



AGENDA REPORT


TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: G. Harold Duffey
Director, Oakland Public
Works Department

SUBJECT: Illegal Dumping Surveillance Camera
Program – Approve Security Lines
U.S.’s License Plate Recognition
(LPR) Cameras

DATE: February 26, 2024

City Administrator Approval


Jestin Johnson (Mar 8, 2024 11:30 PST)

Date: Mar 8, 2024

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That City Council Adopt A Resolution To: (1) Award A Contract To Security Lines, U.S. For The Purchase And Maintenance Of License Plate Recognition And Other Cameras For The Illegal Dumping Surveillance Camera Program In An Amount Not To Exceed Seven Hundred And Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$750,000) For The Period Of April 1, 2024, To March 31, 2027; And (2) Waiving The Competitive Multi-Step Solicitation Process For The Acquisition Of Information Technology Systems And Waiving The Local And Small Local Business Enterprise Program Requirements.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In response to the City Council direction to add License Plate Recognition (LPR) capability to the City’s Surveillance Camera Program (Camera Program), staff conducted an informal bid process and identified Security Lines, U.S. (SLUS) as the lowest, most responsive vendor whose Uniview LPR camera complies with the City’s [Surveillance Technology Ordinance No. 13635 CMS](#). SLUS is also the vendor from whom the City acquired its fleet of surveillance cameras (aka PODs). The proposed resolution seeks City Council’s approval to add SLUS’s Uniview LPR cameras to the Camera Program and to authorize the City Administrator to procure fifteen (15) new LPR camera-equipped PODs; send existing PODs back to the vendor to be retrofitted with LPR cameras; and establish a one-year technical support services agreement with Security Lines, U.S. to provide technical support and maintenance for the surveillance cameras.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

On June 8, 2023, the Privacy Advisory Commission (PAC) received and accepted the Annual Surveillance Report on the Oakland Public Works (OPW) Illegal Dumping Surveillance Camera Program ([Annual Report](#)) and supported the recommended changes to the Illegal Dumping Surveillance Camera Program’s Use Policy (Use Policy) with the condition to select an LPR

camera product that complies with Oakland's [Surveillance Technology Ordinance](#). On July 18, 2023, City Council received the Annual Report and approved the Use Policy changes as recommended by the PAC ([Resolution No. 89844 C.M.S.](#)). At that meeting, Council also approved staff's proposal to expand the Camera Program to include LPR capabilities by purchasing 30 LPR cameras, 30 Satellite PODs, and four (4) additional PODs.

Upon receiving Council approval, staff researched the marketplace to identify an LPR camera that met the City's requirements. In collaboration with the Finance Department's Purchasing Unit, an informal Request for Proposals (RFP) was conducted. Staff was unable to identify local/small local business enterprises that provided portable license plate recognition solutions. In the end, SLUS emerged as the lowest, most responsive bidder. Moreover, SLUS presented staff a more streamlined solution than the one originally proposed. Instead of mounting 30 LPR cameras on 30 Satellite PODs that are then tethered to the main POD, the new solution calls for purchasing 15 Uniview LPR camera-equipped PODs (LPR PODs) and converting the City's current 15 PODs into LPR PODs, which still results in 30 LPR cameras as intended.

An LPR POD consists of the standard components of a traditional POD, plus the addition of one or more Uniview LPR cameras. The Uniview LPR camera is a 2-megapixel bullet camera that has a built-in license plate recognition algorithm capable of recognizing standard license plates from vehicles traveling up to 25 miles per hour (mph). It is equipped with four (4) LED lights to provide an illumination range up to a distance of 30 meters and a built-in infrared illuminator to increase visibility in low light settings. A 256 gigabyte SD card slot provides backup recording. SLUS's proposed LPR POD solution consists of two (2) 180-degree, 5 megapixel cameras and two (2) Uniview LPR cameras in a weather-proof, metal housing. The LPR POD reduces the number of pieces of equipment needed at a single location to enable license plate recognition. The LPR POD requires less equipment and software configurations, resulting in quicker installations.

Oakland Municipal Code (OMC) Section 2.04.042.A requires that the City Administrator conduct a competitive multiple-step solicitation process for the acquisition of any computerized or information technology systems. Further, OMC Section 2.04.042.D provides that the City Council may waive the competitive 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 formal solicitation processes.

Staff recommends that it is in the best interests of the City to waive the competitive multiple-step solicitation process and waive further advertising and competitive bidding process for the acquisition of any computerized or information technology systems for the proposed contract with SLUS because 1) the vendor is the lowest and most responsive bidder in the informal bid process conducted by the Purchasing Unit; 2) they are the original vendor who supplied OPW its fleet of illegal dumping surveillance cameras, with deep knowledge of the Camera Program; and 3) they are able to provide the maintenance and technical support needed to optimize the Camera Program.

Staff now returns to City Council to request approval of the proposed resolution authorizing the City Administrator to enter into contract with SLUS to purchase SLUS's Uniview LPR-equipped PODs and to establish the technical support service agreement.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

In accordance with the City's adopted Budget, City activities are structured to support the following priorities: 1) **Holistic community safety**; 2) **Housing, economic, and cultural security**; 3) **Vibrant, sustainable infrastructure**; and 4) **Responsive, trustworthy government**. The proposed resolution to add LPR cameras to the Camera Program furthers all of these City priorities.

The Camera Program was created in direct response to Oaklanders' call for cleaner, safer streets. Adding LPR cameras to the Camera Program will increase OPW's Environmental Enforcement Officers' (EEOs') ability to capture more accurate license plate information from the vehicles used by dumpers to dump. Accurate license plate info will notably increase the City's ability to catch and prosecute dumpers; in time, resulting in fewer offenders. With fewer dumpers, OPW can maintain cleaner City streets, thereby contributing to community safety and economic security, and promoting more vibrant, sustainable streets and public spaces throughout Oakland.

The proposed legislation will authorize the City Administrator to acquire and deploy SLUS's LPR cameras in accordance with the Use Policy and City Council action pursuant to [Resolution No. 89844 C.M.S.](#)

It should also be noted that the proposed acquisition is for cameras that comply with OMC Section 9.64.045, which among other things prohibits the City from obtaining or using facial recognition technology. Cameras will continue to be placed citywide, in public rights-of-way nearest to chronic dumping "hot spots". Hot spots are locations that often contain dumping where there is insufficient evidence to connect the dumped piles to dumpers and therefore are ideal for surveillance cameras. Public rights-of-way include but are not limited to City assets such as street light poles, traffic signal poles, and other public assets like bus stop shelters (through coordination with AC Transit), and City-installed wooden posts. The City may also explore installing surveillance units on private properties through local business/private resident partnerships. Camera monitoring and the reviewing/searching/ downloading of enforceable video footage will continue to be performed by the Environmental Enforcement Unit's (EEU's) staff.

If approved, staff seeks to 1) purchase 15 new LPR PODs immediately, 2) send 15 existing PODs back to the vendor to be retrofitted with LPR cameras, and 3) establish a three-year technical support services contract with Security Lines, U.S. to service the fleet of cameras and provide on-going virtual technical support.

Alternatives to approving the addition of the Uniview LPR cameras to Oakland Public Works' Illegal Dumping Surveillance Camera Program are:

- **Status Quo – Do not deploy LPR cameras. There will not be any financial outlay for LPR cameras.** Surveillance data from March 2022 through February 2023 reveal that, of the

492 illegal dumping incidents captured by the PODs, 55% or 271 incidents were cases where citations could not be issued because EEOs were unable to see or read the license plate information clearly. Most often, the difficulty reading license plates was a result of poor camera angles or poor video imaging. Adding LPR PODs and reconfiguring current PODs into LPR PODs will help EEOs capture more license plates and issue more citations. If the City does not deploy LPR cameras, staff will continue to struggle to enforce against dumpers.

- **Hire More EEOs – Bring on more EEOs to patrol hot spots.** The EEU is currently budgeted for seven (7) full-time EEOs. Without the aid of surveillance technology such as LPR cameras, the City would need to hire substantially more EEOs given the magnitude of the dumping problem. This is not a viable long-term solution because: 1) it will be cost prohibitive to hire enough EEOs to provide adequate coverage of areas prone to chronic dumping; and 2) more EEOs does not necessarily translate to greater success in catching dumpers if there is insufficient evidence to prosecute. Without supporting evidence, the only way an EEO can catch a dumping violator is to witness the individual in the act of dumping.

FISCAL IMPACT

Staff seeks Council approval to establish a three-year contract with SLUS in an amount not to exceed seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000). The proposed contract capacity is based on an annual expenditure of approximately two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) for the acquisition of additional LPR cameras, replacement parts, and potential future upgrade costs for the cameras; and fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) per year for the technical support services agreement. The agreement consists of monthly on-site vendor visits to perform anticipated maintenance and repair on the LPR PODs. The agreement also includes virtual training, troubleshooting, and technical support for the EEU staff. Year-One funds of two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) are available in the approved Fiscal Year 2023-24 Budget for the purchase of 15 new LPR cameras, the LPR retrofitting of existing PODs, and the one-year technical support service agreement in:

FUNDS: Fund (1010) General Fund: General Purpose and Fund (2244) Measure Q - Parks & Recreation Preservation, Litter Reduction, and Homelessness Support Act;

ORGANIZATIONS: Organization (30674) Illegal Dumping and Organization (30676) Litter Enforcement;

PROJECTS: Project (1005963) Homeless Encampment Cleanup, Project (1006062) Homeless Encampment Cleaning, and Project (1004120) PW Encampment Abatement2.

Purchase of additional LPR-equipped PODS and the technical support services contract renewal with SLUS, are subject to future funds availability.

PUBLIC INTEREST

As mentioned above, the addition of LPR cameras to OPW's program was discussed and received support at the June 8, 2023 PAC meeting as part of its review of the Annual Report on the OPW Camera Program, and the subsequent presentation to the Public Works and Transportation Committee on July 18, 2023. At these and other and City Council and local community meetings, members of the public have consistently expressed support for the use of surveillance technologies to catch dumpers and to stop illegal dumping.

COORDINATION

Staff collaborated with the Budget Bureau, Purchasing Unit, the City Attorney's Office, and City Administrator's Office in drafting of this report and resolution.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: City staff recognizes abatement is not the solution to illegal dumping. In Fiscal Year 2022-23, the City estimates it spent over \$12M to abate debris dumped on Oakland city streets. Although POD units and LPR cameras are not the cure-all to Oakland's dumping problem, they have a role in enhancing EEOs' investigative/enforcement efforts and in enabling the City to prosecute more dumpers successfully. Finally, cleaner streets will promote a safer, healthier, pedestrian-friendly environment that encourages shopping and recreating in Oakland, which will benefit neighborhood businesses.

Environmental: Illegal dumping is a crime against the environment. Chemicals and toxic compounds from unwanted household cleaners, motor oil, materials from broken furniture, mattresses, and appliances, not to mention biohazardous and commercial waste, can readily leach into soil or be washed into storm drains, contaminating Oakland's waterways and harming wildlife. Debris can clog storm drains and culverts, causing flooding. Large garbage piles increase the likelihood of fires. At a minimum, dump piles serve as an ideal breeding ground for mosquitoes, flies, rats, and other disease-carrying vermin. With the passage of this resolution, EEOs will leverage license plate recognition technology, along with video recordings to investigate individuals who continue to dump on City streets and hold them accountable for their crimes against the environment.

Race & Equity: Clean streets that are free of used household goods and clothing, broken furniture, appliances, biohazardous and/or commercial waste will have a measurably positive effect on the health and safety of Oaklanders, especially for those living and working in historically underserved and disadvantaged communities below Interstate 580 where illegal dumping is concentrated, and chronic hot spots are most prevalent. With the passage of this resolution, the City Council will continue its commitment to invest City resources into traditionally underserved and racially marginalized neighborhoods. Through the use of surveillance and LPR

cameras at illegal dumping hot spots, the City will increase enforcement to keep underprivileged communities clean.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That City Council Adopt A Resolution To: (1) Award A Contract To Security Lines, U.S. For The Purchase And Maintenance Of License Plate Recognition And Other Cameras For The Illegal Dumping Surveillance Camera Program In An Amount Not To Exceed Seven Hundred And Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$750,000) For The Period Of April 1, 2024, To March 31, 2027; And (2) Waiving The Competitive Multi-Step Solicitation Process For The Acquisition Of Information Technology Systems And Waiving The Local And Small Local Business Enterprise Program Requirements

For questions regarding this report, please contact Victoria Chak, Administrative Services Manager at (510) 615-5446.

Respectfully submitted,



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