



Office of the Mayor

CONSENT CALENDAR

October 16, 2018

To: Honorable Members of the City Council

From: Mayor Jesse Arreguín, Councilmembers Linda Maio and Sophie Hahn

Subject: Approving Installation of Cameras at San Pablo Park and Environmental Safety Assessment

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the following recommendations to address violent crime in and around San Pablo Park:

1. Pursuant to Berkeley Municipal Code Section 2.99.020(5) declare that “Exigent Circumstances” exist given the recent gun violence in and around San Pablo Park. Recent violence includes a shooting incident on August 18, 2018 in San Pablo Park resulting in injuries, and a shooting incident in front of 2947 Sacramento Street on September 21, 2018 resulting in a victim in serious condition. The recent gun violence is an emergency which presents an imminent and potential danger of injury or death to persons in and around San Pablo Park.

Therefore, the City Council finds that these conditions meet the definition of “Exigent Circumstances” and approves the installation and use park cameras in San Pablo Park, and requests that the City Manager install cameras as expediently as possible. Long-term use of cameras requires City Council approval within 90 days after commencement of the surveillance technology as required by Berkeley Municipal Code Section 2.99.040.

2. Refer to the City Manager to perform an environmental safety assessment of San Pablo Park with a focus on crime prevention specifically around the areas of recent shooting incidents.

Both recommendations shall be considered Short-Term Referrals.

BACKGROUND

On August 18, 2018, a shooting took place in San Pablo Park in which three people, including two innocent bystanders, were injured. The shooting took place in broad daylight while many families and children were using the park. This incident was one in several shootings which have occurred in the San Pablo Park neighborhood over the past two years.

On August 28, 2018, Mayor Arreguin and Councilmember Davila held a community meeting to address recent gun violence in the neighborhood. Several suggestions were recommended to deter and address crime in the area, including some that have already been implemented. This includes the deployment of two additional police officers on an overtime basis to patrol the Park and surrounding area. Another recommendation suggested by community members includes the installation of park cameras with signage notifying individuals that there are cameras and they may be under surveillance. An environmental safety assessment can also be an effective way at reducing crime in an area. Such an assessment focuses on ways in which the built environment can be modified to reduce the likelihood of future violence.

The August 18, 2018 shooting is one of multiple shootings that have taken place in San Pablo Park and the surrounding neighborhood over the past few years, creating a great deal of fear. A multi-pronged approach is necessary to addressing the concerns of the community and reducing violence in the area. Recent communications from constituents show a strong desire to move expeditiously the installation of cameras in San Pablo Park.

While surveillance cameras have long been used in jurisdictions as a tool to reduce crime, only recently have studies been done to determine the effectiveness of their usage. In a 2011 study by the Urban Institute's Justice Policy Center, it concluded that not only are they effective at reducing crime, but the cost of installing and maintaining them is less than the costs associated with crimes that take place without them¹.

Efforts are currently underway by the Police Department, in conjunction with the Public Works and Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Departments, to review possible locations for the installation of park cameras. However, under the Surveillance Technology Use and Community Safety Ordinance, the City Manager may use Surveillance Technology provided it is necessary to address "Exigent Circumstances". BMC Section 2.99.020(5) defines "Exigent Circumstances" as *"means the City Manager's good faith belief that an emergency involving imminent danger of death or serious physical injury to any person, or imminent danger of significant property damage, requires use of the Surveillance Technology or the information it provides."*

This item requests a declaration that "Exigent Circumstances" exist given the recent violent crime in and around San Pablo Park and authorizes the installation of cameras on a short-term basis to address "Exigent Circumstances". The City Manager has requested that City Council take this action to approve the installation of cameras.

¹ <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/27546/412401-Evaluating-the-Use-of-Public-Surveillance-Cameras-for-Crime-Control-and-Prevention-A-Summary.PDF>

Additionally, City Staff has begun the process of performing an environmental safety assessment. Given the expressed urgency of neighbors to address the recent shootings, the purpose of this request is to prioritize and accelerate this process.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Unknown

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

No environmental impacts.

CONTACT PERSON

Mayor Jesse Arreguín 510-981-7100

