City of
VALLEJO
California

DATE: February 9, 2021

TO: Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Shawny K. Williams, Chief of Police

SUBJECT: AMENDMENT TO AXON ENTERPRISES AGREEMENT FOR MARE ISLAND ALPR CAMERAS

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the City Manager to execute the Second Amendment to the Master Agreement with Axon Enterprises in the amount of $56,601 for 10 Flock Safety ALPR cameras to be placed on Mare Island. The new not to exceed amount for the Axon Enterprise Master Agreement would be $1,717,471 for public safety technology.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The purchase of these cameras will enhance the security of Mare Island and add additional cameras to the City's automated license plate readers network to further the Police Department's crime reduction strategies.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

License plate recognition (LPR) technology was developed early in the 2000s and has since grown exponentially among police agencies. System configurations vary, but generally, LPR is made up of one or more cameras and a mobile computer system. These systems are commonly mounted on light posts, overpasses, traffic signal lights, toll roads and bridges, and a wide variety of other locations – along with mobile units that are mounted to police and security vehicles and tow trucks. When an LPR system is turned on, the cameras "read" license plates into the computer system, which interprets the captured characters and checks them against a database of vehicles known to be associated with a crime or suspected offender.

On May 14, 2020, Command Staff from the Police Department received a demonstration of the Flock Safety product (a partner of Axon Enterprises). Flock Safety's ALPR system securely captures images while the proprietary machine-learning algorithm uses 'Vehicle Fingerprint' technology to identify the license plate, via what may only be a vehicle make or type, and color provided by a victim or witness. The system also scans license plates and also compares them to stolen vehicles in the Stolen Vehicle System (SVS) of the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS).

Agencies in Solano County presently using Flock Safety technology successfully are the Vacaville and Rio Vista Police Departments. Other local law enforcement agencies utilizing this technology includes the cities of Napa, Emeryville, Hercules, Piedmont, San Ramon, Danville, and San Mateo.

Research by well-known criminologists Cynthia Lum and Christopher Koper has revealed that case clearances for auto theft and robbery improved after installing the fixed LPR network, particularly in places where fixed LPRs were concentrated. Results also suggest that large-scale LPR deployment may have the

potential to improve investigative outcomes for some serious crimes.

Overview of the Flock Safety Cameras
The Flock ALPR cameras are infrastructure free and can be installed through a combination of options including solar and existing poles, electric and existing poles or solar and Flock poles. The system can recognize temporary plates, no plates, covered plates, state detection and two lanes of traffic.

Flock Safety cameras will be beneficial both from a post investigative and reactive way as well as significant to front-line patrol officers. Officers receive alerts from the stolen vehicle system and be on the lookout alerts (BOLO). Officers will be able to query both plates and vehicles with the machine learning capability of the system.

Designated investigators from the Police Department will have access to the Northern California Regional Intelligence Center (NCRIC) databases to conduct criminal investigative inquiries based on a simple criterion, including license plates, partial plates, location, and date/times, pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding. This host database is provided at no cost to police agencies. Flock Safety cameras distinguished itself as the sole source option as the company is the only vendor reviewed that provides a vehicle identification system or 'Vehicle Fingerprint' technology.

Flock Safety sells to private organizations, i.e., HOAs, which allows police to access that network if given access. This allows private citizens, businesses and organizations the ability to provide the department with actionable evidence that police need to track down a suspect. Common residential surveillance cameras only capture the suspects face and without a "known" suspect the police do not have enough to solve the case. The information gathered by this type of ALPR camera, coupled with the 'Vehicle Fingerprint' technology provides the police with numerous data points to assist them in their case.

Additional features of the system include:

- There is no ongoing maintenance, data storage, or data access costs associated with the vendor. An annual subscription cost is $2,496 per camera.
- Flock Safety does not keep or have access to the data – from a privacy standpoint, the data is only maintained in their servers for 30 days.
- The 'Vehicle Fingerprint' technology, which allows end-users to query the make, model, and color of vehicle, is innovative and presently unique to Flock Safety.

Vendor Selection
In December 2019, the City entered into a five year agreement for $1,597,579 with Axon Enterprises for the Officer Safety Plan which provides the City with body cameras, Tasers and access to various Axon software platforms including Evidence.com and Axon Citizen based on a sole source exemption.

Additionally, in June 2020 the City amended their contract with Axon Enterprises per VMC 3.20.220(A)(2)(c) in the amount of $63,291 for 10 Flock Safety ALPR cameras to be deployed in hotspot areas of the city.

The partnership between Axon and Flock allow the Vallejo Police Department to easily manage ALPR. Additionally, if the department chooses to contract with Axon for in-car cameras with ALPR the city would

maximize ALPR coverage.

OIR Group Recommendations in Support of Action
The OIR Group, in their May 2020 report titled, "Vallejo Police Department: Independent Assessment of Operations, Internal Review Systems and Agency Culture," provided City management 45 recommendations for implementation. Recommendation #7, states that "…VPD should develop and deploy crime prevention strategies involving problem solving and community engagement." The Flock ALPR cameras help prevent crime with the ability for wide-scale public deployment, along with fostering public and private partnerships. Additional cameras allow the department to maximize resources with the use of technology.

Department Policies
The purpose of the department's ALPR policy is to provide guidance for the capture, storage, and use of digital data obtained through the use of ALPRs. The current department policy, Policy 426 "Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs)", is attached to this staff report.

FISCAL IMPACT
This project will not impact the General Fund. During the Fiscal Year 2020-21 budget cycle, money from the Mare Island CFD Fund #114 was budgeted for this expenditure. Additionally, out-going years will also be funded by the Mare Island CFD Fund #114 which has sufficient funding to continue the operation of this project in out-going years.

The purchase of these security cameras through Fund #114 is allowed as funds can be used to cover any activities that may be necessary for the care and preservation of the facilities on Mare Island.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW
This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

ATTACHMENTS

1.	AXON/Flock Mare Island Quote
2.	VPD Policy 426 ALPR

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