The Autovu 2 Camera System is a public safety resource the Appleton Police Department (APD) has been trying to add for several years. The implementation of the system involves outfitting a squad car with several automatic license plate recognition (ALPR) cameras which have the ability to read license plates in a variety of conditions and at high speeds. The data gathered by the cameras is then compared to a database, quickly alerting the officer if any of the scanned plates are wanted for any of a variety of reasons. As an example, the Grand Chute Police Department (GCPD), who has the system already, had an officer parked in a median turnaround on Highway 41 in the dark during early morning hours. A car going by at interstate speeds was detected by the system as being reported stolen. During the ensuing stop, the occupants were found to also be wanted and in possession of firearms. This stop, used as an example to show the value of the system, would not have been possible relying on traditional observations made by the officer alone. It is just one of many such examples available.

During Octoberfest 2019, in fact, GCPD was requested to utilize the system in the downtown area in the days leading up to the event. The Statewide Intelligence Center received a tip that a person threatened on Snapchat to go on a mass shooting somewhere in Wisconsin. Resources were deployed and the person was later found to be staying with relatives in Green Bay. As Octoberfest neared, one of GCPD's squads having the ALPR system was requested to drive the downtown area, including the parking ramps, in order to verify whether a vehicle known to be associated with the person was detected. Utilizing the system, of course, was a much more thorough verification than relying on human observation skills in congested areas. Checking for the vehicle was as easy as entering the known license plate into the system and driving the squad with scanning cameras through the area. The system would automatically alert the officer via the squad's computer if the plate was detected. It was not detected and, combined with other investigative measures in place, the agencies involved were comfortable that the threat was unlikely to lead to hostile actions.

The APD would like to get a squad equipped with the cameras. We would then join the system's server housed at GCPD. Combining resources with other agencies is the most cost-effective approach. Another Fox Valley agency is similarly planning to join the server. Agencies in the Milwaukee area utilize a similar model of sharing one system. Concerns about government intrusion with such technology can be mitigated by the implementation of restrictive record retention schedules. It is intended that the chiefs of police from participating agencies will agree on and implement such schedules through MOUs.

Budget breakdown:

Autovu Sharp X law dual base kit (1)

Sharp X camera hard mount mounting bracket (2)

Generic Sharp XS XGA camera (2)

Black Autovu Sharp X Camera XGA 16 mm lens (2)

Installation (1)

_____

$16,381.16

5 year extended warranty

_____

$6295.00

Anticipated 1% increase in 2020

_____

$226.76

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Total $22,902.92

There aren't any other anticipated streams of revenue for the project at this time. ALPR, however, is a powerful project that would have real benefits for the Fox Valley.

Previous Octoberfest Grants Awarded:

2007 Radar Trailer $5,000

2010 Traffic Enforcement Software $8,000

2011 Surveillance Camera $6,000

2015-2016 Plate carriers $5,000

2015-2016 Messaging Board $17,000