

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Download b-roll/images of installation from Dec. 2023: <https://we.tl/t-X9VdmUmEuv>

# San Diego Police Taking Immediate Steps to Install Smart Streetlight, LPR Technologies in Hillcrest

## LGBTQ COMMUNITY LEADERS STAND IN SUPPORT OF INSTALLATION OF CAMERAS AHEAD OF PRIDE PARADE

**San Diego** – Working to protect against hate crimes and attacks on mass gatherings, San Diego Police Chief Scott Wahl announced Monday that the San Diego Police Department (SDPD) will begin rapidly installing Smart Streetlights paired with automated license plate recognition (ALPR) technology in Hillcrest and possibly other locations citywide.

**“Smart Streetlight and ALPR technologies are invaluable tools for our ability to investigate crimes throughout San Diego,” Police Chief Wahl said. “With the rise in hate crimes and our upcoming annual Pride parade and festival, we want to leverage this technology to protect our LGBTQ community. I’m proud to have several community leaders working with us to combat hate and hold criminals accountable.”**

Following notification to the Privacy Advisory Board (PAB) and City Council, SDPD will begin deploying the technology immediately this week to 14 locations in Hillcrest per the “exigent circumstances” section of the [Transparent and Responsible Use of Surveillance Technology \(TRUST\) Ordinance](#). The use of the streetlights will adhere to the same criteria established and approved by City Council last year.

In 2023, the City of San Diego saw an increase of 73% in hate crimes, and recently, four locations in Hillcrest and the surrounding area, with predominantly LGBTQ patrons, were targeted by suspects in a vehicle shooting gel pellets that struck several victims.

The installation of Smart Streetlights in Hillcrest will allow SDPD to deter, investigate, and hold people accountable for criminal activity. Since its installation, SDPD has used this technology to investigate approximately 129 crimes against persons and property,

In late December 2023, SDPD began deployment of the technology to 500 previously proposed locations citywide. During the installation process, SDPD discovered infrastructural issues at approximately 42 locations, making installation at numerous sites unfeasible. These issues included poles with voltage or power issues, buildings, signs or trees blocking the camera view, or the poles no longer existed in those locations.

SDPD alerted the Privacy Advisory Board in May of the installation issue and requested a review of a plan to adapt the Impact Report as required by the TRUST Ordinance to allow for a two-block zone on proposed locations moving forward to mitigate future issues. Since the PAB will not meet again until after August and past the 90-day required review period, SDPD will seek direct Council approval of the two-block zoning. SDPD will present this information for discussion on Wednesday at the City Council's Public Safety Committee.

SDPD is exploring other areas for the installation of the remaining cameras based on crime statistics and input from investigators and patrol divisions, City Council offices, and community members. All installed locations are added to a [searchable map of locations](#) on SDPD's website.

## **PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS**

Once the cameras are installed, SDPD individually reviews each camera's viewpoint to digitally mask private property, so it is not recorded by the cameras before they are fully operational. Officers and investigators must take the required training prior to gaining access to the system.

Additional safeguards in place for the system include:

- Officers and investigators must take the required training before access is granted.
- A case or event number is listed when searching the system. The SPLA Unit is constantly auditing the system to ensure compliance.
- Video captured by the streetlight cameras is deleted after 13 days, and ALPR data is deleted after 30 days. Streetlight camera video and ALPR data are only maintained if they are being used in an investigation.
- The "hotlist" ability for officers or investigators to enter license plates suspected of or associated with a crime can only be entered by members of the SPLA Unit and only remain on the "hotlist" for 72 hours.

SDPD has taken steps to better inform the public about the new technologies, including publishing use policies and other related materials in accordance with the TRUST Ordinance to its [technology website](#); creating a [searchable map of locations](#) of the streetlight and ALPR cameras; and collaborating with Flock Safety to create a ["transparency portal"](#) on the ALPR data being collected.

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