

Date: December 11, 2024

To: **Mayor and Council.**

Name and title: Walter Babicz, City Manager

Subject: Security Camera Pilot Program Proposal

Attachment(s):

1. Security Camera Pilot Program Proposal – Downtown Prince George/Prince George Chamber of Commerce
2. Staff report to the Standing Committee on Public Safety dated September 12, 2024: Security Camera Pilot Program Proposal

Recommendation(s):

THAT Council RECEIVES FOR CONSIDERATION the Security Camera Pilot Program Proposal from the Prince George Downtown Business Improvement Association and the Prince George Chamber of Commerce as attached to the report dated December 11, 2024 from the City Manager titled, Security Camera Pilot Program Proposal.

Purpose:

For Council consideration and to advance recommendations from the Standing Committee on Public Safety in response to a proposal received from the Prince George Downtown Business Improvement Association (“Downtown Prince George”) and the Prince George Chamber of Commerce regarding a security camera pilot program.

Discussion:

Background

At the September 24, 2024 meeting of the Standing Committee on Public Safety two resolutions were passed following presentation to the Committee of the attached report titled “Public Safety Committee Report – Security Camera Pilot Program Proposal” as follows:

That the meeting of the Standing Committee on Public Safety RECOMMENDS that Council RECEIVES FOR CONSIDERATION the Security Camera Pilot Program Proposal by the Prince George Downtown Business Improvement Association and the Prince George Chamber of Commerce as attached to the report to the Standing Committee on Public Safety dated September 12, 2024, from the City Manager, titled “Security Camera Pilot Program Proposal”.

and:

That the meeting of the Standing Committee on Public Safety REQUESTS administration provide information to Council on potential funding sources, obstacles and opportunities, as well as the feasibility of using a Partnering Agreement to deliver the program in relation to the Security Camera Pilot Program as attached to the report to the Standing Committee on Public Safety dated September 12, 2024 from the City Manager, titled " Security Camera Pilot Program Proposal.

Ask for Support

The attached joint proposal from Downtown Prince George and the Chamber of Commerce requests the following financial support from the City of Prince George:

Grant Funding (\$40,000) towards 'hard costs' of executing the initial pilot program, including camera equipment, security monitoring services, installation and communications.

Grant Funding

Staff have made efforts to source grant funding opportunities in line with the scope of this proposal. To date, no grant program has been identified as a match.

If Council wishes to support this request, Council may consider looking to its 2024 Council Contingency fund. The remaining balance of the 2024 Council Contingency fund is \$35,750. If Council approves utilizing the remaining balance of the Council Contingency fund, there would be a shortfall of \$4,250 from the requested amount of \$40,000. Options for Council's consideration to fund the remaining \$4,250 include the following:

- Deferring consideration of the remaining balance of \$4,250 to the 2025 budget year; or
- Directing administration to fund the remaining balance of \$4,250 from the existing 2024 operating budget.

Administration has confirmed with representatives of Downtown Prince George and the Chamber of Commerce that if funding is approved by Council, the recipient of the funds should be Downtown Prince George, for ease of managing the payment. Downtown Prince George would work in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce on the pilot project as described.

Partnering Agreement and other Considerations

At the time the attached proposal was submitted to the Standing Committee on Public Safety, staff raised the possibility of using a partnering agreement model in connection with this initiative. Staff have now had the opportunity to research and examine this option in more detail, and administration is of the view that the use of a partnering agreement is not viable. A partnering agreement is suitable where a service is being provided "on behalf of" the municipality. In this circumstance, while the City may be able to support this initiative through a transfer of funds (i.e. a grant as described above) the City should not have the ability to be involved in directing the specific work for the pilot program after providing the funding. This is because CCTV cameras installed under the direction of the City, even if in an advisory capacity, in open public spaces may be in opposition to recommendations shared with municipalities from the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC), and would likely result in the same complex regulatory requirements under the

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) that City would be required to follow under its own CCTV program.

Similarly, administration is also challenged with the following requests in the proposal:

Commitment to provide a City Liaison to reach across all City operations that will be required to support and guide the proper delivery of the pilot program.

Commitment to provide a specific liaison from the City Bylaws department to support and guide the proper delivery of the pilot program.

Commitment to provide a liaison from the Prince George RCMP to support and guide the proper delivery of the pilot program as well as the safety and security of the workers and our business members.

The City is not able to commit the RCMP to provide this liaison support, however if this program is supported by Council, or as otherwise directed, staff can express the municipality's desire to have the RCMP engage in this program.

Options for Council

Option 1 – Proceed with the Pilot Program:

If Council wishes to support the proposed initiative, staff suggest this occur through a grant. If approved, staff will work to facilitate a transfer of funds and establish a mutually agreed upon grant agreement to the satisfaction of administration, considering factors such as FIPPA legislation.

If this path is viewed as desirable, the following motions are suggested:

Recommendation 1:

That Council APPROVES \$35,750 from the 2024 Council Contingency fund be used as a grant to the Prince George Downtown Business Improvement Association for the purposes of the Security Camera Pilot Program as described in the proposal dated September 16, 2024 from Downtown Prince George and the Prince George Chamber of Commerce,

Recommendation 2:

(a) That Council defers consideration of the remaining balance of \$4,250 to the 2025 budget year; or

(b) That Council directs administration to fund the remaining balance of \$4,250 from the existing 2024 operating budget.

Recommendation 3:

That the approved funding be distributed through a mutually agreed upon grant agreement between the City and the Prince George Downtown Business Improvement Association on terms satisfactory to administration, and that the City Manager be AUTHORIZED to sign the grant agreement.

Option 2 – Do not Proceed with the Pilot Program at this Time

Alternatives to Council proceeding with the proposed pilot program include the following:

- Receiving this report for information;
- Directing further research into certain areas of the proposal before making a decision; or
- Deferring consideration of the proposal to a future Council meeting.

Strategic Priorities:

This initiative may be viewed as aligned with the strategic priority of Social Health and Wellbeing, specifically, ensuring a safe, healthy and clean community for all residents.

Summary and conclusion:

This report shares a proposal for the creation of a security camera pilot program from Downtown Prince George and the Prince George Chamber of Commerce for Council's consideration, as referred through the Standing Committee on Public Safety.

Respectfully submitted:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

Prepared by Eric Depenau, Director, Administrative Services and Ethan Anderson, Corporate Officer

Meeting date: 2024/12/16