

From: [Tyler Silvy](#)
To: [City Council Public Comments](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Armored Rescue Vehicle Purchase
Date: Saturday, October 22, 2022 9:21:25 PM

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Tyler Silvy
Date: October 21, 2022 at 7:17:23 PM PDT
To: ealvarez@srcity.org, crogers@srcity.org, cc-comments@srcity.org
Subject: **Armored Rescue Vehicle Purchase**

To Mayor Chris Rogers, Vice Mayor Eddie Alvarez and other members of the Santa Rosa City Council:

My name is Tyler Silvy, and I am a Santa Rosa resident currently living in District 1. I am writing today to share my thoughts on an action item on the City Council's Oct. 25, 2022, meeting agenda: Consent Item 12.1 – the Armored Vehicle Rescue Purchase. I am against the purchase, and would ask that the council reject the staff recommendation or delay approval until sufficient justification or need can be demonstrated.

Your budget decisions should mirror the values of your community and your voters. When you reflect on your constituents, do you see a community asking for more police militarization, for their city to tap into civil asset forfeiture funds to buy weapons of war – for their City Council to double down on the status quo? The Black Lives Matter protests of 2020 strongly suggest otherwise.

Unfortunately, the decision to place the purchase of a \$400,000, blast-resistant tank on your consent agenda – the cozy home for predetermined council action – is a clear indicator which direction city leadership has chosen.

I hope I'm wrong. I hope the City Council will consider this purchase carefully, weighing not only constituent sentiment, but also state law that has empowered you to take a more deliberate approach to police militarization while requiring police forces to justify their weapons of war.

The Santa Rosa Police Department has not justified this purchase.

Consider the various arguments presented in the staff report you've been provided:

- **It would make the community safe:** If there is a way to verify this, now or in the future, I can't think of it. It's worth noting, too, that staff didn't even bother offering anecdotal support for this argument.
- **It could/would be used for rescue operations:** This may be true. Have any of the neighboring jurisdictions used their armored military vehicle for this purpose? Was it successful? If this is the primary use, is this the best vehicle for the task? Shouldn't it be housed in the fire department? And, should it really have gun ports?
- **It's needed because Sonoma County could be using the other one:** This could be true. Can the city provide one example of an incident in which an armored vehicle was needed, but it was unavailable because of another deployment by the SCSO? What was the result of that incident? If the situation was resolved via other means, or via patience, why is that approach untenable in the future?
- **Other departments have them:** This is true. It's also true that my mom was fond of the hypothetical, "Would you jump off a bridge just because your friends did?"

Please consider these additional questions before you OK the purchase of a \$200,000 vehicle with \$140,000 in gadgets (such as gun ports):

- The police department cites "231 reported shootings," as part of its justification for this purchase. How is this defined? Were there 231 confirmed shootings? Were there 231 separate incidents in which shootings were reported? Or, were there 231 total calls, including multiple calls for the same incident and calls that were either unverified or false?
- If purchased, what will this vehicle be used for primarily? And how often do you estimate it will be deployed? How often is it used in other jurisdictions, and for what purposes?
- Is there a way to ensure officer safety without using such a vehicle? Might it be better to avoid putting officers in dangerous situations, rather than putting them in those situations and throwing military equipment at the issue?

Thank you for taking the time, and thanks for your service to the city. Please vote against this purchase. Consider it the first tangible effort to declare a ceasefire, instead of doubling down on the war against Santa Rosa residents.

Tyler Silvy

From: [Michael Titone](#)
To: [CityCouncilListPublic](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment against approval of purchase (item 12.1)
Date: Monday, October 24, 2022 3:47:48 PM

Dear Santa Rosa City Council,

I am a resident of Santa Rosa. Tomorrow on the city council meeting's consent calendar on item 12.1, I ask you to not approve the purchase of the armored "rescue" vehicle as it is being billed.

Law enforcement agencies around the country have a decades-long history of asking for more military equipment. They tend to play to the public's fears by considering only worst-case scenarios, in this case an active shooter situation, and don't consider the detrimental impacts on overall public well-being. Military equipment is harmful to the community and erodes public trust in police. The legislative findings supporting AB-481 show that militarized gear does not improve public safety, rather it results in increased risk of civilian deaths, risks to civil rights and liberties, and physical and psychological harm to community members.

Many of the upgrades on this vehicle, such as gun ports, are clearly meant to be used for violence and not strictly for rescue. While this purchase is being billed for use in active shooter situations, sometimes toy guns are misidentified as when a sheriff's deputy killed Andy Lopez. Militarized equipment may also be used to disperse crowds of protesters, harming community members and resulting in lawsuits against the city, as we saw with the George Floyd protesters. While the city's use policy states that the vehicle should not generally be used for crowd control, the policy doesn't strictly prohibit it and is somewhat vague in that it can be used in situations in which violence is merely "threatened". It is far safer for law enforcement to not have the option to misuse this equipment than to rely on use policy alone for protection.

What is also upsetting is that this equipment is being purchased through constitutionally questionable civil asset forfeiture funds, in which money or assets are taken from community members without due process. It is upsetting that this money is being used to purchase a vehicle that will further harm civil liberties.

Please remember that the desire for police accountability still exists in this community.

I ask you to deny this purchase. Thank you for your time.

AB-481: https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB481