



AGENDA REPORT

TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: James Beere
Interim Chief of Police

SUBJECT: LETS Throw Phone Contract

DATE: January 20, 2026

City Administrator Approval


Jestin Johnson (Mar 11, 2026 16:46:32 PDT)

Date: Mar 11, 2026

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt a Resolution:

(1) Authorizing The City Administrator To Enter Into A Two (2) Year Contract With Law Enforcement Technology Solutions (LETS), For The Period Commencing Upon Contract Signing, In The Amount Of Eleven Thousand One Hundred Twenty-Four Dollars And Seventy-Six Cents (\$11,124.76), And To Extend The Agreement For Up To Two Additional Years In An Amount Not To Exceed Eleven Thousand Four Hundred Fifty-Eight Dollars And Fifty Cents (\$11,458.50), Without Returning To City Council, For A Total Contract Amount Not To Exceed Twenty-Two Thousand Five Hundred Eighty-Three Dollars And Twenty-Six Cents (\$22,583.26); And

(2) Waiving The Competitive Multiple Step Solicitation Process And The Local/ Small Local Business Enterprise Requirements

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The LETS Android throw phone is an Android device that is part of a communications system for use in police hostage/crisis negotiations with subjects. The phone is enabled with two-way communication in an overt or covert manner.

This system is intended to provide a reliable means of communication between a hostage taker or barricaded subject and a member of the Department's Hostage Negotiation Team (HNT). At times, there are no other means of phone communication with the subject, and this system allows for safe and reliable communication from a distance. The system allows the HNT to monitor and record conversations to facilitate the development of negotiation strategies and ensure that safety-related information is relayed. In addition to the overt communication capabilities, this technology also may also capture images and audio of identifiable individuals (additional suspects or victims/hostages), some of whom are unaware of the recording.

Approval of this policy will allow City of Oakland to enter into a contract with LETS throw phone company.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

OPD has developed Departmental General Order I-29: Throw Phone Use Policy and accompanying impact report and presented them to the Privacy Commission at the regularly scheduled Privacy Commission meetings on November 20, 2024, and October 3, 2024.

On November 20, 2024, the Privacy Commission voted unanimously to adopt Department General Order I-29 and recommended that the City Council also adopt the Departmental General Order I-29 and the accompanying impact report.

On March 4, 2025 the Throw Phone Use policy, [C.M.S. 90652](#), was approved by Council.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

The Oakland Police Department believes in protecting and serving its diverse community and city through fair, equitable, and constitutional policing. OPD believes in the usage of technology to aid in this mission and in the investment into progressive forms of surveillance technology, which both protects the rights of members of the community while also ensuring and enhancing the safety of community members, officers, and engaged persons. This includes a multipronged approach related to tactics, methodology, and technology that allows for de-escalation in often rapidly evolving and tumultuous environments and crisis events.

Although there are several more expensive alternative Throw Phones offered by various companies, there is no other technology able to directly replace and fulfill the need and benefits of a throw phone in a critical incident.

A less ideal alternative would be to use a regular department-issued cell phone as a makeshift solution which is what OPD has been using. LETS throw phones will be much more ideal.

Throw phone systems of this nature are standardized equipment for Hostage/Crisis Negotiation Teams according to the National Council of Negotiation Associations, Federal Bureau of Investigation Crisis Negotiation Unit, National Tactical Officers' Association, and other industry standards. Approximately 15 years ago, the industry standard for these systems began to include video monitoring capabilities. Such monitoring capabilities were deemed important to be able to assess the demeanor of the subject and whether there were any life-safety factors present, such as the injured parties or threats of violence.

Track Record:

Most law enforcement agencies nationwide, particularly larger and well-resourced ones, have Throw Phones as part of their crisis negotiation and tactical response equipment. Smaller agencies or those with limited budgets might not have their own dedicated throw phones, but they often rely on nearby larger agencies or specialized units for assistance in critical situations that require such equipment. Throw Phones have been a proven critical tool in the negotiation arsenal to establish a secure and reliable line of communication. They indisputably enhance the safety of everyone involved and help facilitate a peaceful resolution to critical incidents. The LETS throw phone has the capability to "lock down" so the HNT member may control the Android from the Command Post or Negotiation Operations Center.

This policy advances the citywide priority of **holistic community safety** as this technology provides opportunities for less immediate police-public encounters where police use of force may occur, and where the lives of officers and the public may be in danger. All Oakland residents and visitors benefit from these efforts to support public safety and policing while mitigating encounters that endanger lives.

Waiver of competitive multi-step proposal solicitation and of the Local/Small local business (L/SLBE) participation requirements

Oakland Municipal Code (“OMC”) Title 2, Chapter 2, Article I, section 2.04.042 B. requires that the City Administrator conduct a competitive multiple-step proposal solicitation process for the acquisition of technical professional services.

OMC section 2.04.042 D. provides that the City Council may waive the competitive multiple step proposal solicitation process upon a recommendation of the City Administrator and finding and determination by the City Council that it is in the best interests of the City to waive the competitive multi-step proposal solicitation requirement.

City staff recommends that it is in the best interests of the City to waive the competitive multiple-step solicitation process for the acquisition of any computerized or information technology systems because LETS is a sole source technology.

FISCAL IMPACT

The LETS system costs \$11,124.76 and includes a FirstNet Throw phone Bundle with a 2-year subscription. The bundle includes the LETS license, access to the application from the application store, evidence manager, the LETS Respond Service, the LETS Lock-down app, and the Transmitter app for FirstNet phones and 2 years of FirstNet cell service. An optional additional 2-year period is available at a cost of \$11,458.50 for a total contract amount not to exceed \$22,583.26.

Funding will be available through Fund (2912) Federal Asset Forfeiture: City Share, Org. (107710) Special Operations, Account (TBD), Project (1000775) Federal Asset Forefeiture-85, and Program (PS01) Agency-Wide Administration.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

No public outreach was conducted other than the required posting on the City’s website.

COORDINATION

OPD coordinated with the Office of the City Attorney and Budget Bureau.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: There are no economic opportunities associated with this report.

Environmental: There are no environmental opportunities associated with this report.

Race & Equity: All Oakland residents and visitors have a right and an expectation of privacy. Additionally, OPD strives to ensure the public safety of all Oakland residents and visitors. OPD has developed its LETS Throw Phone Use Policy and Impact Report with the goal of utilizing the technology to provide a reliable means of communication between a hostage taker or barricaded subject and a member of HNT. At times, there are no other means of phone communication with the subject; this system allows for safe and reliable communication from a distance.

This technology provides opportunities for less immediate police-public encounters where police use of force may occur, and where the lives of officers and the public may be in danger. All Oakland residents and visitors benefit from these efforts to support public safety and policing while mitigating encounters that endanger lives.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt a Resolution:

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(2) Waiving The Competitive Multiple Step Solicitation Process And The Local/ Small Local Business Enterprise Requirements

For questions regarding this report, please contact Steven Lorda, Sergeant, at slorda@oaklandca.gov.

Respectfully submitted,

James P Beere
James P Beere (Feb 25, 2026 13:57:23 PST)

James Beere, Interim Chief
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Reviewed by:

Dr. Tracey Jones
Police Services Manager
OPD, Research and Planning Unit

Prepared by:

Steven Lorda, Sergeant
OPD, Patrol Division

Attachment (1):
A: Throw Phone Technology PSA