



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item

24-0194

Agenda Date: 2/15/2024

Budget Proposal Summary Form

NUMBER

2024-02

TITLE Purchase and Install Fixed Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) Devices to Enhance Public Safety and Assist the Department of Public Safety with Criminal Investigations

BACKGROUND

Lead Department: Department of Public Safety

Sponsor: City Manager

SCOPE OF ISSUE

What are the key elements of the proposal? What precipitated it?

Automatic License Plate Readers (ALPRs) are a tool used by law enforcement to solve crimes and recover stolen vehicles. ALPR cameras capture computer-readable images of license plates. They can be installed in vehicles (mobile ALPRs) or attached to fixed objects, like traffic lights (fixed ALPRs).

Information captured by ALPRs can be used to determine if a vehicle was at the scene of a crime and identify vehicles associated with a crime. Information from ALPR cameras can be shared between law enforcement agencies. Cameras can be integrated with information from national crime databases to provide real-time alerts when a vehicle associated with a known suspect, or a stolen vehicle, passes the camera.

The Department of Public Safety (DPS) evaluated data related to crime and traffic patterns to identify strategic locations for ALPRs. DPS proposes that the City of Sunnyvale install twenty (20) ALPR cameras at fixed locations in the city as part of its ongoing effort to reduce retail theft, residential burglaries and the growing number of auto thefts and auto break-ins in the city. Use of ALPR-collected data will also enhance DPS' ability to locate and capture suspects of violent crimes and other criminal offenses.

The cities of Santa Clara, Milpitas, Morgan Hill, Palo Alto, Campbell, Los Altos and San Jose, and the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office have invested in ALPR systems. DPS will identify and acquire an ALPR system that will facilitate the seamless exchange and transfer of information between agencies to allow DPS to track vehicles that leave Sunnyvale and enter neighboring jurisdictions.

DPS conducted community outreach meetings that were well attended, including attendees from all of the Sunnyvale Neighborhood Associations. DPS presented information about the intended use of fixed ALPR cameras and answered community member questions. The response from the

community has been positive. Data collected by ALPR cameras is secure. No personal identifying information will be stored or accessible to third parties. In addition, there is no facial recognition component associated with this technology.

How does this relate to the General Plan or existing City Policy?

Existing DPS policy supports the implementation of fixed ALPR cameras to identify and track suspects and locate stolen vehicles (DPS Lexipol Policy 431: Automated License Plate Readers).

Reduction of retail theft, residential burglary, and auto theft aligns with General Plan Goal SN-3, Safe and Secure City (Ensure a safe and secure environment for people and property in the community by providing effective public safety response and prevention and education services.) Increased enforcement in these areas will also have a positive impact on the DPS relationship in the community (Goal SN-4, Increasing Public Confidence in Police Services).

In addition, the fixed APLR program supports the following General Plan policies: Policy SN-3.1 Provide rapid and timely response to all emergencies; Policy SN-3.2 Control conduct recognized as threatening to life and property; Policy SN-3.3 Provide investigative services directed toward successful prosecution and conviction of criminal offenders; and Policy SN-3.4 Reduce crime and fear by strengthening the police/ community partnership.

Is the budget proposal: Project (One Time) and Operating.

If the proposal is operating, specify the change in service level(s) that would result (from what, to what). If the proposal is a project, write N/A.

By using a fixed ALPR camera system, DPS will increase its level of response and expand the search area for suspects engaged in crime to include those who flee into other cities. ALPR data can be used as evidence to prosecute suspects, and use of digital tracking will free up sworn personnel, who otherwise would be engaged in searches, to address other public safety emergencies. In terms of performance indicators, it is possible that the deterrent effect of ALPR cameras may be reflected in a long-term decrease in property crimes.

FISCAL IMPACT**Projected cost (list rough annual cost of budget proposal):**

ALPR Services, Year 1 (includes one-time setup)	\$ 84,150
ALPR Services, Ongoing	\$ 70,000
Total (Two-Year Cost)	\$ 154,150

The proposed ALPR system is a subscription model with no infrastructure requirements. The City would pay an annual subscription fee and would own the secure data collected. Data would be stored in the existing system (evidence.com). There would be no additional costs to the City beyond the cost of the annual agreement.

The annual subscription cost is estimated at \$70,000 and \$1,750,000 over twenty years.

Recommended funding source:

Other

Please describe recommended funding source:

General Fund

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Position: Refer budget proposal for consideration in Recommended Budget.

Explanation: ALPR cameras are widely used countywide and other cities report that they are effective in enhancing the effort to deter and solve retail theft, residential burglaries and the growing number of auto thefts and auto break-ins. Use of ALPR data will also enhance the department's ability to locate and capture suspects of violent crimes and other criminal offenses. This initiative has community support and will create efficiencies in operational activities and the use of other department resources.

Reviewed by: Chief Phan S. Ngo, Director, Department of Public Safety

Reviewed by: Tim Kirby, Director, Finance Department

Approved by: Kent Steffens, City Manager