

## City of Piedmont

### Public Safety Camera Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why are Public Safety Cameras (surveillance cameras) being proposed?

A: Public Safety Camera technology can be a useful investigative tool for law enforcement in general and has been shown to be so here in Piedmont. Surveillance footage from private systems as well as from the pilot camera at Oakland Avenue and Grand Avenue has aided in the successful investigation of crimes and prosecution of those who have committed them.

Q: The City already has Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) Cameras. Why are Public Safety Cameras also needed?

A: There are times when criminals will remove the license plates of cars, use a stolen license plate that has not been reported as stolen, or use a vehicle that has been rented fraudulently and use these vehicles to commit their crimes. ALPR cameras also do not aid in the police response or investigation of a crime committed by someone on foot. Public Safety Cameras provide an investigative and response capability which the ALPR cameras lack.

Q: Where would Public Safety Cameras be located?

A: The Police Department has identified six intersections where the cameras would be located. This decision is based on crime data and how the cameras will integrate with the ALPR camera system from a police response and investigative standpoint. The locations are the intersections of: Grand and Wildwood Avenues; Oakland and Grand Avenues; Grand and Rose Avenues; Sunnyside and Olive Avenues; Trestle Glen Road and Cavanaugh Court; as well as Kingston and Monte Cresta Avenues. These locations may change based on connectivity issues or operational changes.

Q: Who would be authorized to view the camera footage and under what circumstances will footage be viewed?

A: The Piedmont Police Department established a Department policy related to Public Safety Cameras. This policy was approved by the City Council in 2017. Only police personnel are authorized to view the camera footage. Authorized personnel would view camera footage for the following purposes: (a) To prevent, deter and identify criminal activity. (b) To respond to critical incidents. (c) To assist in identifying, apprehending and prosecuting offenders. (d) To document officer and offender conduct during interactions to safeguard the rights of the public and officers. (e) To augment resources in a cost-effective manner. (f) To monitor pedestrian and vehicle traffic activity.

Q: How would privacy considerations be addressed and safeguarded?

A: The privacy of the public is of the utmost importance to the Piedmont Police Department and the City of Piedmont. The Public Safety Camera system only captures still images and video and does not record audio. Recorded images and video will only be used for legitimate law enforcement purposes. All video monitoring and retrieval will be done in a professional manner and in accordance with current legal standards. The camera system

will not be used to invade the privacy of individuals, to view private areas or areas where a reasonable expectation of privacy exists. All reasonable efforts will be taken to protect the public's privacy concerns. The review of video images shall be done only by those with authorization from the Chief of Police. Video images captured by public safety cameras that are requested by the public or media will be made available only to the extent required by law. Requests for recorded video images from other law enforcement agencies or through the submission of a court order or subpoena shall be promptly submitted to the Support Services Commander for review. These requests will be complied with in accordance with applicable laws. Requests for video images may from time to time require additional consult with the City Attorney's Office. This consult will be done by the Chief of Police or his/her designee with the goal of both complying with current legal standards and protecting the public's privacy concerns. The Piedmont Police Department does not permit the sharing of recorded video images gathered by the City for purpose of federal immigration enforcement, pursuant to City Council Resolution 42-18, and the California Values Act (Government Code § 7284.2 et seq).

Q: How long would the City retain the video footage?

A: All downloaded media shall be stored in a secure area with access restricted to authorized persons. A recording needed as evidence in a criminal or civil proceeding shall be copied to a suitable medium and booked into evidence in accordance with established evidence procedures. All actions taken with respect to retention of media shall be appropriately documented. Recordings will be retained in accordance with the City's retention schedule and state law.

Q: Will there be more opportunities to learn about this proposal and provide input?

A: Yes! We want to hear from the public. The Public Safety Committee will aid by coordinating a Town Hall meeting, smaller Neighborhood Watch type information meetings, and a survey will also be disseminated to the residents of the City. This webpage is also a source of information.

Q: When will the City Council take up the decision on the Public Safety Camera program?

A: The Chief of Police will present the recommendation for the City Council to consider a Public Safety Camera Program in June of 2019.

Q: What is the role of the Public Safety Committee?

A: The Public Safety Committee was established by the City Council and is comprised of nine voting members. Six of the members are residents appointed by the City Council. One member is a member of the Board of Education or a resident designee appointed by the Board. The remaining two members are the Chief of Police (or designee) and the Fire Chief (or designee). All members are voting members.

The Council assigned the three areas of focus below to the Public Safety Committee:

1. Investigate ways to increase public participation in crime reduction strategies, including but not limited to the following:
  - Neighborhood meetings
  - City-wide meetings

- School events
  - Web-based and other community networks
2. Increase public participation in disaster preparedness using the resources of the Public Safety Committee. Members of the Committee shall directly work to organize increased public participation of those programs/events approved by the Public Safety Committee.
  3. Provide a forum to share comments, issues or concerns regarding public safety issues, including but not limited to crime prevention, community outreach and disaster preparedness education and training.

Q: What are the costs and risks associated with this program?

A: Preliminary costs provided by two different vendors have established an approximate cost of \$45,000 - \$50,000 per intersection. This estimate includes the establishment of infrastructure for connectivity, hardware and software. Industry recommendations of 5% to 10% of the initial procurement costs for on-going maintenance should also be factored in. The Police Department has established a policy to address privacy concerns, employee misuse of video, and public requests for video.

Q: Will a dedicated position be assigned to just monitor the camera footage 24/7?

A: Although monitors will be specifically located to enable authorized personnel to view "live" video, there will not be a position specifically dedicated to monitor the video 24/7. In the case of a in-progress crime, serious incident or natural disaster, the placement of monitors which can be quickly viewed by authorized staff will enable the increased effective deployment of public safety personnel.

Community members with question about the proposal are encouraged to contact Police Chief Jeremy Bowers at [jbowers@piedmont.ca.gov](mailto:jbowers@piedmont.ca.gov) or via telephone at (510) 420-3010.

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