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#29

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Kim Dawson <kim.dawson@edcgov.us>

Please POST to Legistar and PULL Item #29 - Drone -- from 12/10/19 BOS Agenda

1 message

Melody Lane <melody.lane@reagan.com>

Mon, Dec 9, 2019 at 3:21 PM

To: edc.cob@edcgov.us, Kim Dawson <Kim.Dawson@edcgov.us>

Cc: bosfive@edcgov.us, bosfour <bosfour@edcgov.us>, bosone@edcgov.us, bosthree@edcgov.us, bostwo@edcgov.us

Please timely post the entirety of this message to Legistar and pull Item #29 – Drone/unmanned aerial vehicle – from 12/10/19 BOS agenda for public discussion.

The following two related articles are relevant to government surveillance and raised concerns about “Big Brother” during the Taxpayers Association meeting. How exactly is this drone going to be used, and what oversight is there to ensure citizen privacy rights?:

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Melody,

Thanks for sending this. Yes, Big Brother is alive and well in San Diego (and spreading elsewhere, of course). Anytime the government rolls out something like this and claims that it will "gather only metadata such as static data on parking, vehicle counts, pedestrian counts, temperature, humidity, and air pressure", you know it will go well beyond merely counting.

But we should all be comforted by Police Captain Jordan's promise to San Diego's citizens that "the CityIQ system won't be used 'to harass, intimidate or discriminate against any individuals or groups'". Yeah, right.....

Privacy Concerns Over San Diego Smart Streetlights

The Daily Conspiracy Team

San Diego, California is proud to be the world's largest smart city platform but advocates say the drive toward computer-driven interconnectedness is going too far as the city unveils its new streetlight equipped with face recognition software.

Claiming energy savings and "new technological opportunities," the San Diego leaders are "transforming the City's existing street lighting infrastructure into a connected digital

infrastructure."

The city website says that data collected by the streetlight-mounted data collection sensor nodes "can be used to develop applications and systems that benefit the City and the community," and will gather only metadata such as static data on parking, vehicle counts, pedestrian counts, temperature, humidity, and air pressure.

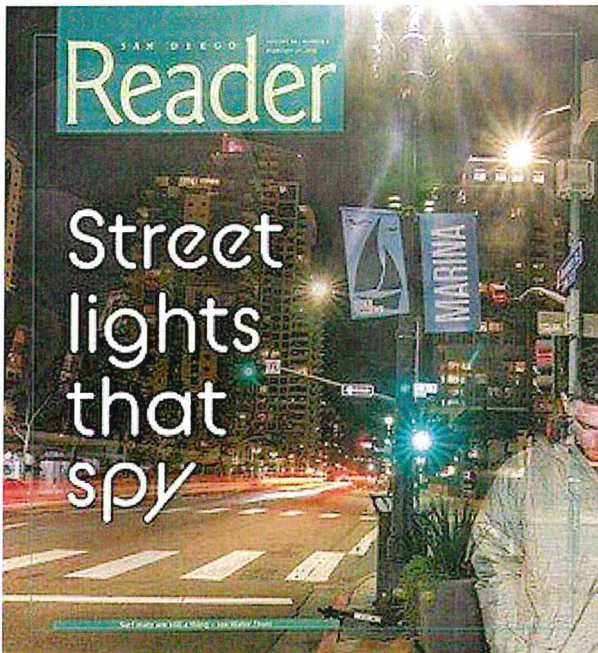
San Diego has partnered with General Electric (GE) to provide its proprietary CityIQ cloud database services to make the metadata collected by the sensors available for exploitation. Stated uses include "pedestrian safety and directing drivers to open parking spaces to mobility planning and optimization, to helping first responders during an emergency and urban and real estate development planning."...[More](#)

<https://www.sandiegoreader.com/news/2019/feb/20/san-diegos-street-lights-spy/#>

San Diego's street lights that spy

Falconer's secret dealings with G.E. and Qualcomm

An outspoken critic of the mayor departs her downtown condominium en route for her law office a few blocks away, monitored by an array of video cameras and audio sensors concealed atop the city's streetlights. Each day, the routine is the same, and each day each minute detail of her activity is captured in a massive database for subsequent perusal by unknown actors.



Photograph by Matthew Suárez

Whether politicians, business people, or simply grandmothers out shopping or on their way to church, potentially compromising information on thousands of private citizens is stashed away on remote servers, open to city officials, law enforcement agencies, and corporations with the money and connections to purchase the information.

To critics, the notion was frightening, and one city took action.

“A web of surveillance technology is rapidly spreading across our urban landscapes,” wrote the American Civil Liberties Union, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, civil rights advocates, Muslim groups, and San Francisco Bay Area privacy advocates in a February 2017 letter to the mayor and city council of San Jose, then considering approving a path to ubiquitous public surveillance via its streetlights.



At least 3200 San Diego streetlights have been equipped with video and audio collection devices at public expense.

Photograph by Matthew Suárez

“Devices capable of monitoring and recording residents invade privacy, chill free speech, and disparately impact communities of color. Certain technologies, adopted for benevolent purposes in the name of ‘smart cities,’ may gather and store information about how residents live their lives in public places, including churchgoing habits, participation in political protests, or visits to an abortion clinic.”

A growing outcry caused the city to back away from construction of its planned high-tech intelligence network. A “privacy advisory task force” was organized last fall to grapple with questions raised by the mass deployment of sensors monitoring the whereabouts and activities of cars and pedestrians, and the city vowed to await the panel’s recommendations.

San Diego’s own streetlight story has been plotted behind closed doors, and bereft of transparency, leading critics to question city hall’s ethos of secrecy and willingness to bend ethics in the pursuit of campaign money.

Here in California’s second largest municipality, at least 3200 streetlights have been equipped with video and audio collection devices at public expense, turning the city into a stealthy laboratory for infrastructure-embedded intelligence collecting with devices regularly used by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and other security agencies. No notice was provided to residents or business owners where the devices have been installed and are now operating.

At the center of the intricate matrix, for which San Diegans are paying more than \$30.2 million, is General Electric, the Connecticut multi-national whose ex-board member, Qualcomm CEO Steve Mollenkopf, and his chipmaking company, is tied to San Diego mayor Kevin Faulconer, the mover behind the intelligence network.

Though Faulconer and city staff have proved unwilling to provide details, documents filed by G.E. under lobbying disclosure laws show that the company began pitching the idea in April 2016, as Faulconer and his backers were raising a record-setting campaign fund to assure easy reelection. G.E.'s filing said the company wanted to retrofit "lighting infrastructure and ability to reuse assets for Intelligent City use cases."

During March 2016, Qualcomm executives and their spouses, including Mollenkopf's wife Susan, came up with more than \$7500 for Faulconer's campaign. A quiet meeting between Faulconer and Qualcomm billionaire co-founder Irwin Jacobs was held at his La Jolla estate the same month, and the mayor was easily re-elected in June. That fall, shortly after Mollenkopf joined G.E.'s board of directors on November 4, 2016, the company's San Diego project kicked into high gear.

Following a short presentation by Faulconer's environmental services department, the city council gave its approval on December 13, 2016, to a \$30.3 million agreement with General Electric to finance the system. There was no discussion of the project's far-reaching privacy implications, although an itemized list attached to the document spelled out its surveillance-related purposes in the fine print.

"Car Image on Demand (123K events)," "Public Safety(14K events)," "Gun Shot Detection," and unspecified "Surveillance" services to be furnished by remote video security vendor Genetec were included in the fine print of a project proforma. Among Genetec's array of intelligence-gathering technologies, the Montreal-based firm makes license plate reader devices for use by the D.E.A.

Though the council and the public were not given further specifics, a January 2018 report by *IEEE Spectrum* revealed that each so-called smart streetlight is packed with high-tech spyware, including "an Intel Atom processor and half a terabyte of memory; Bluetooth and Wi-Fi radios; two 1080p video cameras for video, still images, and computer vision analytics; two acoustical sensors; and environmental sensors that monitor temperature, pressure, humidity, vibration, and magnetic fields. Much of the data gathered will be processed on board, with selected events or streams of data uploaded to GE's Predix cloud through AT&T's LTE network."

Five so-called design-build contracts to install the system won quick council approval on July 17, 2017, absent any discussion of the system's surveillance intent. The sensors would be employed to gather "data and analytics for improved parking, traffic, environmental data and safety," said a truncated presentation by Lorie Cosio-Azar of the city's Environmental Services Department, resulting in the "anticipated reduction of 8,000 Metric Tons of CO2 (carbon dioxide)."

The action drew no attention from the media, with the exception of a July 28, 2017 item in *La Prensa San Diego*. "In a telephone interview this week, Cosio-Azar referred to a 'type of camera' used by the system that 'collects data and images' and stressed that the cameras did not capture video. In a follow-up interview this week with Public Information Officer Jose Ysea, he clarified that the units do, in fact, provide video streams."

"Cosio-Azar could not be reached for further comment on why the cameras and microphone sensors were not explicitly mentioned during the City Council meeting or the presentation to the City's Infrastructure Committee," *La Prensa* noted.

Reached by phone last week, Cosio-Azar said she had been relieved of responsibility for the smart city project November 28. "No reason was given to me," she said regarding her reassignment to unrelated work. "I think the council has gotten wind of it," Cosio-Azar said regarding the unknown status of the project since she left. She added that some council members have begun asking Faulconer's office for more information regarding the costly undertaking.

Cody Hooven, director and chief sustainability officer of the mayor's Department of Sustainability, which runs the project, declined to answer questions, writing in a February 14 email, "Media requests need to go through our communications folks." She forwarded the matter to Faulconer's senior press secretary Greg Block, who provided no response.

A purchase order dated December 21, 2017, shows that the city paid G.E. Lighting Systems \$2,344,167 for electronics hardware and a variety of services related to the "Intelligent Cities project." An additional \$1,837,269 went for "sensor commissioning," per a purchasing record dated January 5, 2018.

Even after the system's public rollout in early 2018, officials avoided discussing its implications for privacy or lack thereof, and provided few other details. Faulconer's spokeswoman Jen Lebron was quoted in a February 22, 2017, Reuters account as saying that in approving the project, the council had "raised no privacy concerns."

"It's anonymous data with no personal identifiers," LeBron argued. "Video is not as detailed as security camera footage." But a December 2017 white paper by Cosio-Azar contradicted Lebron's assurances of anonymity. "Video data from digital smart city infrastructure will make it easier to identify, and, therefore, arrest criminals," according to the document, which touts the marketability of data produced by the system.

"Think of the App Store. Apple puts all iPhone sensor-data APIs on an open platform that's accessible to the app-development community. The availability of apps since 2008 has grossed nearly \$40 billion for developers. A similar app and sharing economy opportunity exists now for the City of San Diego thanks to data coming from its new digital smart city infrastructure."

There is no way to verify Lebron's statements because the city has thus far declined to provide data requested under the public records act, including video collected by the system, but skeptics of such undertakings abound. "I think rather than call them smart bulbs in smart cities, I'd call them surveillance bulbs in surveillance cities," the ACLU's Chad Marlow told the website CityLab in March of last year. "That's more accurate."

G.E. executives themselves have boasted that no other public surveillance effort in the world features "the kind of comprehensive sensor packages being installed on San Diego streetlights," reported *IEEE World* in January 2018.

"Repurposing San Diego's lighting infrastructure in a way that allows the community to put their hands on the heartbeat and nervous system of the city is our way of building a smart city app store," David Graham, then in charge of the smart street light program, was quoted as saying in a February 22, 2017 [news release from General Electric](#).

"We completed a pilot of the solution in August 2016, which showed us a glimpse of the technology's potential, and we're proud to announce San Diego's commitment as the largest digital installation of its kind anywhere in the world."

Since then there has been virtual silence, with no public progress reports or updates from the mayor to the city council, which approved millions of public dollars for the undertaking.

What few specifics that can be gleaned regarding the San Diego project come from contract documents submitted to the city council over two years ago. "The Situational Awareness service provides access to media such as photos and video collected from intelligent lighting sensors along public roadways and in parking lots," says the city's contract with General Electric, entitled the GE Intelligent Lighting Master Purchase Agreement, dated October 28, 2016.

"The media may be requested in any available date range starting near real-time and ending at the media elapse time," the document says. "This data can be obtained from a single intelligent light or a group of them to provide valuable insights for city officials and local businesses to enhance their awareness of the environments."

Adds the document, "Data is stored for 7 days only and then storage is reused/rewritten over."

But when a request under provisions of state public records law was sent to the city on January 3 to obtain data generated by a single so-called smart streetlight installed on a Market Street light pole, the response was repeatedly delayed.

"The City has to conduct a search for records, examine records, consult with another agency, or compile data in order to determine whether it has disclosable records," said a January 11 message.

"Pursuant to Cal. Government Code section 6253(c), the City needs to consult with multiple departments having substantial interest in the determination of the request or among two or more components of the department having substantial subject matter interest; such consultation shall be conducted with all practical speed. Therefore, the City is taking a 14-day extension in which to conduct this consultation. We will notify you on or before January 25 whether the City has disclosable records."

Come January 25, the city said it still wasn't prepared to turn over the records. "Staff are still conducting a search and review of records and need additional time," the message said. "We will provide you with a response within the next week." As of Monday, there have been no further updates.

Austin Ashe, general manager for intelligent cities of Current, the G.E. subsidiary that runs the San Diego surveillance program, told *IEEE World* that "We think streetlights are the place to do this [observation] because they have power, ubiquity, and the perfect elevation—high enough to cover a reasonable radius, low enough to capture a lot of important data."

But at what price for privacy? "The bulbs in communities of color or lower income communities or that happen to be on a corner where a Mosque is located—those are going to be the bulbs subject to maximum monitoring," the ACLU's Marlow has asserted. "Whereas those in the white upper-class segment of town aren't going to be watched."

ACLU headquarters in Washington, D.C. has launched what it calls its Community Control Over Police Surveillance project, intended to "ensure that residents, through local city councils, are empowered to decide if and how surveillance technologies are used, through a process that maximizes the public's influence over those decisions."

According to the group, "efforts have sprouted up in more than thirty cities, ranging in size from a few thousand residents to more than 8 million." But San Diego, home to what has been billed by its sponsors as the nation's most ambitious public intelligence-gathering initiatives, is not on the list.

"Local police forces have largely taken to acquiring and using surveillance technologies in secret," notes the ACLU's website. "Of course, when the police conceal their use of surveillance technologies, they greatly enhance their ability to conceal its misuse, such as using a surveillance technology without a properly obtained warrant or in a discriminatory manner."

Qualcomm's Mollenkopf, a champion of what is called the Internet of Things — another technology being promoted by Faulconer in conjunction with the intelligence gathering effort — is no longer on General Electric's board. He was pushed out in February 2018 as part of a shakeup of the earnings challenged company engineered by new G.E. chief executive John L. Flannery.

But the Qualcomm chief and his company continue to champion remote intelligence-gathering systems rooted in the so-called 5G wireless standard which San Diego's chip-building giant is counting on to generate billions of dollars of new revenue from its wireless business over the coming decades.

"That's now going to disrupt every other industry," he told Bloomberg in September 2018. "And so, for us, that's probably the widest funnel that we've had of opportunity in the history of the company."

Melody Lane

Founder – Compass2Truth

"There is no difference between socialism and communism, except in the means of achieving the same ultimate end: communism proposes to enslave men by force, socialism by vote. It is merely the difference between murder and suicide." ~ Ayn Rand ~