

Niles Police Flock Safety Camera Network

Niles Demographics

Niles is a suburban community which borders the north side of Chicago. Niles is built around Milwaukee Ave. which is a major highway leading from the city of Chicago, thus criminals often transit this road traveling between Chicago and the suburbs. Niles is also located equidistant to 3 Interstate Highways being I-94, I-90, and I-294, which are also used by criminals traveling between Chicago and the suburbs. Often when criminals are detected, they flee to one of these highways via the major streets of Niles.

Niles has a large retail and industrial base. The Niles population of 30,000 people can swell to a daytime population of over 100,000. Due to the large retail base, Niles is a target for retail theft and financial crimes.

Current ALPR System

Niles currently has 2 locations utilizing ALPR cameras. The current system being utilized by Niles is insufficient to the agency's needs. The system only captures information based on a vehicle's license plate. The system prioritizes vehicles coming towards the camera, which is ineffective on vehicles without a front license plate. The system often does not capture license plate information during periods of darkness. Only being in two locations, limits the chance of an offender passing one of the cameras.

A camera network utilizing proper placement along known routes would be beneficial in identifying offenders' vehicles. The new system being considered by Niles (Flock Safety) offers numerous locations and better identification of all vehicle data, not just license plates. The considered system could accommodate enough cameras to set up coverage on every major road entering and exiting Niles.

Proposed System

Niles is looking to fund a network of Flock Safety Cameras consisting of 20 cameras for two years to increase the solvability of crimes. The Flock system has the ability to recognize vehicles by make, type and color in addition to just license plate data. The system is user friendly and can be utilized by officers in the field in real time. The cameras could be placed covering all major entry and exit points along the major roadways of Niles where historically offending vehicles flee after their crimes.

Crimes Involving Transiting Vehicles

Numerous crimes occurring in Niles involve offenders from outside of its jurisdiction coming into and then fleeing from Niles. Evidence from past crimes show patterns of certain criminal offenses that are rarely committed by residents. The following are examples of some of the crimes in which a camera network would aid in solving the crimes.

- Ruse Burglary
- Retail Theft
- Battery / Aggravated Battery

Ruse Burglary

Niles has a large elderly population which is susceptible to *Ruse Burglary*. The percentage of Niles residents over age 65 is 25.1% of the total population (National Average 16.5%). The percentage of Niles residents over age 75 is 14.8%, which is more than double the National Average of 6.9%. The elderly are more at risk of being victimized by this type of burglary due to mental and physical limitations. In a majority of these crimes, the offenders flee in a vehicle near the crime. The victims are rarely ever able to provide more than a brief description of the offender's vehicle. A camera network would help to identify the offender's vehicle from a brief description and lead to license plate information.

Retail Theft

Niles has a large retail base, making it a target for organized retail theft, with an average of over 300 incidents annually. Only a limited number of retail establishments in Niles have organized security or a camera system able to capture quality information on offending vehicles. Often times the only information on a vehicle will be a style and color. All of the retail stores that would be targeted by organized theft crews are on roadways which would be covered by the new system being considered by Niles.

Organized retail theft crews are often identified by one jurisdiction and the information is passed to other jurisdictions. In these cases, the other jurisdictions spend numerous man hours surveilling the target store watching for the offenders. The system being considered has the ability to identify the offending vehicle as it passes one of the network cameras and alert officers of its location. This system would locate offenders prior to reaching their intended targets.

Battery / Aggravated Battery

Niles issues liquor licenses with a closing time of 4:00am. None of the communities around Niles have that late of closing times, which bring more patrons to establishments in Niles, especially late night. With the late night crowds comes crimes associated with liquor establishments, especially fights. Some of the fights have been gang related and involve discharging firearms. During the confusion following a major disturbance, rarely are witnesses able to provide detailed offender information. The liquor establishments that have a 4:00am license are all located on roadways that would be covered by the proposed camera network.

Budget

Total - \$105,000

Year One: 20 cameras X \$2,750/ camera = \$55,000

Year Two: 20cameras X \$2,500/ camera = \$50,000

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cmdr. Brandt #12", is written over a horizontal line.

Commander Ronald Brandt
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