

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: LORI ANN FARRELL, INTERIM CITY MANAGER
JASON NUTT, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
SUBJECT: FEDERAL IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT PRACTICES AND
POTENTIAL LOCAL PUBLIC SAFETY IMPACTS

AGENDA ACTION: STUDY SESSION

RECOMMENDATION

Council will hold a study session to hear public feedback and facilitate a Council discussion regarding recent federal immigration activities in California and throughout the nation, Council actions taken to date, and further options for actions that can be taken by the City of Santa Rosa to help ensure public safety for our residents. No action will be taken except for possible direction to staff. This item has no impact on current fiscal year budget.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recent national events have underscored public concern about immigration enforcement activities conducted by federal agencies. In late 2025 and early 2026, a significant immigration enforcement operation in Minneapolis resulted in heightened public debate and protests after federal agents were involved in use of force by federal immigration agents that resulted in loss of life and generated broad national attention. These events have prompted municipal governments nationwide to evaluate the scope of local authority, public safety considerations, and community expectations relative to federal immigration enforcement actions. The purpose of this study session is to provide background information and facilitate Council discussion regarding the potential development of a local ordinance or resolution that would clarify the City's recommendations regarding improvements to federal immigration enforcement and actions in local jurisdictions including prohibitions in the unauthorized use of city facilities for immigration operations.

GOAL

This item relates to Council Goal #4 – Foster a Safe, Healthy, and Inclusive Community.

BACKGROUND/PRIOR COUNCIL REVIEW

Immigration enforcement within the United States is primarily conducted by federal agents such as U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) under the authority of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Under federal law, the City does not have jurisdiction over immigration status or enforcement actions, nor can it direct federal enforcement priorities or interfere with federal immigration efforts. State and local governments, however, retain authority to protect public safety by not using state or local resources to assist with federal immigration efforts. Both the California Values Act SB 54 and City policy preclude City staff including the Santa Rosa Police Department (SRPD) from assisting with immigration enforcement efforts except in circumstances involving violent crimes. Any guidelines or policies the City adopts must be consistent with federal and state law, including constitutional protections and public safety requirements.

ANALYSIS

There is broad community interest in ensuring that all residents – regardless of immigration status – feel safe engaging with local law enforcement, city services, accessing public spaces, and participating in civic life. Some members of the community have expressed concerns regarding recent federal immigration enforcement actions throughout California and the nation. Others have raised questions about how such activities intersect with public safety, civil liberties, constitutional rights, and local law enforcement partnerships.

The allocation of local governmental resources and facilities are reserved to the City of Santa Rosa and its elected representatives to determine how best to serve the community, and that all community members may participate in civic life and daily activities in a safe and productive manner.

In addition, several local agencies, including the City of San Jose, California, have recently considered or adopted local resolutions prohibiting federal immigration enforcement agents from using City-owned or controlled properties, buildings, parks, parking facilities, or other assets as a staging area, processing area, or operations base for civil immigration enforcement (Attachment 1).

The following topics are provided for discussion.

1. Review of Prior Actions: Review of actions taken previously by both the City and the State of California to preclude the City from assisting with federal immigration efforts except in narrow circumstances.
2. Public Safety and Protection of Civil Rights: Consider policies that emphasize the protection of public safety and civil rights for all individuals, including ensuring non-discrimination and promoting peaceful community environments.

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3. Use of City Resources: Discuss the extent to which City resources (e.g. facilities, personnel, communication systems) may or may not be used in federal immigration enforcement activities.
4. Community Engagement and Communication: Evaluate strategies for providing clear information to the public regarding existing laws, residents' rights, and City policies related to federal enforcement operations.

FISCAL IMPACT

At this stage, there is no identified fiscal impact with this discussion item.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and has no potential for resulting in a physical change in the environment.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - San Jose Legislation

PRESENTER(S)

Jason Nutt, Assistant City Manager