

Public Space CCTV Policy

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Directorate:	City Planning, Design and Amenity		
Responsible Officer:	Manager Regulatory Services		
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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to guide the implementation and ongoing management of current and future public space Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) in the City of Greater Dandenong, including Council's open-space Safe City CCTV Program. The aim of the Safe City CCTV Program is to improve actual and perceived levels of safety, deter instances of crime and anti-social behaviour and promote access to public spaces for residents.

2. Background

Community safety has been identified within the Greater Dandenong Community Plan and the Community Wellbeing Plan as a high priority for action. The importance of this objective has been supported by the community in the course of numerous consultations. Council recognises that the fear of crime impacts upon the perceived and actual levels of safety for residents. In response to these community concerns, Council has initiated a number of community safety initiatives including the Safe City CCTV Program.

CCTV is a tool which is typically used to monitor activity in and around public and private spaces, such as entertainment venues, public transport nodes, airports, central business districts and shopping precincts. In recent years, the uptake of CCTV technology has increased due to improvements in technology, declining costs and a growing appreciation of its attributes (*National Community Crime Prevention Program, undated*).

When used as part of a suite of strategies, CCTV can:

- Deter crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Increase perceived and actual levels of safety.
- Increase the use of the space for legitimate purposes.
- Assist law enforcement agencies in identifying and prosecuting offenders.

The national experience of councils that have installed CCTV and respective local police, indicate that CCTV has contributed to a reduction in vandalism, theft and anti-social behaviour and improved crime prosecution rates and perceptions of safety (*ARTD, 2001*). Evaluations of CCTV initiatives within Greater Dandenong have demonstrated a high level of acceptance among the community for CCTV. The installation of open-space CCTV has been accompanied by an improvement in perceptions of safety and a decline in anti-social and criminal behaviour.

However an analysis of academic research indicates that there are limitations to the effectiveness of CCTV. Success is largely dictated by its location, monitoring methods and the existence of complementing community safety initiatives.

CCTV in Greater Dandenong

Greater Dandenong embarked on its Safe City CCTV Program in 2009 with the installation of 13 public open space cameras in Menzies Avenue, Dandenong North. In response to favourable community feedback, data obtained during this pilot and ongoing feedback on the effectiveness of CCTV from Victoria Police, Council continues to expand its Safe City CCTV Program in key hotspot localities across the municipality, including central Dandenong, Noble Park and Springvale.

Council also installs and maintains a number of corporate CCTV camera systems in and around municipal buildings and car parks. While a number of these cameras capture vision of public spaces, they do not form part of the open-space Safe City CCTV Program.

In April 2015, Council adopted a series of recommendations arising from a security risk review undertaken by the InteRisk Group. One of the recommendations was to improve CCTV coverage and effectiveness by integrating key corporate CCTV camera systems with the Safe City system. Improvements to Council's key corporate systems over the coming years will allow further opportunities to undertake that integration.

Protocols will be developed to guide the management and use of Council's corporate CCTV systems. Protocols will be consistent with those established for the Safe City CCTV system.

Location of Safe City CCTV cameras

The installation of Safe City CCTV cameras will be preceded by a rigorous process to identify the highest priority locations. Council has designed a site identification matrix to prioritise key hotspot locations with scores assigned based on the following four key indicators:

1. Crime – an assessment of crime data from Victoria Police, Council databases and other sources.
2. Location – an assessment of the types and numbers of facilities within 500 metres, the extent of pedestrian traffic and a determination of whether the location serves a regional or neighbourhood catchment.
3. Health and Wellbeing – a review of perceptions of safety, the ability to access public spaces and proximity to community facilities.
4. Economic – an evaluation of the sites economic attributes such as the level of employment and retail investment and the flow on effects of improved perceptions of safety on retail and commercial activity.

Governance and oversight of CCTV

Council will initiate and maintain a range of governance arrangements to oversee the proper management of CCTV camera systems and use/storage of captured footage. These will include:

1. Regular evaluation of individual CCTV sites to determine effectiveness against its established purpose.
2. The Safe City CCTV Code of Practice and Protocols, which will set out strict guidelines for the maintenance, management and security of applicable CCTV systems, including access to recorded material, management of control rooms, control and operation of cameras, the provision of clear and accessible public information, and the protection of the privacy and rights of the public.
3. Annual external audit of the system. The role of the auditor will include:
 - Monitoring performance and behaviour of system operators/users and recommending investigations in the event of any divergences from established CCTV Procedure and Protocol documents.
 - Maintaining oversight of the CCTV Procedure and Protocol documents and recommending any changes to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
 - Presenting an annual report on the CCTV program to Council.
 - Encouraging public confidence in the CCTV system by ensuring its operations are transparent and subject to public scrutiny.
4. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed and will be maintained between Council and Victoria Police. The Memorandum of Understanding outlines the role, responsibilities and objectives of each party. Among a variety of matters, the Memorandum of Understanding outlines the circumstances under which Victoria Police will monitor, and respond to CCTV footage, as well as how they can access and use recorded footage.

3. Scope

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safe City CCTV Code of Practice, Protocols and MOU.

The implementation of the Safe City CCTV program will be managed collaboratively between Council and Victoria Police. The roles and responsibilities of each party are outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding.

Council business units responsible for the Safe City CCTV Program are Regulatory Services, City Improvement and Community Development. Roles and responsibilities of each department include:

Regulatory Services

- Management of day to day operation of the Safe City CCTV program.
- Monitor the compliance of all parties to the Safe City CCTV Protocols and Code of Practice.

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- Relationship management with internal and external stakeholders including current and potential funding bodies.
- Maintain contemporary knowledge of relevant laws or other regulations relating to open space surveillance and open space CCTV systems, to ensure compliance.
- Manage and implement the Memorandum of Understanding with Victoria Police in respect to viewing and accessing recorded footage and providing systems training, as required.

City Improvement

- Project management of contracts to deliver CCTV infrastructure.
- Budget management during CCTV installation.

Community Development

- The conduct of community engagement and wider community safety initiatives in support of the CCTV program and its key aims.
- Identification and prioritisation of future Safe City CCTV sites.
- Evaluation of individual CCTV sites to determine effectiveness against established purpose.

Building Maintenance

- Management of day to day operation of Councils corporate CCTV cameras systems.
- Develop the corporate CCTV protocols and monitor the compliance of all parties.

4. Human Rights and Responsibilities Charter – Compatibility Statement

All matters relevant to the Victorian Human Rights Charter have been considered in the preparation of this Policy and are consistent with the standards set by the Charter.

The Memorandum of Understanding between Council and Victoria Police acknowledges that all parties involved in the implementation and management of the CCTV are bound by the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act, 2006.

5. References

State-wide Legislation and Guidelines

- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic).
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Vic).
- *Evidence Act 2008* (Vic).
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (Vic).
- *Public Records Act 1973* (Vic).
- *Surveillance Devices Act 1999* (Vic).
- *Local Government Act 1989* (Vic).
- Office of the Victorian Privacy Commissioner's - Surveillance and Privacy Information Sheet 03.12
- Victorian Ombudsman's Closed Circuit Television in Public Places Guidelines.
- Victorian State Government Guide to Developing CCTV for Public Safety in Victoria

Council Plans

- Imagine 2030 – Community Plan 2010-2030.
- Community Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021.
- Community Safety Plan 2015-2022.

6. Definitions

Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) – A surveillance system in which a number of cameras are connected through a closed circuit. The footage taken by the cameras is sent to a television monitor or recorder. CCTV systems consist of cameras, monitors, recorders, interconnecting hardware and support infrastructure.

CCTV Systems – means any physical element of a CCTV system, consisting of assets such as cameras, relay systems, video data storage, viewing and printing devices.

Control room – A secure room where vision from CCTV cameras is displayed on monitors and is only accessible by authorised staff.

Corporate CCTV camera systems – Council installed CCTV systems typically installed in publicly accessible areas of libraries, municipal buildings, car parks and leisure facilities.

Safe City CCTV Program – Council's open-space CCTV system.

Public place - any public highway, road, street bridge, footway, footpath, court, alley, passage, park, garden, reserve or other place of public recreation, resort or thoroughfare notwithstanding that it may be formed on private property.

7. Council Policy

- The City of Greater Dandenong is committed to improving actual and perceived levels of safety through the use of CCTV combined with other community safety initiatives.
- Council will conduct a rigorous risk assessment of potential CCTV sites taking into consideration environmental influences and potential benefits prior to the installation of a CCTV system.
- Along with relevant partners, Council will regularly review current and future CCTV systems to determine whether the purposes of the program are being achieved.

Accountability

- The Safe City CCTV program will be operated fairly, within applicable laws and with due regard to the privacy and rights of residents.
- Council will maintain primary responsibility of the installation, maintenance and operation of public-based CCTV systems.

Information

- The community will be provided with clear and accessible information in relation to CCTV systems in the form of signage, media promotion and community education campaigns.
- Recorded footage will not exceed the information required to fulfil the purpose of the Safe City CCTV program. The retention of and access to recorded footage will proceed fairly and in accordance with the Code of Practice, Protocols, privacy provisions and relevant legislative requirements.

Partnerships

- Council will establish a CCTV audit process to report on the management of CCTV systems, ensure adherence to agreed operational documents, make recommendations for improvement as necessary and promote public confidence in the Safe City CCTV program.
- Council is committed to working in partnership with Victoria Police to improve community safety, address crime and manage anti-social behaviour in the municipality. Roles, responsibilities and communications related to the program will be conducted in accordance with the Safe City CCTV Code of Practice, Protocols and Memorandum of Understanding.
- Council will continue to work with traders, residents and local community organisations to promote the presence of CCTV and its ability to improve community safety.

8. Related Documents

- Safe City CCTV Code of Practice.
- Safe City CCTV Protocols.
- AS4806.1-2006, Closed circuit television (CCTV) Part 1: Management and operation.
- AS4806.2-2006, Closed circuit television (CCTV) Part 2: Application guidelines.
- AS4806.3-2006, Closed circuit television (CCTV) Part 3: PAL signal timings and levels.
- AS4806.4-2008, Closed circuit television (CCTV) Part 4: Remote video monitoring – Code of Practice.