# In VIEW

Having the right information at the right time is critical for the success and safety of our Police Department and the public. One of the tools that the Police Department is currently using to provide them with accurate information in their role of serving the City is the OptiCop Camera program.

The OptiCop Camera program started in 2008 with funds from the Community Development Block Grant Program for the initial cameras. Since then, the Police Department has used the City's Community Investment Program (CIP) budget each year to add to the network and deploy a total of 188 cameras in various locations throughout the City.

188
OptiCopCameras
in use

How Does It Work?
Each Opticop camera is continually visually recording and storing what it sees. In addition, the feeds from the cameras are streamed live onto four monitors in the Dispatch Communications Center located at the Police Department. There are always a minimum of three Dispatchers on duty in the center 24 hours a day, 7 days a week who can see the feeds live as the data is coming in and can pull certain feeds if they learn of an incident taking place in a certain location. They can also adjust the camera view or zoom in as necessary.
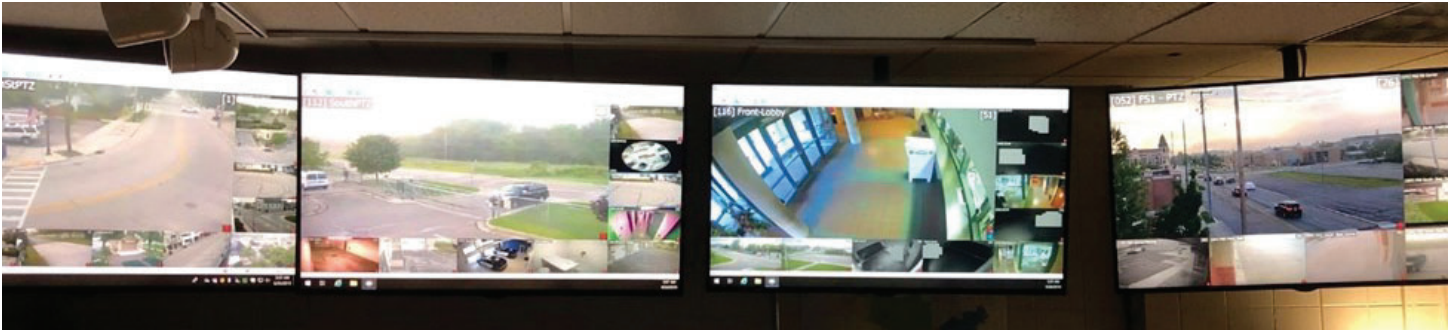
Monitors in Dispatch Center

The visual data is stored for 120 days so that it can be accessed at a later time by the Police Department staff. The cameras only record visual data, except for two cameras located at the Police Department which record both audio and visual data. The cameras are able to transmit data by being connected to City buildings that are on the City's fiber network or through a wireless connection to a tower at City Hall.

Why So Many Cameras?

Serve as a Crime Deterrent – The Dispatch Center can proactively monitor the areas near the cameras and alert Police Officers of crimes in progress or suspicious behavior even before a crime is committed. In addition, those looking to commit criminal acts are sometimes deterred simply by the sight of an Opticop camera in the area.

Provide Real-Time Data- If a call comes in to the Dispatch Center regarding a crime in progress, the Dispatchers can pull up Opticop cameras in that particular area and provide real-time information to officers. This information can be provided to officers even before they arrive on scene. This allows officers to be as prepared as possible for what they might encounter.

OptiCop Camera

Keep a Visual Record- For the safety of the public and the Police Officers, everything that takes place in the sight of a camera is recorded. If there are ever questions as to the Police response or to a person's actions, there is a visual record of what transpired. This recording complements the Police dash cam video that also might be capturing a scene as it unfolds.

Assist in Crime Solving- If Police are alerted of a crime that took place, they can pull up data from cameras in that area to investigate what might have happened. The Police can pinpoint activities quickly by being able to only review data where motion is detected.
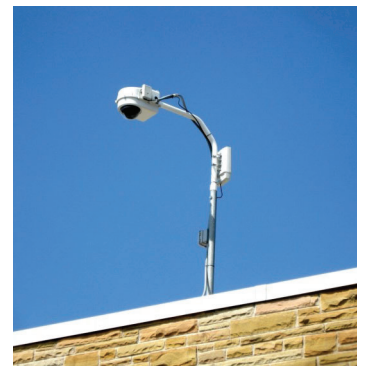
Why the Locations?

Many of the Opticop cameras are located on or around City buildings such as Fire stations, Police stations/substations, parks and office buildings as the City has access to fiber networks at these locations. The majority of the additional cameras are located around downtown (see map below). Many of the cameras downtown are mounted on local businesses. The cameras on businesses are installed only after the building owner consents and agrees to the placement. Many owners have been willing to work with the Police Department on the camera installation as it provides additional security surveillance around their businesses. The only cost to the owner is paying for the small amount of power needed to run the camera at that location.
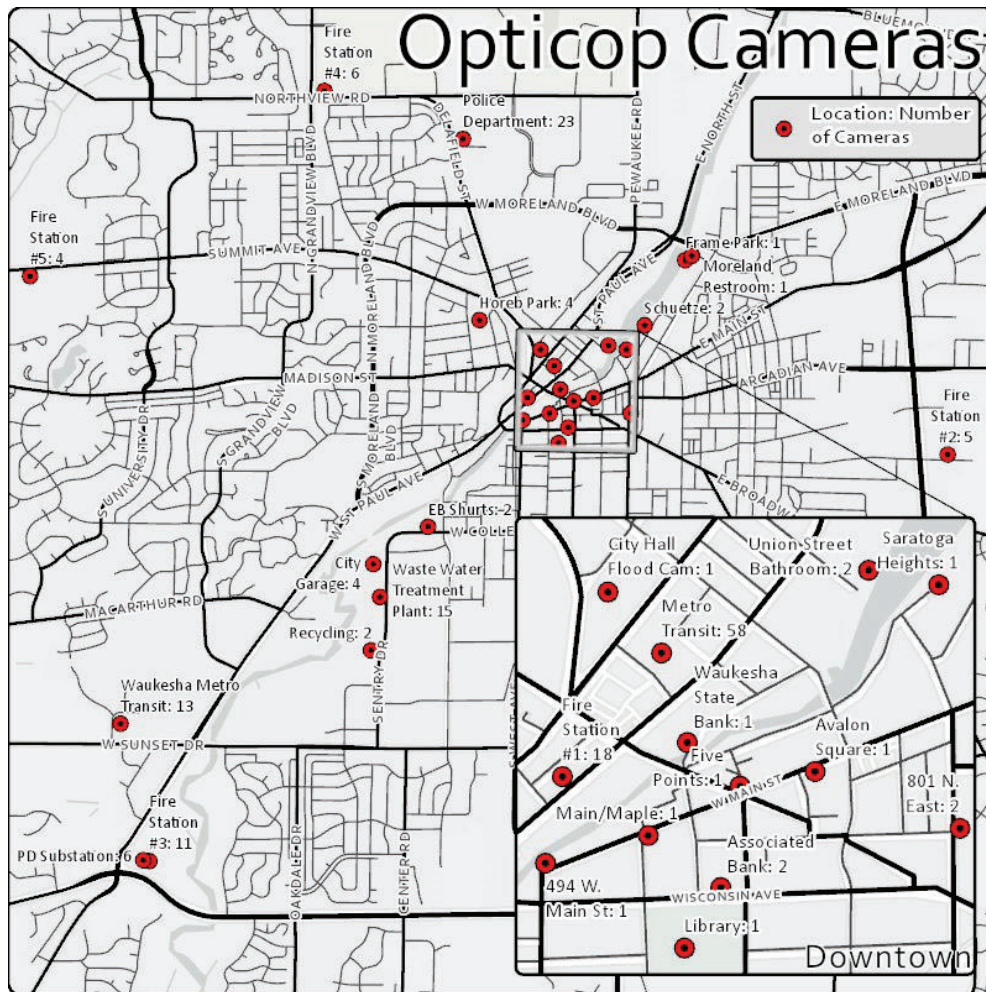
Moving Forward

The data the cameras provide has proved to be invaluable to the Police Department in their role of protecting the safety of the community. Based on their success, the Police Department is continually evaluating new locations for potential cameras. At each location, the Department works to determine the benefit of having a camera in that location and what visual data it would provide.

The City's CIP includes roughly $30,000- $60,000 each year for additional cameras or upgrades to current cameras. Cameras and technologies are continually improving which causes the need for upgrades or replacements. Funds are also prioritized for new locations that the Department has determined beneficial.

Police Officers will continue to utilize this vital data every day as they work to deter crime and provide for the safety of the community.

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