City Council

Olympia Police Department Automated License Plate Reader Cameras Implementation Plan Briefing

Agenda Date: 3/19/2024
Agenda Item Number: 6.A
File Number:24-0222

Type: information   **Version:** 2   **Status:** Filed

Title
Olympia Police Department Automated License Plate Reader Cameras Implementation Plan Briefing

Recommended Action
Committee Recommendation:
The Community Livability and Public Safety Committee received a briefing regarding the Automated License Plate Reader Cameras and expressed support for its implementation.

City Manager Recommendation:
Receive a briefing regarding the Automated License Plate Reader Cameras implementation plan.

Report
Issue:
Receive a briefing regarding the Automated License Plate Reader Cameras implementation plan.

Staff Contact:
Rich Allen, Chief, Olympia Police Department, 360.753.8147

Presenter(s):
Rich Allen, Chief, Olympia Police Department
Mack Larkin, Territory Sales Manager, Flock Safety

Background and Analysis:
Although lower than last year, the number of auto thefts that have occurred in our city and region during 2023 is still higher than our five-year average. What is equally troubling is the way criminals are using these stolen cars to commit other crimes such as robbery, organized retail theft, and burglary.

The Olympia Police Department applied for and has been awarded a grant from the Department of Commerce to fund the utilization of technology to address this crime trend. OPD has chosen Flock Safety as the vendor to place Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR) at strategic locations.

ALPR technology has been used by police agencies nationwide to locate stolen vehicles and to solve

other crimes where an automobile has been used. Vehicle information captured by the system is kept in a database for thirty days and can be searched by vehicle characteristics (license plate number, make, model, paint color etc.). This searchable database makes it an ideal tool in solving crimes.

For Olympia, the data captured by the cameras will belong to OPD and will be stored on a secure server. It will only be accessible by agencies who have received expressed permission from OPD. A public-facing transparency page will be built, allowing the public to learn information about how many times the database has been accessed and for what reason.

The grant funds will allow for a two-year deployment of a limited number of cameras in a "pilot program" approach. The cameras will be focused, but not limited to, the westside of the city, near the "Capital Mall Triangle" area.

Climate Analysis:
The impact to the climate is expected to be de minimis. The cameras will either be connected to existing power in the traffic light poles or will be powered by solar.

Equity Analysis:
ALPR is not Artificial Intelligence (AI). The ALPR system focuses on capturing vehicle characteristics, not driver/occupant information. The technology does not target or capture individual demographics, thus the possibility to search for driver/occupant information in the database is non-existent.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):
The community has interest in OPD's ability to solve crime, return stolen property to its rightful owner, and to hold persons committing crimes accountable.

Financial Impact:
OPD received a grant from the Department of Commerce for $100,000 for this project. The lease price for the cameras, installation, technological support and website transparency portal will be covered by this grant, with no impact to the General Fund.

Options:
1. Receive the briefing.
2. Do not receive the briefing.
3. Receive the Briefing at another time.

Attachments:
Automatic License Plate Readers Factsheet
Flock Safety Factsheet
Flock Safety Falcon Camera Factsheet
Flock Safety Privacy Factsheet
Ethics and Innovation Factsheet
Presentation