

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: RACHEL EDE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR – TRANSIT  
TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
SUBJECT: WAIVER OF COMPETITIVE BID AND PURCHASE AND  
INSTALLATION OF CAMERA EQUIPMENT FOR TRANSIT FLEET  
FROM SEON DESIGN (USA) CORP.

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Transportation and Public Works Department and the Finance Department that the Council, by resolution: 1) waive competitive bidding pursuant to Section 3-08.100(D); 2) approve issuance of a purchase order to Seon Design (USA) Corp., a division of Safe Fleet, Bellingham, Washington, for transit fleet camera equipment for a total not to exceed \$325,000; and 3) authorize the City Manager or designee to execute all documents necessary to purchase and provide for installation services, subject to approval as to form by the City Attorney.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Transportation and Public Works Department seeks approval to issue a purchase order for an amount not to exceed \$325,000 to upgrade existing components and replace camera equipment for part of the CityBus fixed route and paratransit fleets. CityBus currently has Seon Design (USA) Corp., a division of Safe Fleet (Seon) camera equipment installed in the fleet. Staff recommends a waiver of competitive solicitation for this purchase as permitted by Section 3-08.100 (D) of the City Code due to necessary standardization and cost savings. This purchase will benefit the safety and security of both riders and employees by improving the reliability and quality of CityBus' transit vehicle fleet camera system, enabling remote camera equipment health checks and remote downloading of video footage, and increasing the number and capabilities of the cameras on each bus.

BACKGROUND

All CityBus vehicles (29 fixed route buses and 11 paratransit vehicles) are equipped with Seon camera systems. Transit staff are seeking to update the equipment to improve reliability and video quality, reduce staff time maintaining equipment, and

# WAIVER OF COMPETITIVE BIDDING AND APPROVAL OF PURCHASE OF CAMERA EQUIPMENT FOR TRANSIT FLEET FROM SEON DESIGN (USA) CORP.

PAGE 2 OF 4

reduce the time needed to investigate incidents and complaints, thus improving safety and security.

Onboard technology systems equipment (e.g., headsigns, fareboxes, and cameras) is typically installed by the bus manufacturer at the time of purchase of the vehicle as specified by CityBus. CityBus has specified Seon camera equipment on all new bus purchases since at least 2002. During the life of a transit vehicle (12+ years for fixed routes buses and 6+ years for paratransit vehicles), if camera system equipment needs to be replaced, a transit agency typically purchases specific equipment to match the agency's existing camera equipment. This is done to minimize cost and complexity while maximizing interoperability between vehicles. Maintaining multiple camera systems or conducting a full system replacement of all camera equipment costs more than updating an existing camera system. The Transit Division has historically used this approach, employing a non-competitive process for ensuring a fair and reasonable price as system equipment is replaced or upgraded.

Seon sells proprietary video surveillance equipment for which there is no substitute. Substitutes or competition for Seon would need to take place at the fleet level, not on an individual vehicle level. A fleet level replacement of a camera system would be significantly more expensive than the proposed upgrade.

## PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Not applicable.

## ANALYSIS

Transit Division staff continue to work to identify ways to improve safety and security in the transit system and to ensure that any incidents or complaints are quickly and thoroughly investigated. The existing camera equipment is critical to ensuring the safety of CityBus staff as well as the riders that take over 1.3 million rides annually on CityBus. This project will modernize the vehicle camera system to allow for remote camera equipment health checks to ensure that all cameras are functioning onboard vehicles at all times. It will also enable staff to more readily review camera footage related to complaints and incidents through remote downloading of video. Increasing the number and capabilities of the cameras on each vehicle will improve staff's ability to monitor and investigate safety concerns or customer complaints.

The contract price was determined to be fair and reasonable through comparisons of past purchases from the same dealer in 2018-2021 and comparing pricing from this dealer with pricing for another transit agency. The camera system cost (TH8 versus NH16) has increased by about 100% since the prior installation because the NH16 system has twice the number of cameras (all digital) on the system versus the previous system with 8 cameras at a maximum. Camera hardware costs have increased by about 25% per camera since the last installation; however, these cameras will be digital

WAIVER OF COMPETITIVE BIDDING AND APPROVAL OF PURCHASE OF CAMERA EQUIPMENT FOR TRANSIT FLEET FROM SEON DESIGN (USA) CORP.  
PAGE 3 OF 4

as opposed to analog and provide a significantly clearer picture. Labor costs for installation have also increased since the new system has twice as many cameras per bus and the wiring is significantly more complex in order to allow for remote camera equipment health checks and remote video downloading. The cost quoted to the City of Santa Rosa for the Seon NH16 system is consistent with the cost Seon is charging a partner bus operator for the same system. In summary, staff find that the pricing appears to be fair and reasonable considering the expanded capabilities of the new system.

By maintaining and upgrading existing Seon equipment CityBus will save an estimated \$2,500 for nine vehicles and \$8,000 for four vehicles (a total of \$56,000). To rebid the camera system would require the replacement of all the equipment on 40 vehicles (paratransit and fixed route), plus the cost to rewire the vehicles. The estimated cost for a full re-bid significantly exceeds the cost of the proposed purchase.

Section 3-08.100(D) of the City Code provides that purchases of supplies, material, equipment, and services may be made without recourse to competitive bidding requirements where the source of supply, necessary restrictions in specifications, necessary standardization, quality considerations, or other valid reasons for waiving competition appears.

Under Section 3-08.100(D), the approval of the waiver of competitive bidding must be approved at the same level of authority as set forth in Section 3-08.110 of the City Code. Council is the award authority for a purchase with a not-to-exceed amount over \$100,000 and must approve the waiver of competitive bidding.

Staff recommends the waiver of competitive bidding due to necessary standardization and the need to utilize a fleetwide approach to camera acquisition and upgrades. Therefore, awarding the purchase to Seon, in accordance with Section 3-08.100 (D) of the City's Purchasing Policy is the recommended method of procurement.

The purchase of camera equipment will utilize the City's standard purchase order terms and conditions; however, the vendor also includes non-standard terms and conditions that apply in connection with its quote. The non-standard terms and conditions from the vendor present unfavorable provisions and they lack many of the standard terms, conditions and protections the City typically insists upon in the City's standard contracts to best protect the City's interests. City staff are familiar with similar terms from prior purchases with this vendor and nevertheless believe that the benefits associated with the purchase outweigh the legal risks.

#### FISCAL IMPACT

This action has no impact on the General Fund. This procurement will be funded by the Transit Division's Transportation Development Act Article VI (TDA) funding.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) and 15378 in that there is no possibility that the implementation of this action may have significant effects on the environment, and no further environmental review is required.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - Cost Proposal: Q5225, Q43239 & Q52219
- Resolution

PRESENTER

Yuri Koslen, Transit Planner