



Office of the City Manager

INFORMATION CALENDAR

June 12, 2007

To: Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

From: *PK* Phil Kamlarz, City Manager

Submitted By: Doug Hambleton, Police Chief

Subject: Installation of Surveillance Cameras

SUMMARY

On November 14, 2006, Council directed the City Manager to investigate installing several surveillance cameras in those City parking areas in the Marina, that are out of sight and where there are frequent car thefts and break-ins, to determine if this is an effective approach. Staff has concluded that the installation of a few surveillance cameras in several parking areas in the Marina would not be an effective deterrent to the commission of auto burglaries and thefts of autos. A Welcome Kiosk equipped with a surveillance camera system, located at the entrance to the Marina, would likely be a more effective use of surveillance cameras, than installing them in several parking areas, to increase the overall security presence and possibly reduce the incidence of crime in the Marina.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

During the months of January, February, and March 2007, there were 605 auto burglaries reported citywide. Of those, 16 auto burglaries occurred in the Marina, which represents 2.6 % of the citywide total. During the same three month period, there were 234 thefts of autos reported citywide. Of those, 3 thefts of autos occurred in the Marina, which represents 1.30 % of the citywide total.

The 16 auto burglaries reported in the Marina took place in the following locations:

- (6) on Spinnaker Way (1/3 mile long street that is heavily used for parking by people going to Cesar Chavez Park)
- (3) Berkeley Yacht Club parking lot, N dock
- (2) 203 University Ave, street
- (2) 201 University Avenue, M dock parking lot
- (1) 199 Seawall Drive, Hs. Lordship's Restaurant parking lot
- (1) 100 Spinnaker Way lot
- (1) 300 Spinnaker Way lot

The 3 thefts of autos reported in the Marina took place in the following locations:

- (1) 200 Marina Boulevard, Doubletree Hotel Lot (taken via key by an acquaintance of the victim)
- (1) 225 University Ave, Hana Japan parking lot
- (1) 199 Seawall Dr, Hs. Lordship's Restaurant parking lot

A review of the 16 auto burglary reports from the Marina cases found that 6 of them involved cars parked during daytime hours along either side of Spinnaker Way, by people who then went to Cesar Chavez Park. The auto burglaries were committed via smashing a window, and items such as purses, wallets, and backpacks, were taken from in plain view from the front or back passenger seating areas of the vehicles. There were 6 other daytime auto burglaries, which occurred in other areas within the Marina, with similar method of entry and the theft of valuable items from the passenger area of the vehicles. The other 4 auto burglaries occurred at night. Three of those took place on the same night in the Berkeley Yacht Club (N dock) lot, and the other one in the 201 University (M dock) lot.

A survey of the Marina parking areas determined that there are 31 signs posted that say **Lock Your Car – Do Not Leave Valuables In Car**. Six of the signs are posted along Spinnaker Way, which has the highest incidence of auto burglary in the Marina.

BACKGROUND

At the City Council meeting on November 14, 2006, Councilmember Maio raised the issue of auto burglary and theft of autos from various parking areas in the Marina, and suggested that the installation of several surveillance cameras in the less visible parking lots, such as the lot immediately East of Skates Restaurant, would be a good deterrent to the commission of those crimes. The Council directed the City Manager to investigate installing surveillance cameras, to determine if that is an effective approach to the issue.

Surveillance camera systems have evolved greatly over the last several years, from Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), to internet-based IP Video Surveillance technology. IP systems allow an authorized end user to view the images in real-time via an internet connection, or to store images if the system is equipped with a recording device.

Studies have shown that for surveillance camera systems to have a deterrent effect on crime, the following two factors must be present:

1. The potential offender must be aware of the presence of the cameras.
2. The potential offender must believe that the cameras present enough of a risk of capture that they outweigh the rewards of the intended crime.

Passive or Active Monitoring:

- Passive surveillance systems record images and store them for review at a later time. Passive systems are not monitored as images are being recorded.
- Active systems involve a person or people monitoring a series of video displays in real time. Active system images can be recorded as well. They can involve the use of cameras in fixed positions, cameras that are set to automatically roam from one position to another, or cameras that an operator can pan, tilt, or zoom to better observe the activities of people within the area.

Types of Surveillance Camera Placement:

- Overt Camera – Intended to be visible, indicating the area under surveillance.
- Semi-Overt Camera – Mounted within a fixture that can be easily seen, but does not show the camera inside.
- Covert – Mounted in such a way as to be completely undetected.

Cost considerations:

- Active and Passive surveillance camera systems both involve the cost of purchasing and installing cameras, and the equipment necessary to transmit the video images to either a recording device(s), or to be viewed via an internet connection, as well as the re-occurring costs for that connection.
- The larger the area, or number of areas, to be covered, the more equipment would be needed to effectively cover the areas. In the Berkeley Marina, auto burglaries and thefts of autos took place in the seven general locations reported above. The location with the most reported auto burglaries was Spinnaker Way, which is approximately 1/3 of a mile long, and runs between Marina Boulevard and the dead-end turnaround at the Bay. Although a cost analysis has not been done for Spinnaker Way, it is clear that it would be very expensive to install enough surveillance cameras along that 1/3 mile roadway, to be able to effectively cover both sides of vehicles parked on either side of the roadway. The other areas were large parking lots in other parts of the Marina.
- Cameras for active surveillance camera systems that have the ability to pan, tilt, and zoom, cost more than less versatile cameras that are mounted in fixed positions.
- Active surveillance camera systems must be adequately monitored, to be more effective than passive systems. There is a limit to the number of surveillance video feeds that one person can effectively observe. The more camera feeds that the person must observe, the less likely that person will observe the auto burglary being committed. The typical auto burglary takes less than 30 seconds for the window to be smashed and the items in plain view in the passenger area of the vehicle to be grabbed. If an active surveillance camera system is monitored, as an auxiliary function by a person who has a different primary function, their attention will be divided and they will be less effective.
- If a crime was reported in an area that is covered by a passive surveillance camera system, there would be a cost associated with the staff time needed to review the recorded video images from the cameras in the immediate area.

Other considerations:

- Vehicles parking along almost all of the North side of Spinnaker Way, and about half of the South side, are under the canopy of large trees, obscuring the view of the passenger side of those vehicles from where surveillance cameras would be located. The street side of the vehicles could still be observed.
- Perpetrators of crimes often wear clothing, like a sweatshirt with the hood up, in an effort to conceal their identity. A video image that does not show identifying features is of little value.
- Suspect vehicles that are parked out of view of surveillance cameras will not be observed.

- The perception of safety in an area where a surveillance camera system has been installed can be both good and bad. It is good if the system has resulted in a reduction of crime, and citizens continue to exercise appropriate care for their safety and security. It is bad if citizens have an unjustified sense of safety and security because there is a surveillance camera system, and they expect a more rapid response by police in the event of a crime or other emergency. If the surveillance camera system is passive, it is not being monitored, and it will not result in a faster response. If it is an actively monitored system, the person monitoring the images from each of the cameras may or may not observe the crime or emergency situation, and that may or may not result in a more rapid police response.
- If some parking areas are equipped with surveillance cameras, and others are not, the problem of auto burglary may be displaced to the areas that are not equipped with cameras.

Welcome Kiosk:

A different approach to crime prevention in the Marina could involve a Welcome Kiosk that everyone would pass as they enter the Marina. It could be located in the median on University Avenue, East of Marina Boulevard. The kiosk could be staffed at all times, or during specific hours. Information could be provided to the public by staff at the kiosk, or by the use of a variable message sign. Overt surveillance cameras could be installed at the kiosk, to record images of vehicles and people as they enter and leave the Marina. Signage at the kiosk could draw attention to the surveillance cameras, the goal of which would be to deter people from entering the Marina for the purpose of committing crimes. The images from those cameras could be monitored in real-time, but would likely have some crime prevention effect even if they were not monitored.

Personal Crime Prevention:

People can significantly reduce the likelihood of becoming the victim of auto burglary by not leaving items of value in their vehicles. There are many signs posted in parking areas of the Marina that say Lock Your Car – Do Not Leave Valuables In Car. People ignore the signs, and become the victims of auto burglary.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Depending upon direction from the City Council, proceed with further planning for installation of surveillance cameras in one or more parking areas within the Marina, or at a Welcome Kiosk. The use of covert camera equipment would not be a good approach to the property crimes occurring in the Marina.

The Police can explore the uses of covert surveillance camera equipment that can be moved to different locations within the City, such as drug hot spots, as long as there is electrical power and an internet connection can be made. The cost of actively monitoring cameras at drug hot spots would depend upon the amount of time devoted to remote surveillance of each camera equipped area. The use of a covert camera would improve the effectiveness of current drug surveillance programs. When those cameras were not being monitored, they could be set to record and the images viewed later if desired.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF FUTURE ACTION

A local IP surveillance camera company provided an equipment cost estimate of \$14,700 for three security cameras and a computer server to record the images for the parking lot immediately east of Skates Restaurant. They also provided a rough estimate of \$14,000 for surveillance cameras and a server for a Welcome Kiosk at the entrance to the Marina. These estimates do not include the cost of building a Welcome Kiosk, getting power to the cameras, installation of cameras and other equipment, programming, commercial grade DSL line, or training. The cost of building, equipping, and operating a Welcome Kiosk has not been determined.

The same company provided an equipment cost estimate of \$17,310 for their Covert Camera Stealth Box. The camera in the stealth box has day/night capabilities, and can be controlled to pan, tilt, and zoom. The estimate did not include the cost of getting power to the camera, installation of the camera and other equipment, commercial grade DSL line, or training. The covert camera would not be used as a deterrent to crime, and would only need to be monitored during specific times that the police wanted to monitor activities at a problem location such as a drug hot spot, although it could record at all times.

To monitor surveillance cameras 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 5.2 FTEs would be required. At approximately \$90,000. (annual salary and benefits) per Community Service Officer, the total annual staffing cost for full time monitoring would be approximately \$468,000. If cameras were monitored intermittently, the personnel cost would be reduced.

CONTACT PERSON

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