

NO: **R177**

COUNCIL DATE: **October 5, 2009**

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **September 29, 2009**

FROM: **Acting Crime Reduction Strategy Manager
Deputy City Manager**

FILE: **7450-30**

SUBJECT: **Closed Circuit Television Pilot Project - Scott Road SkyTrain Car Park**

RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager's Department recommends that Council receive this report as information.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Council on the Closed Circuit Television Pilot Project that is being implemented at the Scott Road SkyTrain Car Park.

BACKGROUND

The Surrey Crime Reduction Strategy (CRS) contains 106 recommendations that are focused on reducing crime and improving perceptions about crime and thereby improving the quality of life for those who choose to live in, work in or visit Surrey.

One of the recommendations contained in the CRS is:

“Develop a strategy for the application of CCTV in the City.

That the City in conjunction with private sector partners and with input from the Privacy Commissioner developed a strategy for the application and implementation of the CCTV pilot project.

On February 9, 2009 Council considered Corporate Report No. R015 titled “Application for Provincial Funding – Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Pilot Project” and authorized staff to apply for a grant of \$330,000 from the provincial government to implement a CCTV pilot project in the parking lots associated with the Scott Road SkyTrain Station. Based on that application, the Province awarded the City of Surrey \$330,000 to design, implement and monitor such a project.

DISCUSSION

The Scott Road CCTV project is now fully operational. The project is being conducted as a one year pilot and represents a significant milestone in the use of CCTV technology in the public realm in Surrey. One of the goals of the pilot is to determine how best to use CCTV technology

as a crime reduction tool in Surrey. The pilot will assist in establishing best practices that can also be shared with other municipalities and partners.

Pilot Project Location

Crime data provided by the Surrey RCMP established that the Scott Road SkyTrain parking lot was had a high incidence of theft of and theft from automobiles.

In addition to reported crime data, anecdotal information from those frequenting the area and an observation of the physical environment reinforces the risk in relation to vehicle crime in this area. The lack of 'non-rush hour' pedestrian traffic in the car parks and the isolation of the site indicate a higher than average risk of vehicle crime occurring.

The consequences of the vehicle crime at the Scott Road SkyTrain parking lots include:

- Damage to property;
- Theft of property;
- Increased fear of crime for transit users and their social groups; and
- Reticence by the public to use public transit for fear of being victimized.

Partnerships

Working in partnership with TransLink and Coast Mountain Bus Company, an agreement was reached to deploy a pilot CCTV system in the subject parking lots. The Department of Criminology of Simon Fraser University has been contracted to conduct the project evaluation. Other key partners include Surrey RCMP and the TransLink police service.

Project Funding

The City of Surrey received funding support for the Scott Road SkyTrain CCTV Pilot Project in the amount of \$330,000 from the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. This was sufficient to cover the costs of the design, implementation and evaluation of the pilot project.

Key Actions completed to date include:

1. Twelve CCTV cameras have been installed in the Scott Road SkyTrain parking lots;
2. Lighting upgrades have been completed by TransLink to the Scott Road SkyTrain station and car parking areas to assist with the effectiveness of the CCTV system by providing better images outside of normal daylight conditions;
3. Seventeen City of Surrey signs informing the public of the presence of the CCTV cameras have been posted at strategic locations (with high visibility) throughout the parking lot;
4. A project manual, policy document, records log book, and RCMP protocol document have been developed specific to the CCTV pilot project. These documents outline roles, responsibilities, procedures, policy, and file management processes specific to the City's role in retrieving video footage from the cameras, upon request from the Surrey RCMP for the purposes of investigation and law enforcement; and
5. The CCTV system has been reviewed and approved by the Provincial Privacy Commissioner to ensure there are no issues with respect to unlawful privacy infringement.

Evaluation of Pilot Project

The primary objective of this project is to deter criminal activity by virtue of the presence of the cameras and if criminal activity occurs to use the information provided by the cameras to identify and assist in prosecuting the offenders. It is projected that one of the outcomes of the CCTV project will be a reduced fear of crime by the legitimate users of the area.

Success will be measured using on the following criteria:

- A sustained reduction in reported offences occurring in the area;
- The identification of offenders should crime be committed;
- The arrest of identified offenders;
- An admission/finding of guilt in relation to the offenders and relevant case disposal; and
- A reduced fear of crime by legitimate users of the area.

The Department of Criminology of Simon Fraser University, under the direction of Dr. Martin Andresen, has been contracted to conduct an independent evaluation of the project outcomes. The evaluation project will examine the experiences over a one year time frame from August 15, 2009 to August 15, 2010. The final evaluation report will be forwarded to Council in the fall of 2010.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The CCTV pilot project also supports the City of Surrey Sustainability Charter as follows:

- SC 11 – Improve Public Safety and Security.

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