

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
CORPORATE REPORT



DATE: November 27, 2023
TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Chris Zota, Chief Information Officer
SUBJECT: CCTV Cameras in the Uptown and Waterfront Areas

RECOMMENDATIONS

THAT Council receive the corporate report dated November 27, 2023, from the Chief Information Officer, titled “CCTV Cameras in the Uptown and Waterfront Areas” for consideration; and

1. Direct staff to:
 - a) Engage the RCMP Detachment and identify critical areas where CCTV cameras could be installed in public areas, yet not monitored live, to deter violent crime and anti-social behavior, and collect evidence to help solve violent crime;
 - b) Undertake a Request for Quotation (RFQ) process.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The use of public CCTV systems generally falls into two main categories:

- 1. Corporate CCTV systems:** monitor city-owned assets and facilities. Fixed CCTV used inside city buildings to monitor public areas and service access points. These systems are managed onsite by city staff.
 - a) The city currently maintains a network of 48 security cameras, with 22 cameras stationed at the Parkade, one located at the Five Corners intersection, and the remainder distributed throughout various city buildings.
- 2. Public Safety CCTV systems:** monitor public places, generally high pedestrian thoroughfares and areas where antisocial behaviour is, or perceived to be higher, such as shopping precincts, entertainment areas and specific open spaces. These systems are usually permanent; however, new and emerging technologies continue to involve including the use of temporary or mobile public safety CCTV systems.

These two systems are similar; however, the underlying rationale, drivers, objectives and operating requirements may differ and require nuanced considerations in relation to their installation, maintenance and management.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

Motion # & Meeting Date	Motion Details
2023-230 May 15, 2023	<p>THAT Council direct staff to bring forward a corporate report regarding the City utilizing CCTV cameras in the Uptown and Waterfront areas.</p> <p>Voted in the negative (3): Mayor Knight, Councillor Cheung, and Councillor Partridge</p> <p>Note: It was clarified prior to the vote that staff, as an initial step on this topic, will bring forward a corporate report that outlines required resource considerations and potential impacts this could have on other Council priorities.</p>

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Operational Context

The city does not have dedicated staff tasked with the monitoring, maintenance, or operation of this extensive camera infrastructure.

In contrast, many public sector organizations that oversee CCTV camera systems typically employ dedicated privacy officers to ensure compliance with privacy regulations and responsible operation.

High-definition CCTV cameras necessitate a robust, secure, and reliable network infrastructure, ideally supported by fibre optics cabling. Wireless technology does come with resource considerations and requirements and has certain limitations, particularly in consideration of the area's terrain and geographical characteristics.

City-owned fibre optics infrastructure is available at the following Uptown and Waterfront locations:

- Russell Avenue and Johnston Road Intersection;
- Thrift Avenue and Johnston Road Intersection;
- White Rock Museum;
- Memorial Park Washroom; and
- Marine Drive across from Montgomery's Cottage Lunch Restaurant.

It should be noted that the deployment of fibre optics and/or wireless infrastructure can be a substantial financial commitment, entailing significant civil engineering efforts. The quantity of new cameras will directly impact the necessary data storage capacity, necessitating the procurement of additional equipment.

CCTV Policy Context

Research indicates that the role and effectiveness of CCTV use in public places is varied and inconsistent. Most studies suggest that CCTV is largely ineffective at reducing crime and there is evidence that CCTV's can be beneficial in preventing property crimes, particularly vehicle crimes. The effect of CCTV on offences against the person, including personal crime and violent

crime and public order offences, is less clear, with no consistent evidence to support CCTV use in deterring these types of ¹crime.

CCTV is recognized as a beneficial policing tool in situations where the video recording is of high quality, and footage can support police in identifying offenders, gathering evidence and assisting prosecutions².

Research suggests that whilst many people state that they would feel safer with the installation of cameras, there is little evidence to indicate that feelings of safety are increased when CCTV systems are introduced. Research also indicates that the benefits of CCTV can fade after a period of time and that introducing CCTV systems may displace crime rather than reduce it. CCTV systems can also negatively impact perceptions of crime, signaling that the area is unsafe³.

Provincial context – CCTV use by other BC municipalities

Below is a sample of other cities in British Columbia currently operating public CCTV cameras:

- City of Surrey has CCTV cameras at every city facility and approximately 400 cameras at traffic intersections, which are used for traffic and crime intervention. In addition to it, the City launched an initiative called Project IRIS – a voluntary public registry for private security cameras to contribute to public safety. The city cannot access the footage recorded by the cameras, but the RCMP can use the database to identify camera location.
- City of Kelowna operates approximately 300 CCTV cameras and a 24/7 monitoring center. The 2017 costs to run this operation were estimated at \$100,000 per year.
- The City of Richmond operates approximately 200 cameras at signalized intersections with the purpose of enhancing public safety.
- City of Vernon operates approximately 30 outdoor cameras, of which 15 are installed in a parkade, with the rest deployed around a park.
- City of Vancouver sought provincial approval to deploy CCTV cameras along the Granville Entertainment District; however, the request was not supported.
- City of Delta deployed an unknown number of cameras at traffic intersections.
- The City of Port Moody operates approximately 100 cameras, with less than five of them deployed in areas prone to vandalism.
- The City of Vancouver operates approximately 900 cameras across three distinct areas:
 - Traffic Management: 65 standard definition cameras.
 - City Facilities: 810 cameras.

¹ Metcalfe, L., Morgan, A., & Garner, C. (2020). Local government public space CCTV systems in Australia. *Crime Prevention and Community Safety*, 22(3), 210-222. doi:<http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.slv.vic.gov.au/10.1057/s41300-020-00093-8>. See also, Victorian Auditor-Generals Office (VAGO), 2019, Security and Privacy of Surveillance Technologies in Public Places 19 Sept 2019, (<https://www.audit.vic.gov.au/report/security-and-privacy-surveillance-technologies-public-places?section=>)

² 2 IFEC Global (2020) Role of CCTV Cameras: Public, Privacy and Protection, (April 2020) (<https://www.ifsecglobal.com/videosurveillance/role-cctv-cameras-public-privacy-protection/>) see also, Wells, Allard, and Wilson. (2006). *Crime and CCTV in Australia: Understanding the Relationship*.

³ 3 Welsh, B., & Farrington, D. (2002). *Crime prevention effects of closed circuit television: A Systematic review*, Home Office Research Study 252. London: Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate.

- Public Realm: Part of the Winter Olympic Games, 52 cameras were deployed, of which 41 had been decommissioned. The remaining 11 cameras are installed on seven rooftop locations. They are turned ON only during large special events.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The costs associated with installing CCTV cameras along the Waterfront and Uptown areas are dependent on the number and locations of new cameras. Undertaking a Request for Quotation (RFQ) will help identify the budgetary impact.

Whole life-cycle costing, including installation and maintenance schedules, operational costs and staff resourcing, will be considered as part of the initial assessment and as part of the complete CCTV installation proposal.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Provincial Context – FIPPA Parameters for CCTV Use

In British Columbia, the use of video and audio surveillance by public bodies is subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)*. The Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC) provides independent oversight and enforcement of B.C.'s access and privacy laws, which include FIPPA and the *Personal Information Protection Act*, which applies to private sector organizations.

FIPPA governs the manner in which public bodies, including the City of White Rock, collect, use and disclose personal information and impose restrictions and obligations upon public bodies with respect to the same.

Under FIPPA, there are limited circumstances in which a public body can collect personal information through audio and video surveillance:

- The information is collected for the purpose of law enforcement, so long as the public body has a law enforcement mandate;
- The information relates directly to and is necessary for a program or activity;
- The information is collected by observation at a presentation, ceremony, performance, sports meet or similar event.

FIPPA defines *personal information* as recorded information about an identifiable individual other than contact information. Video and audio recordings of an individual's image and voice are considered identifiable information.

For example, it is not sufficient for a public body to claim an interest in reducing crime in order to justify collection for "law enforcement;" the public body must have the authority to enforce those laws.

Section 26(c) of FIPPA authorizes the collection of personal information that is necessary for an operating program or activity of the public body. "Necessary" in the context of surveillance systems is a high threshold for a public body to meet. It must be deliberate in its purpose. The personal information must also be directly related to a program or activity of the public body.

OIPC's position is that video and audio surveillance systems are particularly privacy intrusive measures as they often subject individuals to continuous monitoring of their everyday activities, thereby capturing people's personal information or data through this monitoring.

The OIPC is also very clear that information collected through surveillance should not be used beyond its original purpose.

Finally, it is important to note that under FIPPA, the OIPC has the authority to launch an investigation into the legality of a public body's CCTV systems with or without them receiving any privacy complaints.

It is important to note that the RCMP as an organization is not subject to the *FIPPA Act*.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

With regard to privacy implications in operating CCTV cameras in public environments, a communication plan would need to be developed.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS

It is anticipated that Engineering & Municipal Operations, Information Technology, the White Rock RCMP detachment, and the Corporate Administration staff will need to work together to deliver the multifaceted implementation of CCTV Cameras.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This project does not align with current strategic priorities of Council, and if this project was to move forward, the completion of other current high and top priority projects would be impacted.

OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES

The following options are available for Council's consideration:

1. The White Rock RCMP detachment will identify and supply a list of locations benefiting from CCTV coverage. Staff will initiate a Request for Quotation process and report back to council with the findings.
2. Maintain the status quo.

RISKS

Outdoor CCTV infrastructure can have significant cost implications, and unforeseen circumstances could lead to budget overruns. This includes not just the initial capital investment costs but also staffing and ongoing management and maintenance costs.

Reallocating staff resources to support this initiative would necessitate a shift away from other ongoing projects, or day to day operational needs, potentially affecting the city's ability to execute on council's strategic priorities and an inability to meet day to day operational needs.

It is anticipated that this initiative may draw some public scrutiny, leading to inquiries and attract potential media interest, which could further strain staff resources.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the deployment of CCTV cameras in public spaces offers a compelling duality of benefits and drawbacks that require careful deliberation. On the one hand, these surveillance systems act as potential deterrents against crime, aid in the apprehension of offenders, and instill a sense of security among citizens. On the other hand, they raise substantial concerns regarding privacy infringement, the potential for abuse, and the creation of a pervasive surveillance culture. Furthermore, the effectiveness of CCTV cameras is not absolute; they are not a panacea for crime and may shift criminal activity to less monitored areas.

Thus, a holistic approach is paramount – one that prioritizes CPTED, place-making, community activation and development approaches over the installation of CCTV systems.

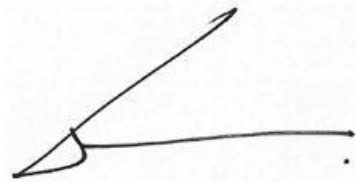
Respectfully submitted,

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Chris Zota
Chief Information Officer

Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer

I concur with the recommendations of this corporate report.

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Guillermo Ferrero
Chief Administrative Officer