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# AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** HENRY L. GARDNER  
INTERIM CITY ADMINISTRATOR

**FROM:** Sean Whent

**SUBJECT:** Informational Report on Creating a Registry for Privately Owned Security Cameras  
**DATE:** December 2, 2014

City Administrator  
Approval

Date

12-3-14

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** City-Wide

## RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Public Safety Committee accept this Informational Report and Overview on Steps Required to Implement a Voluntary Registry of Privately Owned Security Cameras as a Means of Assisting the Oakland Police Department (OPD) in Investigations.

## OUTCOME

This report will help inform discussion between the Oakland Police Department and the Public Safety Committee regarding a voluntary security camera registry program.

## BACKGROUND/LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Voluntary security camera registry programs permit community members to register privately owned security cameras with local law enforcement. Such cameras view public areas. If they are regularly monitored, it is only by the community members who own or maintain them. Law enforcement agencies establish a registration process online, by mail, or by phone. Registrants are informed that law enforcement agencies do not monitor cameras and agree to provide access to assist in criminal investigations. Law enforcement agencies enter the camera owner information in a database and access this information based on the location of registered cameras when a crime occurs. Registered camera owners are contacted if a crime occurs in order to determine if their camera captured video evidence of the crime. The location of privately owned cameras, in other cities, have been integrated into some computer aided dispatch (CAD) systems, which allows registered cameras to instantly populate on screen and assist in the timely investigation, apprehension, and prosecution of criminals.

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Public Safety Committee  
December 16, 2014

## **ANALYSIS**

This informational report is in response to a request by Councilmember Brooks, who has received inquiries regarding residents and merchants registering their privately owned security cameras. Implementation of this program would support the Oakland Police Department's commitment to conduct thorough and expedient investigations by leveraging the capabilities and resources of unmonitored private security cameras. The cities of San Ramon, Ventura, and Newark as well as the County of Sacramento have implemented a registry program for privately owned security cameras. Other law enforcement agencies, including the San Jose and San Leandro police departments, are implementing similar programs.

Most programs allow residents, merchants, and property owners to voluntarily register their security cameras at no cost. These security cameras view and record public areas such as streets, sidewalks, and parking lots. Law enforcement agencies do not monitor the cameras. The agency only contacts the registered camera owner if a crime is committed within the camera's range in order to use the recording as a resource when conducting investigations.

Staff conducted a general assessment of three implemented programs:

### ***San Ramon Police Department***

The Citizen View Program allows interested individuals to register online, by phone, or by mail. The registration form requires owner information, camera location, areas recorded, image retention period, and recording period. Staff contacts owners to confirm the information. The information is entered into a database. Program benefits include the ability to quickly identify cameras in the vicinity of criminal incidents and access to view and/or obtain a copy of the video. The San Ramon Police Department offers registered individuals a printable sign to display on their property which states, "Warning security cameras are in use. We share our video with the San Ramon Police Department."

### ***Ventura Police Department***

The Video Camera Community Partnership Program was implemented approximately four years ago. The Ventura Police Department encourages residents and businesses to voluntarily register their security cameras. The registration form must be submitted by mail or email. Registrants consent to allow the Ventura Police Department to release video imagery to the public or to requesters who seek the imagery under the California Public Records Act.

***Sacramento County Sheriff's Department***

The Sheriff's Electronic Eye (S.E.E.) Program allows citizens and businesses to register their cameras. Registration is online. S.E.E. utilizes the location of cameras once a crime occurs. The Sheriff's Department then directly emails citizens with a group email message. The email message asks citizens to check their video surveillance system for a specific date and time for video capturing a suspect, getaway car, or crime.

None of the above agencies have remote access to cameras. Therefore, video recovery is subject to delay. The ability to immediately access video would be a valuable investigative step and should be considered as an option for any program implemented by the Oakland Police Department.

There are several steps required to create and implement a program based on similar models used by the San Ramon and Ventura police departments, including:

1. Develop a process with the Department of Information Technology (IT) and the Oakland Police Department Communications Section. IT and the OPD Communications Section need to determine program coordination and implementation, including whether the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System can support the software and/or database.
2. Create program materials including registration form, website, and online database.
3. Develop an education and staff training module.
4. Launch a pilot program in select locations.
5. Create multi-language outreach strategy and schedule for residents and merchants.

This model will require staff to be assigned to confirm registrant information and maintain the database and website. If CAD software can support the entry of locations, this will allow the registered cameras to populate on a map surrounding a crime scene. This would expedite investigations by allowing staff (including Patrol Officers and Investigators) to contact the camera owner to determine if their camera captured video evidence, view recordings, and/or obtain a copy of the video. Any video evidence that is obtained by the Oakland Police Department would be subject to governing law and policy concerning such evidence.

**PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST**

This item did not require any additional public outreach other than the required posting on the City's website.

**COORDINATION**

The Police Department consulted with the Office of the City Attorney in preparation of this report.

**COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS**

This is an informational report. Cost estimates will be included in any follow-on reports if Council directs the City Administrator to proceed with program development.

**SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

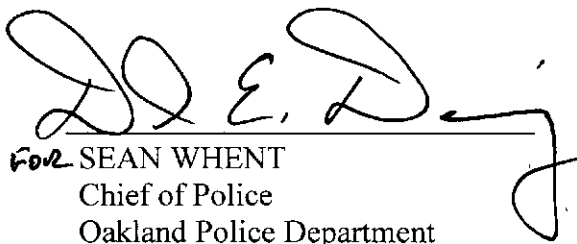
*Economic:* No economic opportunities have been identified.

*Environmental.* There are no environmental sustainability opportunities presented in this report.

*Social Equity:* No social equity opportunities have been identified.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Anthony Toribio, Captain of Police, at [atoribio@oaklandnet.com](mailto:atoribio@oaklandnet.com) or 510-777-8679.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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