does not allow for extended flight time and long-distance operation. The search for UAVs with up to three hours of flight time, video streaming, non-Chinese components, fully electric, and remote piloting has resulted in only one manufacturer for under \$200,000.

On August 9, 2024, the Nampa Police Department was awarded \$170,000 from the Oregon-Idaho High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Program to purchase a fixed-wing UAV.

On September 16, 2024, the Nampa City Council authorized NPD to accept the grant funds.

Reason for Project:

The City of Nampa continues to grow and to meet the needs of the growth, NPD continues to find innovative approaches to their work. One such innovation is the use of UAV technology.

The UAV, and the grant funds, will allow NPD to support counter-drug operations. The use of the UAV will enable officers to ensure the safety of everyone when known drug activity is happening.

When the UAV is not being used for counter-drug operations, it will allow NPD to get eyes on dangerous situations ahead of officers arriving on the scene, or in lieu of officers getting put into harm's way. Situations such as domestic violence will result in an NPD employee getting eyes on the location before officers can arrive on the scene. This will give situational oversight to responding officers. They will have firsthand knowledge if the suspect flees, what vehicle they are in, what direction they are going, and direct officers to their location.

The Treasure Valley does not have an air unit (airplane or helicopter) to assist law enforcement. This UAV has up to three hours of flight time, far exceeding the current UAVs used by NPD that will only fly for up to 45 minutes. When a vehicle pursuit ensues, the UAV can be launched and quickly get aerial coverage. This will allow officers to change their tactics during the pursuit, keeping the public and officers safer.

Response times to calls continue to be an issue for our agency. The need for more officers coupled with the sprawl of the city and traffic issues enhances the need for UAV assistance. The UAV can fly directly, eliminating traffic issues. This UAV can fly up to 60 mph, with sustained flight at approximately 40 mph.

Funding/Project:

Most of the cost will be covered by the grant from the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA Program. The contract is for \$168,593; however, \$8,851.53 is for training and not covered by the grant. Those funds will be paid out of the PD's training budget. The cost to be covered by the grant is \$159,741.47

Two UAV pilots will attend the training which includes instruction on how to maintain and pilot the UAV. They will also be certified to train additional pilots on the UAV.

In addition to the training costs included in the contract, the PD will also cover travel costs for the training out of the training budget. Additional costs will be approximately \$7,114. This includes flights, hotel, per diem, rental car, and parking.

Staff Recommendation:

The fixed-wing UAV brings capabilities to NPD to combat crime in our area. This UAV will give our officers an additional tool in our efforts to combat drugs being brought into and sold in our city and surrounding areas.

Not only will this UAV assist us with drug crimes, but it will also be a force multiplier when we are looking at high-risk calls for service. When our tactical team executes a search warrant, we put UAVs in the air. Depending on the length of the operation, the UAVs will have to be brought down multiple times to change batteries. With the extended flight time, we can keep one UAV in the air for longer periods, uninterrupted.

The applications for deploying the UAV will be selective; however, the ability to deploy for situations where the public is in danger will enable us to get firsthand knowledge of the scene with limited response time.