



DRONE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

CITY OF BELLEVUE PROJECT LEAD Nancy LaCombe, City Manager's Office
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON INSTRUCTOR William Covington, School of Law
E 554, Technology Law and Public Policy Clinic



THE CHALLENGE

Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) technology has significant implications across many platforms (privacy, federal laws, state laws, property laws, safety), along with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) licensing and registration requirements. This project seeks to develop, identify, and analyze the implications of using drones to support city services. The City of Bellevue has performed extensive background research regarding the use of UAS for various departments including legal, police, fire, parks, and transportation. These departments have indicated that UAS technology could benefit the city by providing support to public safety through police, fire, security, and emergency services.

The City of Bellevue has commissioned this project to the Technology Law and Public Policy Clinic (Technology Clinic) at the University of Washington School of Law in order to provide additional evaluation and assessment of current trends. By researching how other cities and local government entities have already employed this technology, our team has been able to identify ways in which the City of Bellevue may effectively implement UAS operations for the police and fire department.

OUR METHODS

The research process consisted of the following phases:

- reviewing the FAA regulations
- researching state law across the United States
- studying the applications of UAS technology
- investigating public perception

A review of the current laws and literature guided our thinking throughout the duration of the project.

Once we began our preliminary research, we went to Bellevue City Hall where we met with representatives from the Police Department, Fire Department, City Attorney's Office, and City Manager's Office. This meeting gave us detailed insight into the City of Bellevue's planned application of UAS, potential concerns, and re-directed our research efforts to fit the scope of the project.

Throughout the research process we presented to the Technology Clinic to solicit feedback and gauge public perception on UAS technology. By initiating a dialogue between the City of Bellevue and the Technology Clinic, our team has identified existing privacy and safety concerns relate to the implementation of UAS technology.



Not all UAS are built the same. Picking a UAS depends on generally four main factors: cost; flight time; camera quality; and software capabilities. DOSE MEDIA UNSPLASH

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

From accident reconstruction to search and rescue, UAS are a game-changer for law enforcement operations. The technology has exploded in recent years, and the relatively low cost of UAS means agencies of all sizes can use them. At least 347 state and local police, sheriff, fire, and emergency units in the US have acquired UAS.

Quick clearance is one of the most important elements of managing traffic accidents. But that cannot be done before the scene is documented. UAS significantly reduces the amount of time and money it takes to capture and clear a traffic accident scene, while providing investigators with comprehensive data to determine what happened.

Search and Rescue is another area well-suited for UAS. UAS can scan a large area within a short time frame. By using UAS in rescue operations, law enforcement can locate lost people faster.

UAS can enhance search and rescue, speed up traffic flow after the accident, and most importantly increase the safety of law enforcement personnel by providing an aerial perspective for better situational awareness during responses to critical incidents.



UAS technology can significantly reduce the amount of time and money it takes to capture and clear a traffic accident scene, while providing investigators with comprehensive data to determine the situation and document the scene. Quick clearance is one of the most important elements of managing traffic accidents in order to ensure the safety of officers and others on the roadway; however, it can only be done after the scene is documented. SHUTTERSTOCK

