



CITY OF COSTA MESA

Agenda Report

77 Fair Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

File #: 24-068

Meeting Date: 3/19/2024

TITLE:

AUTOMATED LICENSE PLATE READER (ALPR) CAMERA SYSTEM LEASE AND MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT

DEPARTMENT: POLICE DEPARTMENT

PRESENTED BY: DAVID CASAREZ, LIEUTENANT

CONTACT INFORMATION: DAVID CASAREZ, 714-754-5266

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council:

1. Authorize the lease of 31 existing Flock Safety Inc. automated license plate reader (ALPR) camera systems from the Omnia Partners Cooperative Agreement No. 23-6692-03 with Insight Public Sector in an amount not to exceed \$306,900 utilizing general funds from the department's budget for a term of three years.
2. Authorize the lease of 15 new Flock Safety Inc. automatic license plate reader (ALPR) camera systems from the Omnia Partner Cooperative Agreement No. 23-6692-03 with Insight Public Sector in an amount not to exceed \$153,750 utilizing funds from the awarded Organized Retail Theft (ORT) grant for a term of three years.
3. Authorize the City Manager or designee to execute two separate agreements for maintenance of the automated license plate reader (ALPR) camera systems with Flock Safety Inc., in a form approved by the City Attorney.

BACKGROUND:

Auto theft not only deprives vehicle owners of their property but also furnishes criminals with a means to carry out additional offenses in stolen vehicles. Consequently, crimes frequently involve the use of stolen automobiles. Directing proactive enforcement measures towards auto theft often reveals other criminal activities and serves as a deterrent to more serious offenses.

Police agencies have employed Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) technology to locate stolen vehicles and solve crimes involving the use of automobiles. The evolution of ALPR technology has made it more affordable. Traditional ALPR systems are comprised of costly fixed camera locations or mobile devices in patrol cars. Although the Costa Mesa Police Department has previously deployed other mobile ALPRs for years, these older devices have reached the end of their operational life and are no longer in use.

The Flock Safety Inc. ALPR System (Flock) entails installing cameras throughout an area to improve coverage. The proposed lease with Flock comprises 15 additional cameras to complement the existing 31 cameras already leased/used by the Costa Mesa Police Department. Flock cameras are situated to monitor major entry and exit points across the city, strategically positioned to aid in criminal investigations and the recovery of stolen vehicles.

Flock captures data such as date, time, location, license plate details (state, partial, paper, and no plate), and vehicle information (type and color). These features allow for retroactive search capabilities to investigate crimes. Moreover, the Costa Mesa Police Department utilizes Flock's real-time alerting for "hotlist" vehicles, which include stolen vehicles, vehicles used in crimes, and vehicles associated with wanted criminals. This feature allows for the immediate notification and response of police personnel to stop, investigate, and apprehend wanted criminals.

Flock's technology gathers unbiased evidence while preserving individual privacy. Flock does not photograph or record vehicle occupants and does not employ facial recognition capabilities. The data collected by the ALPR cameras is utilized for law enforcement investigations only. This data is shared exclusively with law enforcement agencies within California.

Flock cameras are self-sustained, utilizing solar and cellular (LTE) data communications which is a favorable and cost-effective approach to deploying ALPR cameras in the community. Unlike other fixed or mobile ALPR devices, Flock allows for broader coverage of the city, with vendor-provided system maintenance rather than relying on City staff. Flock's lease program offers an all-inclusive model for deploying ALPR cameras, as Flock is the sole manufacturer and developer of the Flock ALPR camera. Notably, Flock differs from other ALPR companies as they are the only manufacturer and service provider that offers ALPR services through its leasing contracts, while others require the city to purchase equipment.

Flock offers significant advantages, including a straightforward annual flat-rate lease per camera priced at \$3,000. Additionally, Flock includes a two-year warranty, Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) compliant cloud-based hosting, unlimited user licenses, continuous software improvements, camera setup, mounting, shipping, and handling.

ANALYSIS:

In June 2022, the City leased 31 Flock Safety ALPR cameras through Omnia Partners Cooperative Agreement No. 44-0000-6644 with Insight Public Sector. The City entered into a one-year agreement with Flock Safety, Inc. approved to form by Legal, to lease and provide maintenance to the 31 Flock Safety ALPR cameras. Since then, a new cooperative agreement No. 23-6692-03 through Omnia Partners with Insight Public Sector has been executed. This agreement will be utilized for the lease and maintenance in total of 46 Flock Safety Inc. automated license plate reader (ALPR) camera systems.

This cooperative agreement meets all requirements set forth by the City of Costa Mesa's Purchasing Policy and all the requirements set forth by the State of California regarding regional, state, and national cooperative purchasing agreements. Omnia Partners has established an approved vendor

list following a nationwide competitive bid process, which includes Insight Public Sector. This process confirms the City still receives the lowest available pricing and meets the competitive bid process requirements. At the time of the initial contract, the purchase did not meet the cost threshold for City Council approval. Since that time, a new cooperative agreement through Omnia Partners with Insight Public Sector was executed with a modest price increase requiring City Council approval.

Since the installation of Flock in February 2023, Costa Mesa's ALPR cameras have directly led to 84 felony arrests, including cases of grand theft, possession of stolen vehicles, embezzled vehicles, vehicle burglaries, and apprehending wanted individuals. Flock has also led to the recovery of 69 stolen vehicles in Costa Mesa, valued at approximately \$1.118 million. Additionally, crucial information about a vehicle linked to a homicide suspect from another jurisdiction was captured as it drove through Costa Mesa. This information was shared with the local investigating agency and led to the arrest of the homicide suspect.

ALTERNATIVES:

The City Council may elect not to renew the lease for the established 31 Flock ALPR Systems; however, this is not recommended as they have already proven to be a valuable tool in the recovery of stolen vehicles, apprehending dangerous wanted criminals, and increasing public safety.

The City Council may elect not to move forward with the lease of the 15 Flock ALPR Systems; however, this alternative is not recommended as the primary goal of the awarded ORT Grant is to increase directed enforcement and investigative capabilities in an effort to reduce retail theft, auto theft, and auto accessory theft in the community.

FISCAL REVIEW:

The lease and maintenance of 31 Flock ALPR systems are included in the Police Department's FY 2023/24 General Fund budget.

There are sufficient appropriations for technology under the awarded \$3.5 million ORT Grant to fund a 3-year agreement to lease and maintain an additional 15 Flock ALPR systems.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City Attorney's Office has reviewed this agenda report and approved it as to form.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS AND PRIORITIES:

This item supports the following City Council Goals:

- Strengthen the Public's Safety and Improve the Quality of Life

CONCLUSION:

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department's budget for a term of three years.

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