



AGENDA REPORT

TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: James Beere
Interim Chief, OPD

SUBJECT: OPD GPS Tracker Policy

DATE: March 5, 2026

City Administrator Approval


Jestin Johnson (Mar 11, 2026 19:41:22 PDT)

Date: Mar 11, 2026

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That City Council Adopt A Resolution Approving The Oakland Police Department Vehicle GPS Tracker Surveillance Use Policy (Departmental General Order I-33) And Surveillance Impact Report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Vehicle GPS tracking devices support Oakland Police Department investigations by assisting with the lawful apprehension of suspects, recovery of vehicles, and advancement of criminal investigations through the collection of vehicle location data. When authorized by a court order or exigent circumstances consistent with law, this technology allows investigators to monitor vehicle movement and corroborate other investigative information. The use of GPS tracking technology improves investigative efficiency, reduces the need for extended physical surveillance, and supports legitimate law enforcement objectives.

The proposed Vehicle GPS Tracking Policy (Departmental General Order I-33) and its accompanying impact report (**Attachments A and B**) establish guidelines governing the authorized use, installation, monitoring, and oversight of vehicle GPS tracking devices. The policy requires compliance with the legal requirements set forth in the California Electronic Communications Privacy Act (CalECPA) and sets clear standards for legal authorization, data access, retention, auditing, and reporting. Approval of this policy provides a structured framework to ensure vehicle GPS tracking technology is used responsibly, lawfully, and in a manner that protects privacy while supporting effective criminal investigations.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Vehicle GPS tracking devices are an investigative tool that OPD has used in criminal investigations pursuant to existing legal standards. State law, including the California Electronic Communications Privacy Act (CalECPA), establishes requirements for search warrants and protections related to electronic location information. In addition, [Oakland's Surveillance](#)

Public Safety Committee
March 24, 2026

[Technology Ordinance](#) requires the Department to adopt a written use policy approved by City Council before deploying surveillance technology.

The proposed Vehicle GPS Tracking Policy was created to meet these requirements and to establish clear Department guidelines for authorization, installation, monitoring, and oversight of GPS tracking devices. The policy formalizes procedures that ensure the technology is used consistently with applicable law and Department expectations, while providing defined safeguards related to access, data handling, and supervisory review.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Investigators have several methods available to monitor suspect vehicles during criminal investigations, including physical surveillance, air support, and reliance on witness or victim reporting. These methods are resource intensive, limited by staffing availability, and often cannot be sustained for extended periods of time. Physical surveillance requires multiple personnel and vehicles and increases the risk of detection, which may compromise an investigation or create safety concerns for officers and the public.

Vehicle GPS tracking technology provides a more efficient and controlled alternative by allowing investigators to monitor vehicle movement remotely while reducing the need for prolonged physical surveillance. Other alternatives do not provide the same level of continuity, reliability, or operational safety. Adoption of the proposed policy allows OPD to use this technology within a structured framework that supports effective investigations while maintaining defined safeguards and oversight.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Oakland Police Department is currently conducting an RFP/Q process to identify a vendor for GPS tracking technology. Historically, the annual subscription cost for GPS tracking services with our previous vendor, 3si, was approximately \$12,000. The current contract for GPS tracking services is set to expire in September. OPD is actively working to determine a suitable vendor to ensure continued use of this essential technology.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

The proposed Vehicle GPS Tracking Policy was presented to the Privacy Advisory Commission on February 5, 2026, for public review and discussion. OPD accepted and incorporated revisions proposed by the Privacy Advisory Commission into the final draft of the policy. The policy establishes safeguards governing the lawful use of GPS tracking technology and is intended to ensure transparency and accountability in the Department's investigative practices.

COORDINATION

The Oakland Police Department coordinated development of the proposed Vehicle GPS Tracking Policy with the Privacy Advisory Commission and the Office of the City Attorney. The Office of the City Attorney reviewed this report and the associated policy for legal sufficiency.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: There is no direct economic impact associated with adoption of this policy.

Environmental: There are no environmental impacts associated with adoption of this policy.

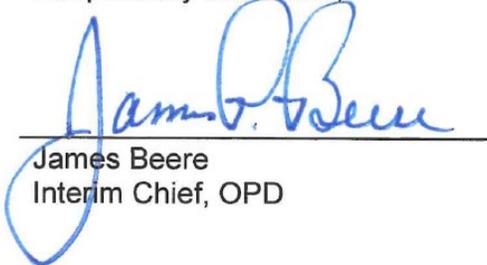
Race & Equity: Adoption of this policy establishes safeguards governing the lawful use of vehicle GPS tracking technology and supports consistent investigative practices. The policy applies uniformly and is intended to ensure accountability and transparency in the Department's use of surveillance technology.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That City Council Adopt A Resolution Approving The Oakland Police Department Vehicle GPS Tracker Surveillance Use Policy (Departmental General Order I-33) And Surveillance Impact Report.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Sgt. Yun Zhou at yzhou@oaklandca.gov.

Respectfully submitted,



James Beere
Interim Chief, OPD

Reviewed by:

Omar Daza-Quiroz, Acting Deputy Chief
Bureau of Investigations

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

Prepared by:

Yun Zhou, Sergeant
OPD, Bureau of Investigations, Homicide

Attachments (2):

- A. DGO I-33 Vehicle GPS Tracker
- B. I-33 Vehicle GPS Tracker Impact Report