



CAMAS POLICE DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

To: Community Development
Chief Lackey
From: Captain Nelson
Date: 11-7-17
Subject: Heritage Trail Parking Lot Expansion

The current Heritage Trail Parking lot is an area where Camas Police Officers are dispatched to a variety of calls. Over the past five years officers have investigated numerous vehicle prowls, thefts, suspicious person calls, wanted subjects, disturbances, animal problems, malicious mischiefs (property damage), and other miscellaneous calls (exposure, death investigation etc.).

A common proactive approach to addressing problems in a crime area is to mount surveillance cameras. It has been our practice to place cameras out at the Heritage Parking lot when there are patterns of vehicle prowls. On one occasion one of our surveillance cameras was stolen. Our staff responded by getting assistance from public works to help us mount the cameras in a higher/more secure location by using one of their "bucket trucks." (Unfortunately our cameras also require batteries to be changed out and we rely on public works staff to assist us.) By capturing the criminal activity on video, officers are usually able to develop leads to help with the investigation(s). During one particular 'rash' of vehicle prowls in 2014, the images from the camera positively identified the suspects involved. The investigation lead to execution of search warrants as well as coordination with other Clark County agencies who also had interest in the same suspects and evidence collected during the search warrant etc. The purpose in sharing this example is to illustrate that one vehicle prowling report can generate several hours of staff time as they work investigative leads, interview subjects, prepare police reports etc.

The current parking lot is listed in the distributed City staff report as "inadequate." The City staff report also states on page 22 under "Public Services" that with the expansion "...some incremental additional police activity may result. However, the expanded parking lot would likely increase the number of recreational users of the trail, increasing the public presence, thus serving as a crime deterrent." While there may be a true need to expand the parking lot, it is important to recognize that by doubling the size of the Heritage Trailhead parking lot there will be an increased demand on CPD resources. We believe the expanded parking lot will have more than an "incremental" impact on CPD staff.