



City of Alameda

Staff Report

File Number:2018-5109 (30 minutes)

City Council

Agenda Date: 2/6/2018

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Agenda Number: 6-C

Recommendation to Authorize the City Manager, or Her Designee, to Negotiate and Execute Purchase Agreements not to Exceed \$500,000 for the Acquisition of Thirteen Fixed Location Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) Systems; and

Adoption of Resolution Amending the General Fund and Technology Replacement Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2017-18. (Police 3121)

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Jill Keimach, City Manager

Re: Recommendation to Authorize the City Manager, or Her Designee, to Negotiate and Execute Purchase Agreements not to Exceed \$500,000 for the Acquisition of Thirteen Fixed Location, Automated License Plate Recognition Systems; and Adoption of Resolution Amending the General Fund and Technology Replacement Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2017-18

BACKGROUND

The Alameda Police Department has been utilizing a mobile Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) system since receiving City Council approval for its purchase and use in May, 2014.

As originally approved, there are currently four marked patrol vehicles that have ALPR cameras. The system records data to include the license plate number, date, time, and location for each license plate scanned. The cameras are not designed to photograph the occupants of the vehicles, and they do not include any personal identifying information of the occupants or registered owner of the vehicle. As required by current APD policy, which was created with community and City Council input, the data is stored in a law enforcement only database by a private vendor for a period of six months. The data is used by the Alameda Police Department for crime prevention, as an investigative tool for solving crimes, and locating missing and wanted individuals.

The current ALPR system is limited in its ability to provide complete coverage of the City, as scans can only be accomplished by the four equipped patrol cars while they are in service. In order to obtain ALPR data, the ALPR patrol vehicles must be in use across the City at all times. Even when all four cameras are in service, the data obtained is not as complete as it could be, as it is virtually impossible to cover the entire City. To dramatically improve the ALPR system coverage, APD is

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proposing to install and utilize fixed ALPR equipment (camera and associated hardware) mounted at all entry and exit points in the City.

The Alameda Police Department is requesting purchase approval in the amount of \$500,000 to expand the Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) system by incorporating fixed ALPR equipment at the various entry and exit points around the City of Alameda.

DISCUSSION

ALPR technology is a helpful and effective tool for the law enforcement and public safety agencies that have them. It automates a tedious, time consuming, manual process that officers routinely complete in their daily operations. It significantly improves effectiveness in identifying vehicles of interest among the hundreds or thousands observed during routine patrol. Without ALPR's, officers have no idea if a particular plate is associated with a stolen car or a particular crime or warrant. To learn that information, they would have to have their attention drawn to the plate, then manually run the plate against records in the state and national databases to learn if the vehicle has been associated with a crime. With the ALPR's, the system will alert the officer of a finding on a particular car as soon as the plate is scanned entering or leaving the City. Not only is this system more efficient, but it frees up officers' time for other duties, including routine patrol in the rest of the City. This is particularly important during times of high call volumes.

In addition to freeing up officers' time, it can improve officer safety by providing critical information regarding the nature of the identified offense *in advance* of the officer making contact with the occupants of the vehicle. Just as importantly, it generates a record of vehicle sightings, complete with time, date, and geographic location information for each observation. The system uses the retained data and has analytical tools to assist officers and investigators in intelligence gathering and crime solving. This data can substantially enhance the Department's investigative capabilities.

A law enforcement surveillance tool such as the ALPR system invariably raises privacy concerns. On October 1, 2013, after community concerns were expressed to the City Council, the Council directed the Alameda Police Department to conduct a public forum related to the use of ALPR system. The forum was held on February 3, 2014, at the Alameda Free Library and was moderated by then Assistant City Manager Alex Nguyen. Participants at the forum were representatives from the Alameda Police Department, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and the Northern California Regional Intelligence Center (NCRIC). Approximately 50 members of the general public and media were in attendance and provided comments and feedback regarding the proposed system and draft policy. The most common concerns raised were about the retention period of the data, access to the data through Public Records Act or private requests, and the proposed ALPR policy of the Police Department. Further public comment and discussion occurred at the regular meeting of the City Council on May 20, 2014. These concerns were addressed in the final policy (Exhibit 1) as adopted by the Alameda Police Department.

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Following the May, 2014 approval, four marked APD patrol vehicles were each equipped with a three camera ALPR system. These patrol vehicles are still in operation and have been instrumental in identifying stolen vehicles, wanted subjects, missing/suicidal persons, and invaluable leads in solving violent and felonious crimes. The Department also conducts semi-annual audits to ensure the ALPR system is being used correctly, within legal standards, and within Department policy.

The collection, retention, and use of data collected by the fixed ALPR's will be regulated by the existing APD policy. Once uploaded, APD's data will be accessible to the NCRIC member agencies. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is one of the member agencies; however, in response to regional concerns regarding ICE access to the data, NCRIC has removed ICE's access to the data for the City of Alameda.

In May and June, 2017, the Council considered as part of its two year budget adoption whether to include funding for ALPRs at the City's entry points. The Council voted not to include funding during the budget adoption for but verbally supported the program and consequently directed staff to return to Council if APD department salary savings could cover the cost of the system.

In October 2017, both APD and the City Council heard from Alameda residents who were concerned about the appearance of a dramatic increase in crime in the City. On October 20, 2017, the entire Council attended a community meeting during which multiple crime concerns were raised.

On November 24, 2017, Chief of Police, Paul Roller published a crime report in the local newspapers. The report showed that Alameda is in the midst of an overall 30 year decline in overall crimes. However, over the past few years, there has been a spike in property crimes. The rise in property crimes is a regional problem with multiple causes. Stolen vehicles and crimes committed by people in stolen vehicles are the most significant crime problem we currently face in Alameda.

To further improve public safety for the citizens in the City of Alameda and their property, it is proposed to expand the current ALPR system to incorporate fixed ALPR equipment at the entry and exit points to the City for vehicle traffic. It is believed that such a system will bring about reduced crime, increase the number of crimes solved, and provide side benefits in being able to locate missing or wanted vehicles or persons.

The proposed ALPR system, which requires one camera per traffic lane, would be located at the Webster and Posey Tubes (which is controlled by the California Department of Transportation, aka Caltrans), Park Street, Fruitvale, and High Street Bridges (Alameda County property), Doolittle Drive and Harbor Bay Parkway (Caltrans), and at Harbor Bay Parkway and Ron Cowan Parkway (City of Alameda). The system would require 13 ALPR systems, each with two cameras and associated equipment. The options for powering the systems are listed in Exhibit 2.

Preliminary site surveys with Public Works, the current ALPR vendor (LEHR), and consults with other cities successful in implementing fixed ALPR systems have found this project to require a tentative budget around \$500,000. Some variance in costs is due to the different powering requirements for

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each location, depending on what is available and whose property the ALPR camera will be affixed.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The total estimate for the fixed ALPR equipment is approximately \$500,000 including installation and will require an amendment to the FY2017-18 budget. Funding will be coming from the General Fund reserve as a result of Police Department's salary savings. The ALPR equipment price has been estimated to be \$319,632.72 from LEHR as of February 02, 2017 (Exhibit 3). The remaining cost is for providing power and mounting solutions. (Exhibit 4) The exact cost of the project will depend upon the power option selected. A resolution amending the City's FY17-18 Budget has been prepared for City Council adoption.

Fund/Account	Amount
General Fund:	
Transfer Out	\$500,000
Technology Replacement Fund:	
Transfer In	\$500,000
Contractual Services	\$500,000

MUNICIPAL CODE/POLICY DOCUMENT CROSS REFERENCE

This action is authorized pursuant to Alameda Administrative Rule 5, and Alameda Municipal Code Section 2-62.2, which exempts contracts with any single or source supplier for supplies, material or equipment from the City's local purchasing policy.

The permanent policy governing the use will be based upon our current Lexipol policy.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This action is not a project for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under CEQA Guidelines section 10561(b)(3) as there is no possibility that this action may have a significant effect on the environment.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) Authorize the City Manager or her designee to negotiate and execute purchase agreements not to exceed \$500,000 for the acquisition of thirteen fixed location, automated license plate recognition systems; and
- 2) Adopt a Resolution amending the general fund and technology replacement fund budget for Fiscal Year 2017-18.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul J. Rolleri, Chief of Police

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Financial Impact Section reviewed,
Edwin Gato, Acting Finance Director

Exhibits:

1. ALPR Policy
2. ALPR Options
3. LEHR Project Quote
4. V5 Solar Power Unit