



Seattle Office of City Auditor

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 13, 2021

To: Chair Alex Pedersen – Transportation & Utilities Committee

From: David G. Jones, City Auditor

RE: September 2021 Annual Surveillance Technologies Usage Review Extension Request

I am writing to discuss the due date for the next annual Surveillance Technologies Usage Review, which our office is scheduled to provide in September 2021, and to request an extension for that report to September 2022.

As you know, Seattle Municipal Code Chapter (SMC) 14.18 requires our office to produce a Surveillance Usage Review every year in September on non-Seattle Police Department technologies. Because of delays in finalizing Surveillance Impact Reports and our loss of consultant funding due to a budget cut, our first two Surveillance Usage Reviews were published relatively recently:

- Surveillance Usage Review: Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) License Plate Readers (LPR), published on 12/30/20.
- Surveillance Usage Review: SDOT Closed Circuit Television Cameras (CCTV), published on 6/30/21.

The SMC requires the second annual Usage Reviews on these two technologies to be filed by September 2021. We do not believe it makes sense to produce the second Usage Reviews for LPR and CCTV by then for the following reasons:

- Our first two reports would be less than a year old, and there would be little in the way of new information or progress on their recommendations.
- SDOT reported that they plan to replace the LPR technology with Acyclica technology by the end of 2021. If SDOT does this, it may not make sense to review this technology again; we will know about this in time.
- The individual who has led our Surveillance Technologies work, Megumi Sumitani, is retiring on July 20 and our current budget will not allow us to hire her replacement until early 2022. From a personnel viewpoint, I could use the extra time to figure out who should replace Megumi in this body of work.

Therefore, I would like to request City Council approval for the second Surveillance Usage Reviews, covering all activities in 2021, for SDOT's LPR and CCTV technologies to be due in September 2022 instead of September 2021.

Please note that we are, in September 2022, required to complete the first Usage Reviews of any existing and new surveillance technologies that the City Council approves in 2021. In fact, we are currently faced with the challenge of producing initial Usage Review reports in September 2022 on one Fire Department and three City Light surveillance technologies.

If you approve this request, this will get our annual Usage Reviews back on the September due date schedule specified in the SMC, as well as giving our office time to implement a sustainable process for completing these reviews annually with our current resources.