

STAFF REPORT

Date: February 26, 2025

To: Mayor and City Council

Through: Jackie Bryant, City Manager

Subject: Staff Report (For Possible Action): Approval to purchase an AeroVironment Telemax EVO Hybrid unmanned ground vehicle (UGV) for hazardous material identification, handling and disposal (bomb robot) for use by the Consolidated Bomb Squad comprised of the City of Reno on behalf of the Reno Police Department, the City of Sparks on behalf of the Sparks Police Department and the Washoe County Sheriff's Office at a total cost not to exceed \$540,000 with the City of Reno's share not to exceed \$180,000 (Federal Forfeiture Funds).

From: Kathryn Nance, Chief of Police

Department: Police Department

Summary:

The Northern Nevada Consolidated Bomb Squad (Bomb Squad) is made up of personnel from the City of Reno, Washoe County and City of Sparks. It provides vital services to the community. In order to maintain its accreditation, the Consolidated Bomb Squad must have a medium-platform robot with capabilities specified in the FBI Bomb Data Center's National Guidelines for Bomb Technicians. Currently, the region does not have a robot that meets these guidelines. The Bomb Squad has identified a UGV that meets the needs of the unit while providing good stewardship of public funds. In addition, the UGV identified can play a crucial role in identifying and handling other hazardous materials, including synthetic opioids and other drugs, without exposing officers to these hazards. The cost of this unit will be split equally between the three partner agencies. Staff recommends authorizing the purchase of this unit using Federal Forfeiture Funds.

Consent Review	Yes	No
1. Is this item an annual or standard item that comes before Council for regular approval?		x
2. Is this item an agreement required based on an item previously approved by Council?		x
3. Is this item included in the current budget approved and adopted by Council?		x

Other Considerations	
What percent of the total City budget does this item represent?	.02%

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

Public Safety

Previous Council Action:

There is no recent Council action relevant to this item.

Background:

The Northern Nevada Consolidated Bomb Squad (Bomb Squad) is made up of personnel from the City of Reno, Washoe County and City of Sparks. This partnership goes back many years, with the most recent Interlocal Agreement dating from 2023. This regional team pools high-level expertise and resources in order to best protect the residents of Northern Nevada from extreme hazards. In January-November 2024, the Bomb Squad provided 187 bomb sweeps, 34 after-hours callouts, 26 community demonstrations/presentations and participated in training for 6,082 total hours of service.

The Consolidated Bomb Squad has access to advanced training and equipment, improved interagency collaboration, and increased credibility in court because it is accredited by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). In order to maintain its accreditation, the Consolidated Bomb Squad must have a medium-platform robot with capabilities specified in the FBI Bomb Data Center's National Guidelines for Bomb Technicians. Currently, the region does not have a robot that meets these guidelines. The robot currently being operated is twenty-one (21) years old, and the manufacturing and third-party vendors cannot service it to maintain function.

While traditionally used for bomb disposal, a primary use of this robot will be assisting in the identification and handling of dangerous drugs, including fentanyl, which can be absorbed through skin or accidental inhalation. An UGV can be equipped with drug identifying sensors and -X-rays, and/or spectrometry devices to detect drugs without exposing an employee. The UGV can also search spaces more thoroughly, especially in confined or hard-to-reach areas like air ducts, crawl spaces, or under vehicles, all encountered during drug investigations. This unit will reduce the risk of harm to officers when entering hostile or unsecured environments where potentially lethal drugs are stored.

Discussion:

The Consolidated Bomb Squad conducted research to determine which model of bomb robot would best meet the needs of the Consolidated Bomb Squad and conform to the National Guidelines for Bomb Technicians. The UGV market for bomb squads is very small. The Bomb Squad researched models and identified the AeroVironment Telemex EVO Hybrid as the unit

that best meets the needs of the Bomb Squad while providing good stewardship of public funds. Both the City of Reno Finance Director and Washoe County Purchasing and Contracts Manager have approved sole source procurement of this unit.

The current quote for the total cost of the unit is \$502,147.55, with RPD's portion anticipated being \$167,382.52. We are requesting authorization for up to \$180,000 to allow for any cost increases or modifications if we are unable to obtain authorization to execute a purchase order within the time frame of our current quote and to accommodate small change order adjustments.

Financial Implications:

This cost will be borne by Federal Forfeiture funding. There is no anticipated impact on the General Fund.

Legal Implications:

Pursuant to NRS 332.115(1)(a) this contract is not adapted to an award by competitive bidding. Legal review completed for compliance with City procedures and Nevada law.

Recommendation: Staff recommends Council approve the purchase an AeroVironment Telemex EVO Hybrid unmanned ground vehicle (UGV) for hazardous material identification, handling and disposal (bomb robot) for use by the Consolidated Bomb Squad comprised of the City of Reno on behalf of the Reno Police Department, the City of Sparks on behalf of the Sparks Police Department and the Washoe County Sheriff's Office at a total cost not to exceed \$540,000 with the City of Reno's share not to exceed \$180,000 (Federal Forfeiture Funds) and authorize the City Manager, Finance Director, Chief of Police and/or their designees to sign the purchase orders.

Proposed Motion:

I move to approve staff recommendation and authorize the City Manager, Finance Director, Chief of Police and/or their designees to sign the purchase orders.

Attachments:

AeroVironment Telemex EVO Hybrid unmanned ground vehicle quote (UGV)