



Raymond Kelly Richardson  
Superintendent

Barry Golner  
Deputy Superintendent

Daniel R. Larocque  
Deputy Superintendent

To: Eileen Donoghue *EMD*  
City Manager

From: Raymond Kelly Richardson  
Superintendent of Police

Date: January 21, 2021

Re: City Council Motion Response

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**Councilor Nuon - Req. City Mgr. to investigate the feasibility of a Voluntary PILOT Program for Residents, Business Owners and other Religious and Non- Profit Institutions to register their address as a location that operates a video surveillance system; such a registry would allow Lowell Police Officers to readily identify known locations throughout Lowell that have Video Surveillance Systems that could potentially aid police with Criminal Investigations; in addition report to identify other communities within Massachusetts where similar programs have been established.**

Supervisors from the Investigative Services Division have looked into implementing such a registry. Feedback from similarly sized municipalities was mixed at best. The two main issues that arose were lack of participation from citizens and issues surrounding the privacy of those citizens that did participate. The consensus opinion was that such a list would be subject to disclosure receptive to a public records request or a court order. This may cause citizens to be leery of signing up for such a registry. More importantly, if these concerns gained widespread attention, may potentially dissuade citizens not on the registry from being cooperative when investigators independently approach them looking for surveillance footage.

During our research on a registry, however, we learned that there is a free Neighbors application by Ring that allows users to upload videos and pictures to share with their neighbors and allows communication between the police and community. Users of the Neighbors application do not need to own Ring cameras; users can also upload videos/pictures from other brand cameras. If a crime occurs in a specific location, the LPD can reach out to Neighbors application users to try to locate videos. Users can choose whether or not they want to share videos and the LPD has no ability to access videos without user approval.

The Neighbors application can be found in both the Apple App store and Google Play.

<https://ring.com/neighbors>

Lastly, it is important to note that video surveillance footage is an important part of modern criminal investigations and Lowell Police detectives are well versed, and well experienced, in canvassing for video footage citywide. As a result of this experience there is a wealth of institutional knowledge amongst investigators, regardless of a registry, as to where they will be able to locate video footage for their investigations.