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MPD to purchase new video surveillance systems

By Vera Kochan

Currently Moraga's Community Surveillance System monitors the town's major intersections. The purchase of that system was funded by a Moraga Community Foundation fundraising drive and is used by the Moraga Police Department to aid with investigating and solving crimes.? However, the system is not monitored around the clock and gives insufficient coverage to wider areas of town.

According to an April 12 staff report by Chief Jon King, "The Police Department also maintains equipment to address issues in Town, including radar and LIDAR devices for speed enforcement [Light Detection and Ranging is a remote sensing method that uses light in the form of a pulsed laser to measure ranges of variable distances to the Earth], crime scene investigation equipment, items for community engagement events and software for diagramming crime scenes and traffic accidents."

The report also explained that "much of this equipment is becoming dated and is due for replacement or has not kept pace with current technology. It is in need of replacement to allow officers to continue to function in an efficient and effective manner."

The town council approved the transfer of Public Safety Impact Fees in the amount of $33,000 to the Central Video Surveillance System CIP (17-501). This will fund the purchase of five additional video systems to be installed at key locations. The new systems will feature an Automated License Plate Reader camera and a high-definition color camera with a minimum of three separate views of the surrounding roadways. The systems will be linked to MPD for monitoring and reviewing purposes.

Also approved was the transfer of $18,000 to the Police Department Supplies and Materials account (101-620-022-01) for the purchase of updated radar and LIDAR units to aid officers in their daily duties with greater efficiency.

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