

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

MOTOR VEHICLE CRIME PREVENTION AUTHORITY

GRANTS BUDGET and REPORTING (GBR)  
COMMITTEE MEETING

Hilton Palacio del Rio  
200 S. Alamo Street  
Salons A, B and C  
San Antonio, Texas 78205

Via Microsoft Teams and in person

9:00 a.m.  
Friday,  
January 17, 2025

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Sharon Jones, Chair  
Rebecca Cantu-Serrano (absent)  
Tom Sloan

STAFF:

William Diggs, MVCPA Director  
David Richards, General Counsel

*ON THE RECORD REPORTING*  
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CLOSED SESSION	
7. The Committee may enter into closed session under one or more of the following provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act, Government Code Chapter 551: Section 551.071 Section 551.074 Section 551.076 Section 551.089	none
8. Action Items from Closed Session	none
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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. JONES: Good morning. Today is January 17.  
It's 9:00 a.m., and we will convene our meeting.

Please stand for the pledges.

(The Pledges of Allegiance - U.S. and Texas  
were recited.)

MS. JONES: Please remember to silence your  
phones, and Court Reporter, Sharon Jones, for the record.

MR. DIGGS: Good morning. Glad to see  
everybody back. William Diggs, director MVCPA, for the  
record.

So we are going to pick up with the City of  
Mexia.

MR. CROSSLAND: Good morning. My name is Heath  
Crossland. I'm the chief of police with the City of  
Mexia. It's a pleasure for me to be here. It's my first  
opportunity to present for a grant like this, and I think  
this is going to be big changer for our community.

The City of Mexia is located in Limestone  
County. On average, combined average of traffic through  
the City of Mexia in 2023 was 100,000 cars a day. These  
vehicles use three major highways through our town; it's  
US Highway 84, State Highway 14, and State Highway 171.

In 2024 there was approximately 483 vehicle-  
related crimes, to include catalytic converter theft,

1 theft of motor vehicles, theft from a motor vehicle,  
2 including car crashes -- not car crashes but hit and runs,  
3 those types of issues, crimes.

4 We're a non-emissions county, as well. Our  
5 catalytic converter theft is probably grossly under-  
6 reported. We have been hit prior to 2023, our school bus  
7 barn was hit as well. A lot of our school vehicles were  
8 hit.

9 And these were kind of a fly-by-night  
10 situation. We didn't have any arrests that I know of that  
11 we made in conjunction with anybody in our county or in  
12 our town. We believe that is pass-through traffic.

13 The City of Mexia serves as a hub and we cater  
14 to about tens of thousands of people daily. We are the  
15 largest city in a three-county area. We're approximately  
16 7,800 people.

17 To give you an idea where we're located, the  
18 City of Fairfield is on Interstate 45, they're about 3,000  
19 people; City of Buffalo is further south on 45, they're  
20 about 2,000 people. If you go to the west, you have  
21 Hillsboro, which is about 47 miles to the west/northwest,  
22 and then Waco is another 42 miles west/northwest. So  
23 roughly to get anywhere of size, it's about 30-40 miles  
24 away from us.

25 So the City of Mexia does serve as a hub and we

1 do have a lot of traffic that comes through there, pass-  
2 through traffic as well. As a business hub, our victims  
3 are in our shopping centers, our apartment complexes and  
4 our hotels.

5 I'm here today to ask for a grant to facilitate  
6 the implementation of an LPR system. The City of Mexia is  
7 requesting the grant to force multiply through technology.  
8 As you've heard several times, we're also shorthanded.

9 It's very difficult to get people to move out  
10 to the country to go to work for almost no pay, so we're  
11 trying to force multiply through technology. This would  
12 include monitoring criminal activity such as catalytic  
13 converter theft and various other vehicle-related crimes.

14 I also believe that we have a fence within our city  
15 limits, or close thereto, that was a scrap yard at one  
16 time. It's been closed down but there's still traffic and  
17 I anticipate that there's a lot of metal theft, including  
18 catalytic converters, that are coming through there.

19 If we're granted this opportunity, this will  
20 serve as a catalyst for the partnership with the  
21 surrounding counties and the cities. The County of  
22 Limestone is also researching LPR technology, looking to  
23 implement those within the next twelve months. The City  
24 of Groesbeck, 12 miles south of us, has decided to  
25 implement LPR technology as well.

1           And we have also taken a step forward and  
2     implemented five livestreaming cameras from the same  
3     company at our parks and our baseball fields with the  
4     intent of -- we have a community-oriented area, a rodeo  
5     area and park and fairgrounds, is what I'm trying to say.

6     And so we're trying to implement those there as well for  
7     the safety aspect of it.

8           We do have MOUs pending as the build-out goes.

9     As we build out our camera system to include the LPRs,  
10    our MOUs will increase to the City of Teague which is  
11    north of us, Fairfield, et cetera -- I'm sorry, Teague is  
12    to the east of us, Wortham is north of us.

13           With a lot of these crimes involving motor  
14    vehicles and the pass-through, these cameras will help us  
15    gather the data so we can research that data to identify  
16    these crews that are coming through. We currently are  
17    asking for seven fixed LPR cameras, all major points of  
18    entry in our city. Like I said, we are also implementing  
19    six other cameras to do the same thing within the city.

20           We do have an LPR policy that's waiting to be  
21    implemented once we can get them. And other than that, I  
22    don't think I have anything else for you. I think I'm  
23    asking for about \$20,000-\$25,000.

24           MS. JONES: Sir, do you have a marketing plan?

25           MR. CROSSLAND: Yes. We have two major

1 dealerships within our city that are looking to partner  
2 with us and we are using our Facebook page to put the word  
3 out there. I'm also doing community events.

4 I go to speak to the Kiwanis. I speak to all  
5 of them -- the Rotary Club, you name it, I'm there. Our  
6 schools also, all of our schools are combined in one area.

7 We do have two SROs, and so we're getting the word out to  
8 the school and the teachers and everybody else there as  
9 well.

10 MS. JONES: Okay.

11 Any questions?

12 (No response.)

13 MS. JONES: Thank you, sir.

14 MR. CROSSLAND: Thank you for your time.

15 MR. DIGGS: I'd like to all up the City of  
16 Monahans.

17 MR. LAWS: Good morning. Thank y'all for  
18 having me. My name is Stormey Laws, I'm from Monahans.  
19 I'm currently the captain; I've been in Monahans for 13  
20 years.

21 If you don't know where Monahans is --  
22 completely fine, not many people do -- we live in the same  
23 dirt bowl as Fort Stockton, about 45 minutes north or so.

24 So I understand what they meant when they said four hours  
25 to nowhere.

1           This is the first time I've ever talked for a  
2 grant so I'm actually kind of excited, as you can tell.

3           Monahans sits right on two major highways that  
4 kind of intersect our city, I-20 and Texas 18, which  
5 brings in a lot of different types of people. We're also  
6 an oilfield town, which brings in people who are looking  
7 for work. Unfortunately, when the work leaves, they don't  
8 and they switch to other areas of ways to earn their  
9 money, some of them not so good.

10           Currently, just like you've heard amongst other  
11 agencies, the 40 or so that were before me, we are too  
12 shorthanded, which really plays an impact on how we patrol  
13 our city or how we set up the close patrols. In I think  
14 around 2022, the City of Monahans itself was the victim of  
15 catalytic converter thefts where a subject broke into our  
16 city yard and stole several from our city vehicles, a few  
17 police units, a few city trucks.

18           Being in Ward County, we are the biggest city  
19 in the area. We also neighbor the second largest county  
20 which, of course, Fort Stockton is in. We've worked very  
21 closely with the other agencies in the area.

22           When vehicles get stolen, they end up in  
23 Monahans, for some reason or the next. We have a metal  
24 yard there that we work pretty well close with when stuff  
25 like that comes in.



1           Last year we actually purchased some Flock  
2 cameras, set those up. They started out working really  
3 great. We've actually been able to identify a lot of  
4 thefts that happened. Stolen vehicles, stripped vehicles,  
5 we were able to locate them in our city, where they were  
6 going, where they're coming from, even for other agencies.

7           Today I'm asking for a grant to help buy more  
8 cameras, LPR and the live cameras. We do have an LPR  
9 policy in place, just in case, just so you don't have to  
10 ask me in a minute. Hey, I got you.

11           Short and sweet, other than that, I mean,  
12 that's why I'm here. I'm just here to try to better my  
13 city the best I can. I really think these cameras will  
14 help out slowing down the theft that's occurring  
15 throughout the area, and being able to have certain  
16 cameras so other agencies can also use them would really,  
17 really benefit Texas.

18           MS. JONES: Captain, how many cameras are you  
19 requesting?

20           MR. LAWS: I believe it was six of the LPRs and  
21 two of the live.

22           MS. JONES: In '23 and '24, you had zero.

23           MR. LAWS: Yeah, in '23 and '24 we didn't have  
24 any catalytic converter thefts, but I really, really think  
25 that they were not reported. And then a lot of the stuff

1 that was reported, we worked with a lot of newer officers  
2 so they were reporting as thefts and not actually labeled  
3 as catalytic converter thefts. So when I went back and  
4 looked, I could actually see that there was some that were  
5 catalytic converters, so they didn't make it on the list  
6 because that's what they were presented as just actual  
7 theft.

8 MS. JONES: Perfect. Thank you.

9 MR. SLOAN: Hey, Captain, can you elaborate  
10 briefly, with being a no-emissions county how you're  
11 getting the word out to your residents and your new  
12 residents that go there to work and stay there once the  
13 work is dried up about the importance of this initiative?

14 MR. LAWS: Sure, absolutely.

15 So recently we got a new chief, and the new  
16 chief is real, real big when it comes to community  
17 relations. He actually assigned a sergeant to work all  
18 the social media, so we send out a lot of posts on social  
19 media about, you know, lock up your stuff, keep it out of  
20 sight, be aware, put up cameras, hear noise, make sure you  
21 call us.

22 We stay active pretty well in the community a  
23 lot. We have community events quite a few times a year,  
24 as many as we possibly can. We have a really good city  
25 council that helps us out a lot and gets us out there and

1 does anything they can to try to put us in the community.

2 MS. JONES: Thank you, Captain.

3 MR. LAWS: Thank y'all.

4 MR. DIGGS: I'd like to call up now the City of  
5 Mont Belvieu.

6 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Good morning. My name is  
7 Brandon Rodriguez. I'm a detective with the Mont Belvieu  
8 Police Department. With me today is the chief of  
9 operations, Erik Kvarme.

10 First off, I'd like to thank y'all each for  
11 your time and the opportunity to speak. We appreciate  
12 your consideration of our application for this grant.

13 We'd like to take a moment to tell you a little  
14 bit about the City of Mont Belvieu and the Mont Belvieu  
15 Police Department. The south side of the City of Mont  
16 Belvieu is located along the north side of I-10 in  
17 Chambers County. The city is 15 square miles, located 30  
18 minutes east of downtown Houston and 40 minutes west of  
19 Beaumont. The city limits share boundaries with the City  
20 of Baytown and Harris and Liberty counties.

21 Like other cities across the State of Texas,  
22 Mont Belvieu is experiencing rapid growth in the business  
23 and residential areas. The rapid growth and large  
24 industrial footprint contribute to the increase in daytime  
25 population. Mont Belvieu has a current population of

1 12,500 with an estimated daytime population of over  
2 25,000.

3 The city's major thoroughfares that contribute  
4 to this influx of people are State Highway 146, FM 1409,  
5 FM 565, and State Highway 99. These thoroughfares provide  
6 ingress and egress routes to make it easy to come in and  
7 out of our cities.

8 In an effort to stay ahead of the demands of a  
9 growing city, the Mont Belvieu Police Department has more  
10 than doubled in the last few years and now currently has  
11 33 sworn officers. The department utilizes proactive and  
12 community-oriented policing to reduce and prevent crime.  
13 Some examples that we have for proactive policing include  
14 the recent implementation of four crime reduction officers  
15 whose primary focus is focusing on high crime areas with  
16 the intent to prevent and capture offenders of  
17 auto-related crimes, including catalytic converter theft.

18 Patrol officers are intentional about logging business  
19 checks and neighborhood checks throughout their shifts.

20 And the Mont Belvieu Police Department  
21 recognizes the increasing need to leverage technology to  
22 combat crime, as we've already invested in 21 automated  
23 license plate readers and have currently a policy in place  
24 governing the deployment and the use of those automatic  
25 license plate readers.

1           The city has a great working relationship with  
2 Chambers County and the surrounding agencies. With the  
3 use of those 21 automatic license plate readers already  
4 currently owned by the Mont Belvieu Police Department,  
5 we've had a tremendous success in preventing crime and  
6 identifying suspects who have already committed crimes.  
7 Due to the data we have collected with the license plate  
8 readers, multiple outside jurisdictions have also been  
9 able to prevent crime in their jurisdictions and help  
10 solve crime in ours.

11           A brief summary of how we use these license  
12 plate readers, without going into too much detail. When  
13 we receive an alert, our dispatch verifies that alert and  
14 every available patrol officer, and sometimes including  
15 our own CID, responds to the area in an attempt to locate,  
16 identify and stop those suspect vehicles and identify  
17 their occupants. If an alert is originated from an  
18 outside agency, that agency is notified with the  
19 information collected by the sworn personnel of the Mont  
20 Belvieu Police Department.

21           The department engages regularly with the  
22 community via community events, National Night Out, city  
23 park events, Coffee with a Cop, to name a few. The  
24 community is extremely supportive and regularly engages  
25 with our department in person and via online social media.

1 Our department regularly posts informative information in  
2 relation to current crime trends and tips on how to  
3 prevent and protect citizens from falling victims to those  
4 crimes. In addition to the online engagement, members of  
5 the Mont Belvieu Police Department host in-person seminars  
6 that cover similar topics.

7 The City of Mont Belvieu report of catalytic  
8 converter thefts has greatly decreased in recent years,  
9 with the peak being in 2022 with a total of 17 catalytic  
10 converter thefts. Two suspects were identified that year  
11 and arrested for catalytic converter thefts. We believe  
12 the reduction in the report of catalytic converter theft  
13 is due to a combination of the following factors:  
14 increased sworn personnel, allowing for a stronger visible  
15 presence throughout the city; a change in the crime trend  
16 where the vehicle is stolen and the catalytic converters  
17 are taken after the fact; the deployment of automatic  
18 license plate readers; and the great working relationships  
19 with our surrounding agencies.

20 The current operations plan is to implement the  
21 12 additional automatic license plate readers in the  
22 ingress and egress areas most affected of motor vehicle  
23 crimes that are already not covered. Additionally, the  
24 four live feed cameras will be placed in our city parks,  
25 where there has been a significant increases in auto-

1 related crimes. The live function gives officers,  
2 detectives and dispatchers the ability to quickly identify  
3 suspects involved in various auto-related crimes,  
4 including catalytic converter theft, leading to a quick  
5 apprehension, the recovery of stolen property and the  
6 evidence needed for criminal prosecution.

7 In addition to the deployment of all cameras,  
8 the department will continue to educate its citizens in  
9 person and through social media. All information gathered  
10 will be compiled and shared with neighboring agencies. A  
11 monthly evaluation will be completed to determine the  
12 effectiveness of the placement of all cameras and  
13 adjustments to be made as necessary.

14 If awarded, the breakdown of how we use the  
15 Senate Bill -- all of our funds, which is a total amount  
16 of \$56,500, will be used for the equipment to fund the  
17 license plate readers, and we'll continue to do the things  
18 outside of that for our social media and education  
19 purposes. Our contributing factor for the 20 percent is  
20 \$9,416.

21 Thank you each for your time. We look forward  
22 to working together to educate the public on motor vehicle  
23 crime, catalytic converter theft, and reducing and  
24 preventing crime throughout the State of Texas.

25 MS. JONES: Detective, in your request you have

1 security cameras.

2 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes, ma'am. That's the actual  
3 live feed cameras. They just don't have the same  
4 capabilities as the stand-alone LPRs do.

5 MS. JONES: I just needed some clarification.

6 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes, ma'am. That's the four  
7 cameras that do the live feed.

8 MS. JONES: Make sure we're on the same page.

9 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes, ma'am.

10 MS. JONES: Thank you. No questions.

11 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

12 MS. JONES: You're welcome, Chief.

13 MR. DIGGS: The City of Mount Vernon. The City  
14 of Mount Vernon.

15 (No response.)

16 MR. DIGGS: The City of Murphy.

17 MR. RIEBSCHLAGER: Good morning. My name is  
18 Kris Riebschlager. I'm a detective with the City of  
19 Murphy.

20 So we're here today to ask you guys for some  
21 money. We have put in for four LPR cameras in the City of  
22 Murphy.

23 The City of Murphy is about five and a half to  
24 six square miles. We have 21,000 permanent residents,  
25 with a transient of about 30,000 vehicles a day on one of



1 our main roads, FM 544, anywhere between 12- and 14,000  
2 on -- depending on what you call it in different cities --  
3 ours is Betsy Road. It's another main thoroughfare  
4 through Murphy.

5 2023 we had a catalytic converter theft that I  
6 decided to run down the rabbit hole on. Turns out,  
7 working with neighboring agencies, we were able to find  
8 through an LPR hit from another agency that that vehicle  
9 came through ours. And we ended up tying that person or  
10 that suspect and group to possibly 96 different offenses  
11 within North Texas and Oklahoma. That case has since been  
12 turned over to the FBI and it is with the Eastern District  
13 right now.

14 We haven't had any that we know of or that have  
15 been reported in 2024. Of course, we do have, like  
16 everyone else, your BMVs, burglary of motor vehicles, your  
17 stolen vehicles. Lowe's has put in multiple LPR readers  
18 in their parking lot. We have solved a UUMV, a stolen  
19 vehicle out of that parking lot within hours because of  
20 those LPR readers.

21 While we were doing investigations for the  
22 catalytic converter theft, we did discover that there was  
23 another catalytic converter theft and it was from a school  
24 bus. We do serve five different campuses, we serve two  
25 different districts with those campuses, and on the middle

1 school and high school campus, they keep a bus on the  
2 campus at all times. Those buses were victimized and the  
3 catalytic converters were stolen. They didn't report them  
4 to us, they just took the loss, a lot like a lot of the  
5 other agencies.

6 So in finding with the investigation is that  
7 there's a huge hole in the LPR cameras and the visibility  
8 of the other agencies between us and just going out east.

9 So we are surrounded by Allen, Plano, McKinney,  
10 Richardson, Wiley. There are larger agencies but there  
11 are almost no cameras -- no LPR cameras within Wiley,  
12 Rockwell, Rowlett and we lose vehicles.

13 So if we're looking for vehicles, we're looking  
14 to track suspects of catalytic converter theft -- which is  
15 starting to see another rise. I've seen some BOLOs come  
16 out recently, a couple of them from Farmers Branch, which  
17 we heard of yesterday -- and so we would like to be on  
18 board and try to activate four cameras within our city.

19 We do have an LPR policy and we are hoping to  
20 continue that into the future by adding more within the  
21 city for our north-south thoroughfare, and continue to  
22 proactively try to prevent catalytic converter theft and  
23 help solve our BMVs and stolen vehicles.

24 MS. JONES: Do you currently have cameras?

25 MR. RIEBSCHLAGER: No. Just the Flock cameras

1 through Lowe's. We have access to those, that's it.

2 MS. JONES: Okay. And those are Flock as well?

3 MR. RIEBSCHLAGER: Yes.

4 MS. JONES: What is your marketing plan?

5 Because you're coming from where you have one and then  
6 zero.

7 MR. RIEBSCHLAGER: Right. So when we presented  
8 this to council, actually a couple of our council members  
9 are HOA board members, and when they heard about what  
10 capabilities we have, they were actually onboard. They're  
11 going to get in with their HOAs through email blasts.

12 We have a new community relations person within  
13 our department. That person is going to be in charge of  
14 the Facebook and they're going to put all that information  
15 out to try to curb any sort of issue we may have with it.

16 MS. JONES: Okay. Thank you.

17 Any questions?

18 MR. SLOAN: I'd just make a suggestion on the  
19 social media. When you get that win with 90-plus  
20 catalytic converter thefts that was turned over to the  
21 FBI, that needs to be shared with the public. Because  
22 that's a real problem that a lot of people, as you know,  
23 are not aware of if they're not living in that world or it  
24 didn't happen to them. So I would make that  
25 recommendation to you.

1           MR. RIEBSCHLAGER: We have arrested one subject  
2 on it and the eleven cases was on an interview that I did  
3 with him -- I was able to clear those eleven. So he has  
4 been arrested. I want to say he's still -- after I put  
5 the grant in, I heard from College Station, who was one of  
6 those on the list, and they were doing six more charges.

7           The FBI was very much happy to let us keep the  
8 state charges on him, so he's pending right now. If I  
9 know correctly, he's pending 32 cases right now. But we  
10 will put that out there as soon as we know that that is  
11 where it is.

12           MR. SLOAN: Thank you.

13           MS. JONES: Thank you, sir.

14           MR. RIEBSCHLAGER: Thank you.

15           MR. DIGGS: I'd like to call up the City of  
16 Navasota.

17           MR. MIZE: Good morning.

18           MS. JONES: Good morning.

19           MR. MIZE: And thank you for giving us this  
20 opportunity. My name is Mike Mize and I was called up  
21 from reserves. I'm a reserve officer from Navasota,  
22 because as y'all probably heard, we had a tragic incident  
23 and we lost an officer on Wednesday. So here I am and I'm  
24 going to present what they gave us.

25           So the chief of police, he's just now entering

1 his second year. And when he inherited the department,  
2 they had technology like from the '90s and that's one of  
3 the reasons he's going for this request of cameras. And  
4 in 2023 there were 184 motor vehicle-related cases with  
5 thefts, larcenies and burglaries.

6 I'm not sure how many would be catalytic  
7 converters in there, but I'm sure it's some of the vehicle  
8 parts. But in 2024 there were 146 of the same related  
9 cases that were reported, so there's sort of a down trend.

10 And for Navasota, we are a small town here in  
11 Grimes County, but we have several highways that run  
12 through it. And if people don't know where Navasota and  
13 Grimes County -- we're just right down from College  
14 Station where the Aggies play and all that good stuff.

15 So anyways, on major highways we have Highway 6  
16 that runs through there that goes up from Houston 290 up  
17 to College Station, on up to Waco area. And then we have  
18 Highway 90 that goes from I-45 up and it connects to 90  
19 and then it goes in Houston, then comes into Navasota.  
20 Then we have 105 West and that runs 290 from Brenham to  
21 Navasota, and then we have 105 East that runs from there  
22 on to Conroe and on parts further east. And on that 105  
23 East, they just completed 249 which adds more vehicles to  
24 it that goes into 105 and feeds into Navasota, so there  
25 are a lot of vehicles running through there.

1           And so with these major highways coming through  
2 Navasota, it makes it very easy and accessible for the  
3 criminal element in nearby cities, you know, your smaller  
4 cities and the mainly Houston up the road. So it gives an  
5 idea for these criminals to come through our city, and  
6 either they think they're safe because they're in a  
7 smaller town or they're just passing through.

8           Currently the population in Navasota, now we're  
9 currently hitting right at about 10,000 people. And as  
10 the city has been growing with our easy access to larger  
11 cities -- like two years ago when the chief took over, he  
12 had 20 officers, and now as of today they've grown to have  
13 30 officers. And he has strengthened our CID up to six  
14 investigators, and we've formed an enforcement unit  
15 staffed by two officers.

16           And during the time when the current chief was  
17 an interim chief, he was able to purchase an LPR movable  
18 trailer. And then with this trailer, it's been running  
19 nonstop over these past two years and they've had over  
20 1,400 MOUs from agency throughout the state and nation.  
21 The speed trailer has been positioned throughout the city  
22 limits in various places and is used to run the LPR and  
23 get updated traffic counts which run the tens of  
24 thousands, hundred thousands per month. That depends on  
25 if the Aggies are playing that weekend or not, we get a

1 large influx of folks.

2 So they've had a huge success with that single  
3 trailer and recovery of stolen vehicles and apprehended  
4 some criminals that have been identified and recovering  
5 stolen vehicles. With that trailer and the things they've  
6 located, they were able to assist local, state and federal  
7 agencies on narcotics, bank juggling investigations, as  
8 well as your normal major arrest warrants.

9 So after the staff was meeting and they were  
10 going over all their stuff, they were thinking, well, we  
11 need more cameras so we can seal up the city. And so  
12 that's one of the reasons why we're here so we can apply  
13 for four cameras so we can place them on our major  
14 throughways coming in. And these would be four fixed LPR  
15 standalone cameras and position them at the main arteries  
16 of the Navasota thoroughfare. And these places would be  
17 Highway 6 south of the city, Highway 6 north of the city,  
18 Highway 105/249 and Highway 90, and we have future goals  
19 to add one more camera at Highway 105 West.

20 And this project would incorporate, of course,  
21 the four fixed cameras and they are the LSQ solar-powered  
22 Motorola system running the Vigilant LPR system. Total  
23 cost of the cameras would be approximately \$33,260. This  
24 includes the equipment install and licensing agreements.

25 And Navasota is already licensed through

1 Motorola Vigilant with the speed trailer system, and  
2 they're currently in the process of installing three fixed  
3 cameras along Business 6 in the downtown area. And these  
4 are cameras that give live time, but they're mainly put  
5 out there for the railroad tracks crossings that the  
6 dispatchers can watch and get a live view that will allow  
7 them to dispatch officers to a best route if the railroad  
8 lines are blocked. So we do have cameras in use but those  
9 are just live feed.

10 And so along with those cameras, then the  
11 Navasota Police Department, they do the support and we  
12 have the support for the IT support and the server and the  
13 cloud storage. Navasota PD, we do have an LPR policy.

14 And then mainly back to the main reason for our  
15 request for the four cameras is to place them along our  
16 selected highways, effectively covering all our major  
17 highways coming and going through our city. And so if you  
18 were coming from Houston, you would have to go through one  
19 of our major highways, unless you want to divert about an  
20 hour and a half, two hours around to avoid Navasota and  
21 going to your point, say if you wanted to go to College  
22 Station or Waco or back through down to Houston or to  
23 Brenham.

24 So a huge increase in traffic has been observed  
25 since, like I said, before they opened 249. And as we



1 know of, there are no other LPR cameras along Highway 6 up  
2 from 290 towards Hearne, which goes through College  
3 Station and Bryan and then you have Hearne. But College  
4 Station does have a mobile trailer and we are in contact  
5 with them when things occur.

6 So the addition of these cameras would assist  
7 us in decreasing the criminal theft, hopefully we could  
8 stop or help eliminate the catalytic converter thefts or  
9 catch the thieves as they're known and then put into the  
10 LPR system as they pass through our city if we get these  
11 cameras installed. And of course, like I said, it would  
12 help identify any vehicles used and possible locations.

13 So with the use of the cameras, license plates,  
14 known organizations can be entered into the database and  
15 alerts. If they pass through our system, we could pass it  
16 on to our nearby agencies or our guys can pick them up as  
17 they're passing through the city, depends on which camera  
18 they tripped.

19 And do y'all have any questions?

20 MS. JONES: Yes, sir. In 2023 you had 184  
21 stolen and then in 2024 146.

22 MR. MIZE: Right.

23 MS. JONES: Are those from drive-by, basically  
24 pass-throughs, or those are from the actual residents?

25 MR. MIZE: These are from --

1 MS. JONES: Or a combination?

2 MR. MIZE: A combination. That's from the data  
3 that they pulled from their system from the officers  
4 actually made reports, so the citizens made these reports.  
5 What they were, I have not read those reports to see how  
6 they occurred, if they were inside thefts or if they were  
7 recoveries.

8 MS. JONES: Yes, sir. Thank you.

9 Tom.

10 MR. SLOAN: Mr. Mize, I don't have any  
11 questions, I just want to extend my heartfelt condolences  
12 for the loss of Mark Butler.

13 MR. MIZE: Thank you.

14 MS. JONES: That's coming from the board and  
15 from all of us as well.

16 MR. DIGGS: I echo the same.

17 I did want to ask if you would see either  
18 Lauren or Dan back there in the back. There's one piece  
19 of information we're missing in the grant management  
20 system for you guys, pretty simple process if you'll just  
21 visit with them before you leave.

22 MR. MIZE: All right. Thank you.

23 MR. DIGGS: Thank you so much.

24 I'd like to call up the City of New Braunfels.

25 MR. CHRISTOPHERSON: Good morning. First, I

1 would like to also offer our condolences for Navasota.

2 I'm Craig Christopherson, New Braunfels Police  
3 Department, lieutenant in criminal investigations. The  
4 best backup ever is Jenn Gates, our grant coordinator.

5 Basically our ask today is total proposed  
6 project cost of \$144,152; \$120,126 is of the grant and the  
7 \$24,026 is from matching funds. It's going to be for  
8 personnel, contracted service, and grant-related travel  
9 costs.

10 Fiscal year '25, SB 224 second solicitation  
11 application support is the continuation of fiscal year  
12 2024 grant funded activities. And the grant costs are  
13 between March 23, 2025, and August 31, 2025. Of course,  
14 we're the participating agency; our backup agency is going  
15 to be Comal County Sheriff's Department.

16 We need to change a little bit in the packet.  
17 It has that we have 17 stolen converters in 2024, it's  
18 actually 25 now once we got the December numbers in. To  
19 answer one of your questions earlier, one of them was from  
20 a business. I won't give up that business, it got hit  
21 pretty hard, and another one is from apartment complexes  
22 where they were taking these from.

23 So this grant would also support the continued  
24 support of two of our FY 2024 MVCPA grant-funded officers  
25 who address the street-level crimes such as catalytic

1 converter thefts and extend the operational abilities of  
2 the SCE unit. Those costs include the base salary, fringe  
3 benefits and overtime. It also includes an ask for 12  
4 more Flock cameras, two live view, and then ten LPRs to be  
5 positioned in several areas throughout the city and  
6 relocated as needed upon criminal and law enforcement  
7 activities. And then, also, it's asking for travel costs  
8 for city personnel to participate in MVCPA grants.

9 As far as our public outreach, we've done  
10 social media posts. We've had numerous conversations at  
11 city council meetings. We have a Citizens Police Academy  
12 that anybody that goes through that is getting some  
13 information on these, as well as Coffee with a Cop for  
14 just the community in general.

15 And yes, on the LPR policy, we're revamping all  
16 of our policies right now and that's in the mix too.

17 Do you have any questions for us?

18 MS. JONES: Sir, what did you ask for in the  
19 2024?

20 MR. CHRISTOPHERSON: As far as LPRs?

21 MS. JONES: Yes, sir. Everything.

22 MS. GATES: Hi, everyone. Jenn Gates, City of  
23 New Braunfels grants coordinator.

24 In our '24 -- our current grant, we have two  
25 street crimes unit officers and that was for all of their

1 equipment. These were new positions, so it was all of  
2 their equipment, salary, et cetera, their supportive  
3 costs. And then we also had license plate readers.

4 Initially, our plan when we had applied was for  
5 the purchase of the LPRs, but through all the conferences  
6 and whatnot, there was a certain vendor that became known,  
7 and so we have joined their network. And so this would be  
8 a continuation of subscription costs with them. And then  
9 we had the purchase of a bait vehicle, and then some other  
10 program support costs, like we had some trackers that  
11 we're going to be using during operations and whatnot.  
12 Those were our high level asks.

13 MS. JONES: So you requested two officers and  
14 how many LPRs?

15 MS. GATES: At the time we had requested, we  
16 thought that we were going to have about 16 LPRs but they  
17 were going to be city purchased, and then with switching  
18 to the subscription option, that expanded the network out  
19 to, I think, 53-56 LPRs and then that does include  
20 surveillance cameras also, just a few of those.

21 And so this would be to extend. We had worked  
22 with the vendor to see what could fit into our approved  
23 budget, and so this is just an expansion of that service  
24 area with additional cameras.

25 MS. JONES: So you were awarded 53 LPRs in

1 2024.

2 MS. GATES: Approximately, yes. And our grant  
3 term, our current grant term is until March 23, and so  
4 with not knowing -- you know, we're new recipients and so  
5 not sure what the extension process is and whatnot, to  
6 make sure that we were going to be covered during that gap  
7 period, because this has been extremely vital to our  
8 agency and we so appreciate your support.

9 MS. JONES: Okay. And basically, you're  
10 requesting now to support your officers and the cameras,  
11 you're requesting at least salary.

12 MS. GATES: Yes, correct. We've gotten all the  
13 equipment, we've purchased the equipment, so we have  
14 submitted our first financial report and whatnot that  
15 reflects that. And so we have the equipment, they're  
16 operational, but we just needed that salary gap.

17 MS. JONES: Very good. Thank you.

18 MS. GATES: Thank you.

19 MS. JONES: No further questions.

20 MR. CHRISTOPHERSON: Thank you.

21 MR. DIGGS: I'd like to call up Oak Ridge North  
22 Police Department.

23 MR. ROGERS: Good morning. My name is Brandon  
24 Rogers. I'm a lieutenant with the City of Oak Ridge  
25 North.

1           If you don't know where that's at, it's north  
2   of Houston, about 35 miles north of Houston. We're  
3   actually in the adjoining county to the north, Montgomery  
4   County, but we are the furthestmost city to the south. So  
5   we're the first city you drive through going north and the  
6   last if you're going south.

7           And of course, we're on the I-45 corridor, we  
8   have about a two-mile stretch of the interstate. We  
9   border with the Woodlands, which is affluent. It's always  
10  been a target for Houston criminals. We're always chasing  
11  them back into Houston.

12          We currently do not have any LPRs but that's  
13  what our grant application is for. We could easily fit 12  
14  or so in our city for all the ingress and egress routes,  
15  but I was restricted to only applying for two, so that's  
16  why I'm here.

17          We do not have an LPR policy but we will as  
18  soon as I get back to my office and write one, or  
19  plagiarize one.

20          (General laughter.)

21          MR. ROGERS: Our catalytic converter thefts  
22  peaked in 2022 but they have dropped off sharply, but  
23  they're still out there. We partner with all our  
24  neighboring cities, and of course, we're usually the last  
25  catch net when they're trying to go back into Houston. We

1 do work with our neighboring cities and law enforcement  
2 agencies to try to catch them.

3 And that's pretty much it, if y'all have any  
4 questions for me.

5 MS. JONES: Lieutenant, what is your marketing  
6 plan?

7 MR. ROGERS: As far as like social media goes?

8 MS. JONES: You don't have any LPRs. Correct?

9 MR. ROGERS: Correct, we do not.

10 MS. JONES: So what is the plan for the  
11 residents to know that the LPR exists and also the  
12 reporting of catalytic converter theft?

13 MR. ROGERS: We brought it up for the  
14 resolution in the city council meeting. We could also  
15 broadcast it on our social media. I have not heard of any  
16 issues voiced by any of the residents about having one.

17 MS. JONES: Thank you.

18 Member Sloan, Mr. Diggs?

19 (No response.)

20 MS. JONES: Thank you, Lieutenant.

21 MR. ROGERS: Thank you.

22 MS. JONES: You're welcome.

23 Court Reporter, it is 9:45 and we will resume  
24 at 10:00.

25 (Whereupon, at 9:45 a.m., a brief recess was



1 taken.)

2 MS. JONES: Sharon Jones, for the record. We  
3 are resuming at 10:01.

4 MR. DIGGS: Good morning. Calling up next the  
5 City of Palestine.

6 MR. KELL: Good morning. My name is Matt Kerr.  
7 I'm a captain with the police department in Palestine,  
8 Texas.

9 We have 43 sworn officers in Palestine. We  
10 serve our city which has a population just under 20,000,  
11 with an MSA daytime population at right at 58,000. We  
12 have several major highways that go through our city, to  
13 include State Highway 155, State Highway 19, US Highway  
14 79, US Highway 84, and US Highway 287.

15 We are looking to add some ALPR cameras to our  
16 department. We do not currently have any license plate  
17 reader cameras. We are involved with the Flock system and  
18 we have the back-end capability to see data and share data  
19 with other agencies, but we currently do not have any ALPR  
20 cameras.

21 We have already drafted and implemented a  
22 license plate reader policy that went live a couple of  
23 weeks ago, and so we're looking to expand our criminal  
24 investigation division to help us with some of these  
25 catalytic converter related thefts, as well as thefts of

1 motor vehicles.

2 In 2023 we had four catalytic converter thefts  
3 that were reported, 2024 we had two that were reported.  
4 In 2022 we did have 25 catalytic converter thefts that  
5 were reported to us, but we do know that there have been  
6 more than that specifically. Our Toyota dealership in  
7 Palestine has had eight instances where they've been  
8 stolen from on their lot. They also advised that during  
9 that time span that they have had approximately 40  
10 customers that they have served that their catalytic  
11 converters were stolen, but none of those reports were  
12 made to the police department.

13 In 2023 we had 23 stolen vehicles and in 2024  
14 we had 28 stolen vehicles.

15 Palestine is strategically placed in between  
16 the Houston and Dallas corridor. We're about two hours  
17 north of Houston and we're two hours south of Dallas.  
18 We're an hour south of Tyler, Texas.

19 We get a lot of commercial traffic coming  
20 through our city, and kind of to elaborate on how much  
21 traffic we actually see is we have two Walmart  
22 distribution centers in our town, one of which is the  
23 largest of its class in the nation, one being in  
24 Palestine, one being in New York and the other in  
25 California. It's a DC that supplies other DCs, and that's

1 just kind of elaborating how critically structured we are  
2 in relationship to the big cities. Even the very large  
3 companies are kind of using us as a hub to move out  
4 freight and stuff like that.

5 Over the years we have had many theft --  
6 organized theft rings out of Houston and Dallas for  
7 different types of things. One which stands out in our  
8 mind, I believe, is last year we had a theft ring with  
9 Cuban nationals out of Florida and they were going around  
10 doing a lot of fuel theft. We ended up catching them and  
11 it ended up being a federal thing because they were doing  
12 it in multiple states and all over the State of Texas, and  
13 they were just coming through and they were coming through  
14 on Highway 79 there.

15 We plan on utilizing our social media, our  
16 connections with Rotary Club, Lions Club, Coffee with a  
17 Cop, as well as officers making citizens aware of this new  
18 program that we're looking to implement. We also have a  
19 Citizens on Patrol program that will help inform the  
20 citizens of this new implementation, as well as we have  
21 Youth Corps program and so that kind of get it into the  
22 younger crowd there.

23 We're asking for 12 cameras and we're looking  
24 to put at all the ingress/egress of the city, so those 12  
25 cameras would cover all of the highways that I mentioned

1 in and out of the city.

2 We have a dedicated street crimes unit that is  
3 comprised of a sergeant and a corporal that also has a dog  
4 and so they are proactive patrol. They don't run calls --  
5 they don't run your typical district calls, but they are  
6 out proactive patrolling, whether it's narcotics or  
7 burglaries or whatever the problem is at the time. And so  
8 they would be primarily the ones who would use it all the  
9 time.

10 Obviously, our patrolmen would have it, as well  
11 as our criminal investigation division, but out there in  
12 the field working it every day we would have two officers  
13 that are completely dedicated to those proactive types of  
14 patrol utilizing the ALPR systems.

15 I feel like I'm missing something, and I'm sure  
16 y'all will have a couple of questions for me.

17 MS. JONES: Sir, you mentioned the stolens at  
18 the dealership and then the vehicles that were brought to  
19 the dealership. What year is that?

20 MR. KERR: 2023.

21 Ms. JONES: And do you have an idea of why  
22 those are not being reported?

23 MR. KERR: Yeah, they're corporate so they  
24 didn't want to fool with it and their insurance was just  
25 going to pay and take care of it. We encouraged them to

1 make the report, but they didn't want to. Our chief is  
2 friends with one of the guys that runs the dealership,  
3 that's how we kind of knew about it is because he told us,  
4 but they just did not want to file a criminal report.

5 MS. JONES: And then what about the citizens  
6 who brought their vehicles in?

7 MR. KERR: I don't know if they were stolen  
8 from within our city or if it was within the county. So  
9 we're the county seat so kind of everybody in about a 30-  
10 40 mile radius is doing business within our city, so that  
11 could have been people that were not living within the  
12 city limits within those 40 that they replaced that year.

13 MS. JONES: Are you planning to have a  
14 marketing campaign?

15 MR. KERR: Absolutely. We work well with our  
16 city council. We also have, like I was talking about, our  
17 Citizens on Patrol that are out within the community. We  
18 talk with our business owners and specifically the car  
19 dealerships as well, and say we have some technology now  
20 that we can actually go and be proactive in this and to  
21 just on a hope and a whim that we get a lead somewhere.

22 MS. JONES: Is your campaign going to reach  
23 throughout the county?

24 MR. KERR: Absolutely, yes, ma'am. Like I  
25 said, we have a daytime population right at 58,000 and

1       that's about what there is in Anderson County, so everyone  
2       either works or does commerce within our city that's in  
3       our county and our area.

4               MS. JONES: All right, perfect. Thank you.  
5               Major?

6               (No response.)

7               MS. JONES: No further questions. Thank you.

8               MR. DIGGS: The City of Palmer.

9               MR. CANTU: Good morning. How are y'all?

10              MS. JONES: Good morning.

11              MR. SLOAN: Good morning.

12              MR. CANTU: I'm Sergeant Cantu with the Palmer  
13       Police Department.

14              So we're located in Ellis County, we currently  
15       have 12 full-time officers. Our city is growing; as of  
16       now our population is probably sitting around 5,000. As  
17       of 2024, we have over, I want to say, 45,000 vehicles pass  
18       through I-45. The majority of our activities involve  
19       traffic enforcement on I-45, as well as responding to  
20       various calls that happen in the city.

21              As far as catalytic converter thefts, we  
22       haven't had any reported of 2024. So of those traffic  
23       stops that our officers make on I-45, each officer is  
24       coming across maybe 15 contacts throughout their shift, so  
25       with these traffic stops, the majority of them end up --

1 well, not majority of them but we do get into pursuits on  
2 the highway. The majority of our traffic enforcement  
3 leads into pursuits.

4 So with those pursuits, we're limited with  
5 personnel. So there's only two CID officers assigned,  
6 which would be me and my lieutenant. There are only three  
7 major roads that enter Palmer which are I-45, obviously,  
8 FM 878 and FM 813. So most of the suspects that utilize  
9 I-45 leave on I-45.

10 We're looking to purchase four Flock cameras,  
11 each of which would be placed on our three major roadways.

12 We would like to use the grant funds to purchase Flock  
13 cameras to assist members in detecting that the vehicles  
14 sometimes happen in the city. We do have a truck stop in  
15 the city.

16 As of this year, the Palmer Police Department  
17 purchased four license plate readers, which we do have a  
18 policy already in place. Those cameras are not currently  
19 activated; we're still going through the process of  
20 getting those up and running. Having these license plate  
21 readers will, I think, assist us in recovery and possible  
22 apprehension of vehicles and suspects.

23 That's all I have for today. Thank you.

24 MS. JONES: Member Sloan, any questions?

25 MR. SLOAN: There's zero catalytic converter

1 thefts reported for '23 and '24, Sergeant. Just because  
2 they're not reported, do you know the instances where they  
3 have occurred?

4 MR. CANTU: So I haven't gotten with the  
5 county. They were supposed to reach out to me about the  
6 catalytic thefts. I haven't got an answer from them, but  
7 I'm sure there are some that are happening out there.

8 I know with the DFW Task Force, they have  
9 numerous catalytic converter thefts. We only utilize them  
10 for Flock; they've helped us out track suspects. They've  
11 helped us out like that, but not that I know of off the  
12 top of my head.

13 MR. SLOAN: Okay. You're a zero emissions  
14 county, so robust social media marketing -- you're going  
15 to be putting cameras up or you're seeking to put up  
16 cameras. What is the mindset of your community regarding  
17 this with the under-reporting of potential catalytic  
18 converters?

19 MR. CANTU: So we have a really good rapport  
20 with our city council and the members, and that includes  
21 our social media page on Facebook, our city council  
22 meetings, our community outreach events. Those are really  
23 the only three major things that we reach out to them, and  
24 they're pretty receptive of what we've put out to them.

25 MR. SLOAN: Thank you.



1 MR. DIGGS: Good morning. If you would, before  
2 you leave, if you'll check in with Lauren back there in  
3 the corner, we've got a couple of things we still need  
4 from you guys in our grant management tracking system.

5 MR. CANTU: Yes, sir.

6 MR. DIGGS: Thank you.

7 MR. CANTU: Thank you.

8 MR. DIGGS: I'd like to call up the City of  
9 Pasadena now.

10 MR. BUCKERT: Good morning. My name is Doug  
11 Buckert. I'm a sergeant with the Pasadena Auto Crimes  
12 Task Force. Today, Detective Charlie Sanders is with me.

13 I don't know why I always get nervous doing  
14 these.

15 We are a MVCPA task force grantee and a FY24 SB  
16 224 grantee as well.

17 Do you want to come do this?

18 He's my public speaker, that's why I brought  
19 him.

20 MR. SANDERS: Good morning.

21 Our task force consists of our sergeant plus  
22 six investigators, working all auto-related crimes in the  
23 City of Pasadena.

24 Obviously, Pasadena is southeast of Houston in  
25 Harris County, one of the most populated counties, and of

1 course, City of Houston being one of the biggest in the  
2 country.

3 Like everybody else here, our biggest spike in  
4 catalytic converter thefts was in 2022 with well over 300.

5 That started dropping off pretty quickly, just like  
6 everyone else; we went down to 75 in 2023 and down to 12  
7 in 2024 that were reported, however, we have identified  
8 some unreported catalytic converter thefts.

9 Even though we are an emissions county, we  
10 found that anecdotally we've had some victims mention that  
11 their car was stolen, they made the auto theft report, and  
12 then once it got to a repair shop, they found out that the  
13 catalytic converter was stolen but that wasn't amended.  
14 So those aren't being captured, so some of those are  
15 stolen there.

16 Today's application applies for funding to  
17 renew 18 LPR cameras that were previously funded under the  
18 task force or the SB 224 grant, and adding an additional  
19 28. Of course, we have a policy for those LPRs already in  
20 place.

21 The ones that we already have have been  
22 strategically placed at our hot spots, ingress/egress  
23 areas, as well as where we've had those catalytic  
24 converter thefts in our major retail areas and businesses.

25 In addition to the LPR cameras, we're asking for funding

1 for CrimeTracer, which is a program that connects  
2 agencies' RMS systems together for data sharing and  
3 intelligence to help us identify criminal elements such as  
4 those catalytic converter thefts or the associated crimes  
5 of auto theft that go along with it.

6 And then the other thing we're asking for is  
7 funding for the BLT and BOLO software which was developed  
8 by some MIT graduate that's way smarter than me and allows  
9 communication among participating agencies to share those  
10 crime bulletins that we all are kind of siloed in our own  
11 agencies for more of that data sharing.

12 And that is our request, if you have any  
13 questions.

14 MS. JONES: Detective, which agencies are  
15 sharing the BOLO software?

16 MR. SANDERS: So currently nobody.

17 MS. JONES: Are going to share?

18 MR. SANDERS: So we take pride in working with  
19 all of our surrounding agencies, so like Deer Park, La  
20 Porte, South Houston. We're a 68-A task force, so we do  
21 68-As not just for Pasadena but Deer Park, La Porte, South  
22 Houston, Shore Acres, Baytown, Jacinto City.

23 MR. BUCKERT: I might be able to answer that  
24 question a little more thoroughly. Sgt. Buckert, Pasadena  
25 Task Force, for the record.

1           So that was a last-minute addition to our grant  
2 request that was brought to me by one of our  
3 investigators, who was like, hey, look at this, this is a  
4 cool program. It does rely on participating agencies and  
5 we would be the first in the State of Texas. So that  
6 might be something we have a little more further  
7 consideration whether or not we want to participate in  
8 that, because if they aren't surrounding agencies  
9 participating, then we're sending crime bulletins to New  
10 York, and I doubt we have a lot of crossover criminal  
11 activity from that far. So that might be something we  
12 need to amend in our request.

13           But there's endless other things I could think  
14 of that we could allocate that money for: updating some  
15 office equipment, whether that be laptops, desktops that  
16 we use in our catalytic converter theft investigations.  
17 Or this was just recently brought to me, some of our tech  
18 vests are approaching their expiration dates. So if that  
19 crime bulletin program isn't something as useful as we had  
20 hoped, it might be something we reallocate those funds to.

21           MS. JONES: Sergeant, what we're going to ask  
22 you to do is reach out to other agencies, see if this is  
23 something that they are willing to participate in because  
24 it's supposed to be shared, and you made your point:  
25 there's no point in sending a BOLO.

1                   MR. BUCKERT: Yes, ma'am. When I included it  
2 in our grant request, there was a little lack of  
3 information on my end as far as what participating  
4 agencies in the area -- and us being the first in Texas,  
5 it would start with us. And of course, nobody wants to be  
6 the first.

7                   MS. JONES: And also, is it possible maybe  
8 to -- your scope is a bit narrow. Is it possible that it  
9 could be where you share information with all task forces  
10 if all those were interested? Or is it specifically for  
11 your city?

12                  MR. BUCKET: I believe the way that program  
13 works is the participating agencies that have the program  
14 would get the bulletins. So I don't think it's something  
15 we could -- other than just a hard copy print off, PDF  
16 bulletin -- which is kind of the common practice now that  
17 gets emailed about -- I don't know how to share that with  
18 other task forces or grantees. That would need more  
19 research.

20                  MS. JONES: Okay, good. So what I'm asking you  
21 is if this is possible, if you will speak with other task  
22 force commanders and see if this is something that they  
23 see benefit from and if it's something that they want to  
24 participate in and share, then they can add it to their  
25 grant if that's possible to share it. If it's not

1 possible to share it, then you need a plan to reallocate  
2 or deduct.

3 MR. BUCKERT: Correct.

4 MS. JONES: That's all I'm asking.

5 MR. BUCKERT: Yes, ma'am.

6 MS. JONES: Thank you, sir. No further  
7 questions.

8 MR. SANDERS: Thank y'all.

9 MS. JONES: Thank you.

10 MR. DIGGS: I'd like to call up Rains County  
11 now.

12 MS. HOPKINS: Good morning. I have a slide  
13 show. Thank you.

14 Sorry, I thought that was the common practice  
15 was a slide show, so I might be the only one. It's my  
16 first year here.

17 MS. JONES: It's okay. I like slide shows; I'm  
18 visual.

19 MS. HOPKINS: Me too.

20 So I'm Kristi Hopkins with Rains County. I  
21 handle grant development for the whole county, but I'm  
22 here on behalf of the sheriff's department.

23 A little background of the county, the  
24 sheriff's office and the grant components and goals. So  
25 this is our county. If you can see the tiny dot in

1 Northeast Texas, we are the fourth smallest county in  
2 Texas, population estimated 12,986.

3 Our county is the Eagle Capital of Texas.  
4 We're flanked by two lakes: Lake Tawakoni is the Catfish  
5 Capital of Texas, and Lake Fork is the Bass Capital of  
6 Texas. So that all to say, we receive a lot of influx in  
7 population on the weekends, holidays, fishing tournaments,  
8 and such, a lot of weekenders.

9 Just listening to some of y'all's questions,  
10 I'm going to kind of fill in some questions that weren't  
11 necessarily on my slide show. The previous year before  
12 applying for this grant, there were 27 thefts of catalytic  
13 converters specifically. Many other thefts, especially  
14 recently. We had a ring coming up, they said from the  
15 Houston area, that was doing vehicle thefts, and so in  
16 just one night we had eight thefts, so that happened  
17 recently.

18 Currently we have no cameras in the county  
19 except for one that we do not own. It's on our western  
20 border. The City of East Tawakoni, which is in our  
21 county, owns that camera.

22 And another answer to one of the things that we  
23 were talking about, policies, the sheriff did update the  
24 policies the previous year, and LPRs are included in  
25 policies.

1           Our problems our county is facing is we only  
2           have two deputies to cover the entire county. And the  
3           other agencies are not 24-hour agencies, so they're alone  
4           nights, weekends for the entire county, so limited  
5           coverage. And as I previously mentioned, we only have one  
6           camera currently that will be in the network that we're in  
7           by the City of East Tawakoni.

8           A little side note, that camera was used -- I  
9           want to say a year ago or within the last year, there was  
10          a child abduction. And so that was used to see the  
11          vehicle leaving the county and the day after that child  
12          was recovered and brought home.

13          Our goals are to deter crimes, accelerate the  
14          investigations. We want to mainly discourage the theft.  
15          We've already brought this before commissioners court,  
16          it's been discussed, put out on social media through  
17          livestreaming and the newspaper and such, so we want to  
18          really discourage that, first of all.

19          And then with the cameras, they'll provide  
20          real-time data, and I'll show you the platform we're using  
21          in a minute. They provide picture, video and time  
22          location data for prosecution. And at the time of  
23          application, there were already over 11,000 cameras in  
24          network to coordinate with other agencies.

25          So this is a little view of our county. Sorry,



1 it's a little hard to see. The blue dotted line kind of  
2 goes around our county.

3 If you'll see to the westernmost point of our  
4 county, that is the one camera currently in place. That's  
5 on Highway 276, and that's the camera that caught the one  
6 vehicle leaving the county.

7 If you'll see to the northwestern all the way  
8 down to the southeastern point of our county, that's the  
9 major highway that runs through our county, Highway 69.  
10 And it receives a lot of traffic; it is the most traveled  
11 highway in the county. I think TxDOT was actually  
12 recently talking about putting an overpass because it gets  
13 pretty backed up.

14 All right. So this is the software we're  
15 looking to use. It is what our department currently has  
16 experience with as well, and that offer an app for mobile  
17 devices. They offer mobile alerts, so they can put in a  
18 license plate or they can put in the vehicle color, four-  
19 door, truck.

20 Like I know we recently had a road rage  
21 incident where they only had the truck color, four-door,  
22 dually. And so that can be put in as an alert so they can  
23 receive those alerts to track and hopefully find that  
24 vehicle.

25 I already talked about community engagement a

1 little bit, but if receiving this grant, we do use our  
2 commissioners court as a public platform. People can come  
3 and talk, I livestream it, it gets put in the newspaper.  
4 We're really big on social media. I also handle the  
5 social media and the county website, so we put everything  
6 on there as well.

7 So we kind of already talked about the real-  
8 time alerts. They can be based on license plate or based  
9 on features of the vehicle, you don't necessarily have to  
10 have the license plate, and that would be the hot list  
11 alerts for the different features of the vehicles.

12 This is the current stats: over 10 billion  
13 plates read every month with the network that we would be  
14 in.

15 I think I had one more thing, and we're asking  
16 for \$20,000 with a cash match of \$4,000, for eight  
17 cameras.

18 MS. JONES: Member Sloan?

19 (No response.)

20 MS. JONES: No questions, ma'am.

21 MS. HOPKINS: Thank you.

22 MS. JONES: You're welcome.

23 MR. DIGGS: I'd like to call up now Robertson  
24 County.

25 MR. BARBER: Howdy. I'm Steven Barber, I'm a

1 deputy at Robertson County Sheriff's Office, and I'm  
2 assigned to our special operations division. We are  
3 seeking right at \$32,000, I believe, from you guys for 12  
4 Flock license plate readers.

5 Robertson County is situated about ten minutes  
6 north of Bryan-College Station. We have a population  
7 somewhere around 25,000. That number is probably a little  
8 bit off just due to non-reporting on our censuses.

9 Like everybody else, we're shorthanded. All  
10 the law enforcement agencies in the county are  
11 shorthanded. The municipalities are kind of where the  
12 biggest problem are, and it's not that they're a problem  
13 themselves, it's they're not able to get people to come  
14 work or not able to retain people. So the sheriff's  
15 office ends up being the primary law enforcement agency  
16 for at least three of the cities within our county.

17 Now, we are the only one that is fully staffed  
18 on patrol. We are one of only two agencies out of six  
19 that that provide 24-hour coverage for the county.  
20 Typically, there may be three, at the most four deputies  
21 covering an almost 700 square mile county.

22 So when it comes to catalytic converter theft,  
23 we've done a fairly good job of reducing the numbers.  
24 Motor vehicle theft has kind of stayed pretty much even.  
25 What we're seeing, though, is not so much the crime

1 occurring in our county; we're exporting our criminals.

2 So Bryan-College Station has a population of  
3 around 250,000. What we see are folks out of specifically  
4 two of our municipalities going south, committing crimes  
5 in Bryan-College Station, and then coming back up into our  
6 county.

7 These license plate readers will allow us a  
8 couple of different things: degrade freedom of maneuver  
9 or freedom of movement along those thoroughfares for those  
10 criminals, but also to kind of allow us to conduct post  
11 investigations, and a little bit of early warning as well.

12 We do have a very active PIO. We have a LPR  
13 policy in place. I think that's pretty much all the  
14 questions y'all have been asking, but pending anything  
15 else, that concludes what I have.

16 MR. SLOAN: Confirming, you're seeking 12  
17 cameras. Is that right? I was taking shorthand.

18 MR. BARBER: Yes, sir.

19 MR. SLOAN: You talk about Bryan-College  
20 Station, that's a big population. What's the  
21 collaboration look like with them moving forward?

22 MR. BARBER: It's really good. Bryan has, I  
23 believe, eight cameras up right now. They're seeking  
24 more.

25 Brazos County is seeking some, and College

1 Station has Vigilant in place. It sounds like they're  
2 looking at getting Flock but I don't know where they're at  
3 on negotiations with them.

4 We are kind of a dead spot right now. Some of  
5 the places around us are getting Flock. We cooperate with  
6 basically everybody.

7 In the special operations division  
8 specifically, our mandate was to integrate with other  
9 agencies as best we can. It's our crime reduction unit,  
10 canine and everything else. So regionally, anybody within  
11 the COG, if they call, we come.

12 MR. SLOAN: Thank you.

13 MR. BARBER: Awesome. Y'all have a great day.

14 MR. DIGGS: I'd like to call up now Rusk  
15 County.

16 MR. VALDEZ: Well, good morning.

17 I am not going to read from this. I did give  
18 you a copy of it, I'm just going to kind of go over just a  
19 little. I prefer to speak from my heart.

20 I just finished my first term as sheriff, and  
21 we've managed to jump through a lot of hoops to get the  
22 Rusk County Sheriff's Office the resources that they need  
23 with a very solid commissioners court that backed us.

24 MS. JONES: Sir, I don't mean to be rude. Can  
25 you please state your name?

1 MR. VALDEZ: Sorry. My name is Johnwayne  
2 Valdez. I'm the sheriff of Rusk County.

3 When I took office, we were not only  
4 understaffed, but severely under-equipped. We didn't even  
5 have our own radio channel. It actually burned up and we  
6 were using the volunteer fire department radio channel.  
7 With our commissioners court, we managed to use some ARPA  
8 funds to get us the equipment and the systems that you see  
9 there in the packet that I gave you.

10 There's been a lot of talk about being  
11 proactive. That's what I ran on. I ran on our IBR stats  
12 which were not good, which is what caused me to run.

13 Since that time, we have cut our crime  
14 drastically. We make over 5,000 traffic stops a year. We  
15 cover 934 square miles, and we have four guys working a  
16 shift if I'm fully staffed, so these guys work hard.

17 I came into office with one rule: as long as  
18 you keep up with me, you'll never hear me complain. I  
19 wear a uniform every day and I go out and help. You have  
20 to do that; I can't expect them to do anything that I'm  
21 not willing to do myself.

22 When you look at what we've all heard here  
23 since yesterday, you hear about the amount of motor  
24 vehicle thefts, catalytic converter thefts, and other  
25 crimes. We have five major highways, both state and US

1 highways, that intersect right in the middle of our  
2 county, which is the City of Henderson. We get a ton of  
3 traffic every single day. We're in a corridor for not  
4 only cocaine smuggling but human trafficking as well.

5 So we stay very, very busy, very active. We  
6 are a member of the DPS Auto Theft Task Force based out of  
7 Tyler. We are surrounded by Smith County, Gregg County,  
8 Panola County, Cherokee County and Nacogdoches County.

9 What we're requesting, like a lot of other  
10 people, is a Flock camera system. We currently are the  
11 only county in East Texas without any camera coverage  
12 whatsoever. You heard the City of Cumby talk the other  
13 day about -- yesterday about the amount of motor vehicle  
14 thefts and also burglary of motor vehicles that happened  
15 in their county.

16 Those same people hit us. They hit 13 total  
17 counties in East Texas. And we've worked very hard  
18 together with the DPS Auto Theft Task Force, managed to  
19 catch two of the cartel members in a pursuit out of  
20 Hopkins County, and identified a third. So we're making  
21 strides with not only the U.S. Attorney's Office but  
22 Homeland Security on bringing the rest of this group to  
23 justice.

24 But one of the things that became very, very  
25 clear to us is when they got into Rusk County, we

1 basically lost where they went because we have no camera  
2 coverage. What I'm requesting is that we get that  
3 coverage by being able to not only assist the DPS Auto  
4 Theft Task Force but the citizens of Rusk County, which  
5 I'm sworn to protect, to make sure that we can do our job  
6 not only harder but smarter. I believe we can do both. I  
7 believe we have done both in the first four years, and for  
8 that we will only improve.

9 The request is for \$70,833 minus our cash  
10 match, and I sincerely hope that my speech here today is  
11 going to be helpful toward that.

12 The people of Rusk County have embraced this.  
13 We use our social media, we have over 19,000 followers on  
14 our social media right now, which is huge, over double  
15 what it was when I took office, and we use that almost  
16 daily. I am the guy that runs our Facebook page so if  
17 something gets posted, I post it. And our commissioners  
18 court and our local community supporters are very much in  
19 favor of us applying for this grant.

20 Do you have any questions? We do have a policy  
21 also in place. My chief deputy, I like to call him one of  
22 the smartest cops I've ever worked with, and he thought  
23 ahead and went ahead and got the policy written.

24 MR. SLOAN: Sheriff, thank you.

25 Quick question on the instances of catalytic



1 converter thefts. I see zero here for '23 and '24, again,  
2 zero emissions county.

3 Can you just elaborate on some of what you hear  
4 in the grassroots? Is it occurring and not being  
5 reported? What's the story there?

6 MR. VALDEZ: Actually, last week I was speaking  
7 to some folks at the local pharmacy -- that's where you  
8 always get your intel, right? I actually had two of the  
9 gentlemen that were in there that actually had their  
10 catalytic converters stolen last year and just did not  
11 report it, just called for a wrecker and had their  
12 vehicles sent to the dealership. One of them actually  
13 complained because it was a Toyota Tundra that it took him  
14 forever to get a replacement. But I think that when it  
15 comes to that particular type of crime, when it did start  
16 to lower, some people just simply chose to go the  
17 insurance route and not file on that.

18 Now, I do go out and speak not only to schools,  
19 also to Kilgore College and to Kiwanis and Rotary and  
20 Lions Clubs in trying to get the word out there that we  
21 can't fix it if we don't know it's broke. We need to know  
22 these types of things because it will only get worse.

23 Talking with our dealerships a lot, and  
24 hopefully the City of Henderson is going to also try to  
25 implement a camera system as well; we want to work with

1 Chief Taylor. And we have five dealerships in our  
2 county -- one in Kilgore, actually two in Kilgore -- about  
3 them actually helping out and getting their own camera  
4 system that can interact with ours as well.

5 MR. SLOAN: Thank you, Sheriff.

6 MR. VALDEZ: You bet. Thank you.

7 MR. DIGGS: I'd like to now call up San  
8 Patricio County.

9 MR. RIVERA: Good morning. My name is Oscar  
10 Rivera. I am the sheriff for San Patricio County.

11 Let me first say that in my 50 years in this  
12 law enforcement business, I'm humbled to see these all  
13 these folks show up over here with the same common goal.  
14 One thing that really resonates with me is the word  
15 "share" because in my business back before 9/11, the word  
16 "share" didn't exist and we've gone a long way by just  
17 sharing information and sharing data that can be real  
18 helpful.

19 Before I came looking for a grant, I did, of  
20 course, do my homework with other agencies. I have eight  
21 law enforcement agencies in our county. We're in San  
22 Patricio, which is just north of Corpus Christi -- Corpus  
23 Christi to the east and Corpus Christi to the north.

24 And so one of the questions I had to ask our  
25 agencies is do we have a catalytic converter problem,

1 because we gratefully can say we don't in our county. And  
2 sure enough, some of the agencies have one or two or three  
3 or four. But we attribute our success there by keeping up  
4 with our salvage yard where we're getting a lot of the  
5 stolen property go there, especially copper and catalytic  
6 converters and get them to help us with that. And it  
7 helped, it sure did.

8 So the next biggest problem we have is that we  
9 are a big industry county. We are right next to the Port  
10 of Corpus Christi. Half of that is in our county, which  
11 is the third largest port in the world.

12 Next to that is ExxonMobil who has a big  
13 plastic company in San Patricio County. Chiniere, who has  
14 the second largest liquified natural gas plant, is in San  
15 Patricio county. Kiewit, that builds the big oilfield  
16 platforms, is in San Patricio County, and so is Steel  
17 Dynamics.

18 But with industry brings construction workers  
19 and brings auto thefts. And we are covered with auto  
20 thefts, especially with heavy equipment operations, farm  
21 equipment implements. And 102, to be exact, in San  
22 Patricio County, and that's really a big number. And so  
23 211 of those calls come through our county; out of that we  
24 generated 102 stolen in 2024.

25 So visiting with the police agencies, what can

1 we do as a positive reaction for this. And I owe it to my  
2 59 deputies, I owe it to my 24 troopers -- which I was a  
3 member of for 30 years -- and I owe it to my eight  
4 agencies to try to get some tools for them to try to get  
5 this resolved.

6 And Aransas Pass is pretty proactive. They  
7 said, you know, we have a camera system. And sure enough,  
8 their camera system helped us solve a dual homicide last  
9 year, and so we see the effects that they've done for us.

10 We own one LPR that's an ELSAG system that we share with  
11 Border Patrol, and it's on US 77.

12 So the next part of the homework is what kind  
13 of traffic do we have, so I tasked TxDOT with that. Port  
14 of Corpus Christi starts there, US 181 starts there, Texas  
15 35 starts there, Interstate 37 starts there in Corpus  
16 Christi and they all intersect in San Patricio County. US  
17 77 starts in Brownsville and goes all the way down to  
18 Iowa, crosses San Patricio County.

19 Interstate 37 starts in Corpus Christi, ends in  
20 San Antonio. Highway 35 that ends in Houston, north of  
21 Houston. And these highways bring a lot of traffic.

22 So my concern was how much traffic is a lot of  
23 traffic. It's 45,000 cars daily pass Interstate 37. So  
24 what if we became proactive by putting a camera system on  
25 Interstate 37 coming into San Patricio County, 77, 35 in

1 Portland, 181 in Portland, 359 over in Mathis where we  
2 have a lot of the illegal traffic that goes through there,  
3 and let's see what we can do with that. And trying to be  
4 conservative, we just have six cameras to get started and  
5 do our part to get this done.

6 Because at the end of the day, folks, this is  
7 about the victims. It really is, because if we solve one  
8 stolen car, get some vehicle recovery for a victim, we've  
9 done a good thing. If we arrest a fugitive coming through  
10 our highways, we've done a good thing. If we save a  
11 victim from kidnapping or a missing person and unite them  
12 back with their family, those are precious moments that  
13 will never be forgotten by these victims.

14 We do have an LPR policy in place and we are  
15 social media friendly -- very friendly to the fact that we  
16 have a common database that if you mess up in San Patricio  
17 County, the sheriff is going to make your momma happy for  
18 you because we do post your face and it says what you did.

19 And it creates a lot of media attention.

20 Just yesterday got three phone calls here, I  
21 think we made a comment about Uber drivers, which is our  
22 transport deputies in Pennsylvania and New Mexico, and it  
23 attracts attention. I think it's a good thing to do is to  
24 let people know what we're up to. It helps.

25 That's all I have to say and welcome any

1 questions.

2 MS. JONES: Sir, do you work with the auto  
3 theft task force?

4 MR. RIVERA: Yes, we do, and Corpus Christi has  
5 a great auto theft task force.

6 MS. JONES: Thank you.

7 MR. RIVERA: Because their crooks come to our  
8 county and our crooks go to their county, so we do talk to  
9 them, and they're a big inspiration to us how do we handle  
10 them. We also -- the vehicle inspection program that we  
11 share with Corpus Christi, one of the few counties around  
12 that does this when DPS quit doing that, and that is also  
13 a very proactive program for us. Great team.

14 MS. JONES: Thank you, sir.

15 MR. RIVERA: Yes, ma'am.

16 MS. JONES: No further questions.

17 MR. RIVERA: Thank you so much for your time.

18 MS. JONES: Yes, sir.

19 MR. DIGGS: I'd like to now call up the City of  
20 Sealy.

21 MR. GRIMES: Good morning. My name is Russell  
22 Grimes. I'm an administrative sergeant for the City of  
23 Sealy, and I'm here with my captain, Scott Riske. We're  
24 here on behalf of the citizens of Sealy and we're  
25 requesting funding for the addition of automated license

1 plate readers, as many people have.

2 A little bit about the City of Sealy. We're  
3 one of those cities that's also rapidly growing. We are  
4 just on the western edge of the Houston-Harris County  
5 urban sprawl that's reaching out into the country. We've  
6 seen a lot of growth over the last few years.

7 TxDOT just recently completed a massive  
8 expansion through our entire county of Interstate 10. So  
9 now we've got a fast lane in and out of the Greater  
10 Houston Area and we've seen a lot of our crooks coming  
11 from the Greater Houston area and other areas, and they  
12 use the highway to make it back and forth.

13 We're also intersected with State Highway 36,  
14 so we see a lot of traffic on that one as well; that runs  
15 from the Gulf Coast all the way to North Texas. The  
16 interstate, there's 60,000 cars daily in each direction.  
17 State Highway 36 is about 25- to 30,000 cars in each  
18 direction daily. So we have a lot of traffic coming in  
19 and out.

20 Our city is 15 square miles and we're kind of  
21 centered on that intersection. Population-wise we're  
22 about 10- to 12,000 people. We're still kind of figuring  
23 that out with all the recent growth, so fast that our city  
24 actually had to put a moratorium on growth due to some of  
25 the complications through COVID and getting materials and

1 everything and infrastructure ready. But they're back up  
2 and running and we expect a lot more growth there coming  
3 up.

4 So we plan to utilize the funds to get the  
5 automated license plate readers through the Flock Safety  
6 program. Currently the City of Sealy doesn't have any  
7 cameras. There is one -- and I'm not sure if it's a Flock  
8 camera -- that's at the weigh station on the interstate,  
9 but that's the closest one to us.

10 We have several officers who are plugged into  
11 the network of officers who use them, so they get intel  
12 from other people out of the area, and so that's been  
13 useful to us. One of our investigators is real familiar  
14 with the system and uses that to help in investigations,  
15 and we've seen a lot of traction with our investigations  
16 through using our network of people that have access to  
17 them. So we feel it's going to be a great asset to our  
18 department and our citizens if we can tap into some of  
19 that and provide that.

20 With Sealy being on the western edge of the  
21 Greater Houston Area, there's 8,000 cameras in the Houston  
22 area, give or take. So we know where they're moving  
23 around over there when we give them our license plates,  
24 but we don't know when they're coming in and out of our  
25 area. And so the next one I think that's available on I-



1 10 coming this direction is all the way in Seguin. So  
2 we're looking to add to the Greater Houston Area and all  
3 the surrounding areas to give intel and provide real-time  
4 updates on some of this stuff.

5 As far as catalytic converter thefts, motor  
6 vehicle thefts, auto parts thefts, we saw a spike in 2022.

7 And when I say a spike, we had a few, I don't remember  
8 the exact number, catalytic converters. I put down a  
9 couple on the application that I could confirm but we had  
10 several that were reported as criminal mischief where they  
11 were interrupted.

12 We had one oil company there in Sealy that  
13 actually had three or four of them cut off the trucks but  
14 were interrupted and left them on the ground. So it was  
15 all reported as criminal mischief. Some of our officers,  
16 being proactive, actually made some stops and arrested  
17 people who were in possession of catalytic converters, but  
18 we couldn't confirm that they were actually taken from our  
19 area but they were obviously in our area, shopping still.

20 The school district, they have their own police  
21 department in Sealy so we don't get their reports. But  
22 after we started working on this grant program, we  
23 confirmed that they've had several over the last few years  
24 right out of the student parking lot.

25 So we believe that adding six Flock cameras to

1 our city, covering our major ingress and egress, will help  
2 us out in not only catching them coming in and out of  
3 town, but also providing information to our surrounding  
4 communities. The only other agency in our county that has  
5 cameras is Wallis and they are to our south about 12  
6 miles, and they have direct ingress from Houston-Harris  
7 County area as well, so we're looking to complement that  
8 and expand on it.

9 We work great with the sheriff's department,  
10 our neighboring smaller city there, San Felipe, and also  
11 to our north the county seat is Bellville and the Austin  
12 County Sheriff's Department, as well as DPS. We all kind  
13 of work as one team. We frequently back them up and  
14 answer calls for them outside of our jurisdiction and our  
15 ETJ, and sometimes they'll come inside the city and work  
16 with us as well.

17 So in preparation for this, we prepared MOUs  
18 and our LPR policies and things like that we have to  
19 prepare for, getting DPS and TxDOT approval for putting  
20 these in the right of way. So we have those things in  
21 place already, and we're just ready to get started on the  
22 project.

23 We have a pretty good community outreach effort  
24 and we plan to continue that. We often speak with our  
25 EDC, economic development center. And also the Greater

1 Area Sealy Chamber of Commerce is real good, we interact  
2 with them.

3 They call on us to give presentations to the  
4 local businesses, other groups such as Lions, VFW and  
5 stuff like that. The schools, we'll go out and talk with  
6 them. So as this comes onboard with us, we plan to  
7 incorporate the education of everyone about it.

8 I know a while back it was on the news and we  
9 had some questions about it, about the catalytic converter  
10 thefts. And so we did a push to, you know, protect  
11 yourself, park in lit areas, if you have cameras, make  
12 sure they're working and recording and things like that,  
13 which we do occasionally.

14 We have a pretty good social media following,  
15 and so we push out a lot of information through that way,  
16 and oftentimes our local newspaper and other online news  
17 outlets will pick up stuff from our Facebook postings and  
18 share them throughout the county. So we have that in  
19 place. And going forward, we plan to include this  
20 information in postings about the catalytic converters and  
21 the use of LPRs to stem that.

22 We have several auto dealerships on the  
23 interstate, as well, and in the last couple of years we've  
24 had several thefts of vehicles, high-end vehicles. And  
25 what we found is they're not local people stealing these

1 cars. They're coming in from other areas.

2 They are, for lack of better term, shopping  
3 online, finding the car they want, and making their  
4 preparations to come and get it. And they've got this  
5 down to a science. You know, with the interstate traffic,  
6 they're in and out of our jurisdiction within a couple of  
7 minutes. And we even have a vehicle manufacturer, a high-  
8 end vehicle, had three cars recently stolen, about a  
9 quarter million dollars apiece, and they were recovered in  
10 other areas through the use of license plate readers and  
11 other auto crimes task force people.

12 And so we want to do our part to add more eyes  
13 to the network of cameras that are already growing across  
14 the state and also to help us stem the crime that we are  
15 seeing in town and prevent as much as we can.

16 So with that, I will entertain questions if you  
17 have any.

18 MR. RISKE: I just wanted to add that we are  
19 currently in partnership with our economic development  
20 corporation to acquire six other Flock cameras. The six  
21 that we're asking from you guys would help supplement  
22 that.

23 MS. JONES: Thank you, sir.

24 Sergeant, you mentioned that the cameras that  
25 you're currently seeking is an agreement between the city,

1 TxDOT and DPS. Is your camera placement in the city  
2 proper or is it on the highway itself?

3 MR. RISKE: So two of the six that we're  
4 requesting from you guys are going to be high-speed and  
5 they'll be on I-10. The other four are going to be on  
6 state highways, 36 and 90, inside the state right of way.

7 The other six that we're trying to get through EDC,  
8 whichever ones we get first, will also be on I-10. Two of  
9 the high-speeds, the other four -- three of those four  
10 will be on FM roads and one will be on a back road that  
11 comes into the city from a neighboring city.

12 MR. GRIMES: But they'll all be inside our city  
13 limits proper.

14 MR. RISKE: They'll all be made available to  
15 any state agency immediately upon their request. We've  
16 already gotten a few requests from outside the State of  
17 Texas that we've granted so we can have access to their  
18 cameras as well.

19 MS. JONES: Thank you, sir.

20 Sergeant, you just said that they're all inside  
21 the city proper. Correct?

22 MR. GRIMES: Yes.

23 MS. JONES: Perfect. Thank you. Just trying  
24 to help you there.

25 MR. GRIMES: Thank you.

1 MS. JONES: You're welcome.

2 Any questions?

3 (No response.)

4 MS. JONES: Thank you, gentlemen.

5 MR. GRIMES: Thank you.

6 MR. RISKE: Appreciate your time.

7 MS. JONES: Court Reporter, it is 10:59, we  
8 will resume after a short break at 11:15.

9 (Whereupon, at 10:59 a.m., a brief recess was  
10 taken.)

11 MS. JONES: Good afternoon. We will now resume  
12 at 11:21.

13 MR. DIGGS: I'd like to call up the City of  
14 Sour Lake.

15 MR. BURLESON: Good afternoon. I'm Aaron  
16 Burleson, the chief of police for City of Sour Lake. I  
17 want to say ditto to what the other 55 said before me.

18 Sour Lake is located in the south central part  
19 of Hardin County. We're about 15 miles from Beaumont,  
20 about 45 minutes from a place called Plum Grove, Colony  
21 Ridge, which is a problem area over in Polk and Liberty  
22 counties, and about an hour out of Houston-Harris County.

23

24 So Sour Lake has had its share of catalytic  
25 converter thefts and auto thefts, auto recoveries, auto

1 burglaries, equipment thefts over the years. The majority  
2 of our actors have come out of the Houston-Plum Grove-  
3 Colony Ridge area. And so we work closely with the  
4 Southeast Texas Auto Theft Task Force, which is located in  
5 Beaumont, and they've helped us tremendously in recovering  
6 a lot of our auto thefts and identifying several of our  
7 crooks because they're already aware of them.

8           The catalytic converter grant will provide  
9 significant assistance to Sour Lake by funding efforts to  
10 combat increasing issues of catalytic converter thefts and  
11 auto thefts. As y'all know, these thefts have been a  
12 widespread problem, causing not only financial burdens for  
13 vehicle owners but also strained law enforcement  
14 resources.

15           With this grant, it will enable us to enhance  
16 our ability to investigate and prevent these crimes  
17 through purchase of necessary equipment, such as  
18 surveillance technology and tools that can be used to aid  
19 in the identification and recovery of stolen vehicles.  
20 Additionally, the grant will allow the police department  
21 to provide training for their officers on identifying  
22 theft patterns and investigating these crimes more  
23 effectively. This proactive approach will help reduce  
24 thefts, increase arrests, and ultimately provide better  
25 protection for the community.

1 By supporting law enforcement in tackling these  
2 issues, the catalytic converter grant program will not  
3 only reduce crime, but also improve the safety and  
4 security for the Sour Lake residents and those who travel  
5 through it.

6 I'm open to any questions.

7 We did -- I'm going to back up -- we do have an  
8 LPR policy. I have marketing.

9 We've been working with the Beaumont Police  
10 Department. They just stood up a real-time regional crime  
11 center, and with the camera systems that we're looking to  
12 get, we'll partner with them. I've already brought the  
13 real-time crime center over and had them do presentations  
14 for several of the community businesses and residents and  
15 our economic development commission and our city council,  
16 so they're all bought into it.

17 MS. JONES: Sir, how many of your staff are  
18 assigned to auto theft?

19 MR. BURLESON: I have a total -- I'm allocated  
20 nine officers; I'm down one. I have a  
21 sergeant/investigator, he's over patrol and  
22 investigations, and then myself. So we kind of tackle  
23 both and we work investigations and follow-ups.

24 Patrol officers, they stay about two to three  
25 years because the size of our department. They want to go



1 be run-and-gun with the big dogs, so they'll come over and  
2 get some training and then they leave. It's a revolving  
3 door as far as trying to recruit people.

4 MS. JONES: The unmarked vehicle is going to be  
5 shared or assigned?

6 MR. BURLESON: No. It will be for my sergeant.  
7 He'll be operating out of it.

8 MS. JONES: Those are my questions, sir.

9 MR. SLOAN: A follow-up question, Chief. On  
10 the in-car body-worn camera systems for \$91,000, how many  
11 cars are we outfitting? Is that for the entire team  
12 that's dedicated?

13 MR. BURLESON: I've got ten body cameras that  
14 we're getting. We have nine officers. I actually have  
15 four reserve officers, so occasionally we'll have a  
16 reserve officer come out, they'll be able to check out the  
17 tenth body camera.

18 The three car cameras will go in our three  
19 marked units that we have. And then the sergeant's car,  
20 we're going to look at trying to get one for him, but  
21 that's down the line.

22 MR. SLOAN: And these individuals are dedicated  
23 to the street crimes for auto theft, catalytic converter?

24 MR. BURLESON: Right. They're everyday patrol,  
25 yes.

1 MR. SLOAN: Okay. Thank you.

2 MS. JONES: You just mentioned that you needed  
3 a camera for the vehicle that you're purchasing?

4 MR. BURLESON: I'm looking at getting -- we had  
5 an Axon camera bid and that was the first bid we put in  
6 with this. If we get the vehicle, then I'll try through  
7 my funding to get the other camera system.

8 MS. JONES: Understood. Thank you, Chief.

9 MR. BURLESON: I didn't know if he had anything  
10 or not. Thank you.

11 MR. DIGGS: I'd now like to call up the City of  
12 Splendora.

13 MR. TELLER: Good morning. My name is Troy  
14 Teller. I'm a lieutenant with the City of Splendora  
15 Police Department, and I currently oversee the criminal  
16 interdiction unit.

17 Our city is located in the northeastern part of  
18 Montgomery County; we're about 2.8 square miles. We have  
19 two major thoroughfares that go through our city, one  
20 being Interstate 69, formerly known as US Highway 59, and  
21 FM 29 which leads to -- just like Sour Lake, we have up  
22 the road Plum Grove, Liberty County, and had those issues  
23 out of there and deal with a lot of cartel coming in and  
24 out of there as well. And also that goes to Conroe.

25 We're seeking funding for additional LPR

1 cameras. We currently have four installed, and we're  
2 looking to finish equipping the rest of the city to make  
3 sure we can manage those in and out of the city as a  
4 whole.

5 We have very little catalytic converter thefts  
6 that are reported. We do have the ISD bus barn that is in  
7 our city and they recently were hit last year. And it was  
8 not reported to us, it was reported through their police  
9 department.

10 We currently have LPR policies in place. We  
11 are very actively on social media such as Facebook and our  
12 PD app which is communicable through our community.

13 So that's all that I have.

14 MS. JONES: Member Sloan?

15 (No response.)

16 MS. JONES: Nothing, sir.

17 MR. TELLER: Thank you.

18 MS. JONES: Thank you.

19 MR. DIGGS: I'd now like to call up the City of  
20 Sulphur Springs.

21 MR. HORTON: Good morning. My name is Brad  
22 Horton. I'm the patrol lieutenant for the City of Sulphur  
23 Springs Police Department.

24 We're kind of here today for a different  
25 reason, in such that we're not asking for any equipment.

1 We were fortunate enough to be granted the nine Flock pole  
2 cameras in the first solicitation of this grant and that's  
3 kind of where it stopped, not on our own accord but the  
4 majority of the cameras that we're putting up are on state  
5 right of ways. And as many people know, right now TxDOT  
6 has kind of put a hold on allowing permits to put those  
7 up, so we're kind of in a holding pattern at the moment.  
8 So it would be kind of putting the cart before the horse  
9 to ask for more equipment when we can't utilize the  
10 equipment that we have at the moment.

11 What I am here for, to give a little background  
12 of how Sulphur Springs is at the moment, there is a lot of  
13 growth coming into Sulphur Springs. We currently have  
14 platted out new neighborhoods; it's over 1,400 more houses  
15 going up in three phases. They are starting phase two on  
16 that.

17 A lot of that property was incorporated within  
18 the city limits of Sulphur Springs, but there was zero  
19 infrastructure for any of that. So because of that, that  
20 and new industry that is coming in, they're currently  
21 projected to start their manufacturing in February of this  
22 year now, Liberty Trailers, 170,000-something square foot  
23 manufacturing company. And we have several of those that  
24 have come in, so it's put a lot of strain on city  
25 finances, city budget for the infrastructure because

1 they've spent millions and millions of dollars on that and  
2 just putting in new roads that didn't even exist.

3 Because of that, they've asked this second  
4 solicitation to help with the first year incurring license  
5 fees and subscriptions to operate the Flock system.

6 With that being said, I'm not exactly sure what  
7 to add to that. I will say this, I told myself I was  
8 going to do this when I first stepped up here, but we do  
9 have an LPR policy in place, and it has currently been  
10 amended this past year to include and be more specific  
11 towards the Flock pole cameras once they're put up in  
12 place as well, and the operation of the servicer and the  
13 data for those and the sharing of information with other  
14 counties and police departments.

15 With that, I would be happy to entertain any  
16 questions that I hopefully have an answer for.

17 MS. JONES: Lieutenant, to be clear, you're not  
18 asking for equipment?

19 MR. HORTON: Yes, ma'am, that's correct.

20 MS. JONES: What are you requesting, sir? Can  
21 you tell me again what you're requesting instead of the  
22 equipment that you have here?

23 MR. HORTON: To help with the first year of  
24 subscription and license fees to operate the equipment.

25 MS. JONES: So you're switching it?

1 MR. HORTON: I'm sorry?

2 MS. JONES: You're switching?

3 MR. HORTON: That's what I was told by our  
4 chief that that's what the second one was for, for license  
5 fees.

6 MS. JONES: Okay. We'll take note of that.

7 And also, to address the comment about TxDOT,  
8 Texas DPS and TxDOT are consistently working together.  
9 That's all I've got. Thank you.

10 MR. HORTON: Thank you.

11 MS. JONES: Any questions?

12 MR. SLOAN: I have a question. Are your LPR  
13 readers in place now? Have they been installed?

14 MR. HORTON: We have a couple of mobile LPRs  
15 that we purchased, we've had for a while. And actually  
16 one of them is getting fixed and it's taking a long time  
17 to get it fixed because it's such an old unit. They're  
18 having a hard time getting parts for it. The nine Flock  
19 cameras that we were originally granted, they are not in  
20 use yet.

21 MR. SLOAN: Okay.

22 MR. HORTON: We're waiting on the permits,  
23 permission from TxDOT to place those cameras.

24 MR. SLOAN: All right. And so these fees that  
25 you're seeking for the grant money would be carryover

1 charges for the licensing for these that are not installed  
2 yet, just so I can make sense in my mind.

3 MR. HORTON: Correct, correct, yes, sir.

4 MR. SLOAN: Okay. Thank you.

5 MR. DIGGS: Good afternoon. William Diggs,  
6 MVCPA director, for the record.

7 So for the licensing fees that you're  
8 requesting, are those for current cameras that you have in  
9 place that are funded by MVCPA?

10 MR. HORTON: It is cameras that are funded by  
11 MVCPA, but they're not currently active at the moment  
12 because we're in a holding pattern waiting for our permits  
13 from TxDOT.

14 MR. DIGGS: Okay. So it's for an additional  
15 year's service then.

16 MR. HORTON: Correct.

17 MR. DIGGS: Okay. Thank you.

18 MR. HORTON: Yes, sir.

19 MS. JONES: [Inaudible, not on mic]

20 MR. HORTON: That's perfectly okay. Thank you.

21 MR. DIGGS: I'd like to now call up the City of  
22 Temple.

23 MR. TREHERN: Good morning. My name is Mike  
24 Trehern. I'm a crime analyst with the Temple Police  
25 Department. I want to thank you for the opportunity to

1 allow us to present to you the information for this grant.

2 The City of Temple is asking for \$200,000 and  
3 the city has committed to a match of 25 percent for a  
4 total of \$250,000. We intend to use those funds to  
5 install 60 stationary LPR cameras, along with five live  
6 view pan-tilt-zoom cameras at 28 locations in our city.

7 So just a little bit of information about the  
8 City of Temple. So for those of you who aren't familiar  
9 with where it is, we're about an hour north of Austin. We  
10 are in Bell County at the intersection of I-35 and the  
11 planned I-14 corridor. I-14 is currently running from  
12 Killeen over to the Belton area and it will be passing  
13 through Temple in the next few years as they do some major  
14 construction there.

15 We're about two hours away from every major  
16 metropolitan area in the Central Texas region, so two  
17 hours from Dallas, two hours from Houston, two and a half  
18 from San Antonio. We also have several large neighboring  
19 cities, Killeen and Waco, of course, in our area.

20 Also, we're uniquely positioned where the BNSF  
21 and the Union Pacific railroads come in and join each  
22 other, which provides a lot of opportunity for freight  
23 conveyance to go from truck to rail, and vice versa from  
24 rail to truck. So logistics and logistical operations are  
25 a major source of income in Temple, and several of our



1 largest employers are distribution centers and  
2 manufacturing facilities.

3 In 2023, the city commissioned a study to look  
4 at population. So our daytime population was estimated at  
5 102,000, just over that -- I'm sorry -- our residential  
6 population is just over 102,000, our daytime population  
7 swells to about 135,000. Like many of the other cities  
8 who have presented, we are growing very quickly so we're  
9 adding about 5- to 7,000 a year, and our build-out is  
10 expected to reach 145- to 160,000 by 2033, which is about  
11 eight years from now. So if we do reach that population,  
12 that's going to put us in the top 25 largest cities across  
13 the state.

14 Of that population, there's about 8,000 who are  
15 veterans and we also have about 1,000 active duty  
16 personnel who reside in the city. Most of those are  
17 senior enlisted and senior officer ranks. Another thing  
18 that's kind of important in our city is I talked about the  
19 conveyance to rail, but logistical security for the  
20 military is important to us. Fort Cavazos is just down  
21 the road and a lot of that military equipment that gets  
22 shipped by rail down to ports passes through the City of  
23 Temple.

24 So currently we have 166 sworn officers. Our  
25 city size is 76 square miles, which is part of the reason

1 we're asking for so many cameras, because we have a lot of  
2 area to cover that we can't always have officers at. So  
3 generally speaking, each of our officers on patrol has to  
4 cover about ten square miles just for their area at the  
5 time.

6 So some of the areas of concern that we have,  
7 you heard Chief Lopez yesterday from Killeen PD. He  
8 mentioned that Bell County is ninth in the state for auto  
9 thefts in 2023. We're still waiting on those 2024 numbers  
10 to roll in for the whole county, but I can tell you that  
11 Temple had a 15 percent increase in auto thefts and a 41  
12 percent increase in vehicle burglaries in 2024 as compared  
13 to 2023.

14 You'll see on the grant we had 39 incidents in  
15 2023 of catalytic converter thefts; we did finish out the  
16 year of 2024 with six incidents, accounting for eight  
17 catalytic converters. So we did have a significant  
18 reduction; that's about 82 percent reduction. We credit  
19 that to some targeted enforcement actions, as well as some  
20 of the changes in legislation related to catalytic  
21 converters and the laws surrounding that.

22 As far as auto thefts go, our main goal is we  
23 want to prevent, reduce and solve more crime, all crimes,  
24 including catalytic converter thefts and other motor  
25 vehicle-related crimes. We want our community to be safe

1 for our residents and for our visitors.

2 We have seen a lot of success with the LPRs  
3 that we currently have. We have 18 active with two in  
4 permitting, so we're at about 20, and that's evidence --  
5 so we actually recovered 90 percent of our stolen vehicles  
6 this past year, so only 36 out of 344 remain outstanding.

7 We've also recovered vehicles from Killeen, Belton and  
8 Waco, as well as some of our neighboring jurisdictions out  
9 in the county using those LPRs.

10 So what we're hoping to do is to continue to  
11 build on that success and be proactive and intentional  
12 using technology to support our limited number of  
13 officers. Some of the ways we're going to do that, we're  
14 going to increase overwatch and enforcement in the city  
15 where we can't always be, especially around our retail  
16 shopping and medical districts.

17 We did find that most of our incidents occurred  
18 in retail areas. So while people are shopping, their  
19 vehicles are being burglarized as well as having parts  
20 removed from them. Our schools have been targeted and our  
21 medical facilities as well.

22 Those cameras help serve as an early warning  
23 mechanism, you know, through the hot list alerts, letting  
24 us know when suspect vehicles are in the area. And we  
25 also use them, of course, to help identify leads when

1 crimes are committed, helping us identify suspect  
2 vehicles.

3 We do have an ALPR policy in place. We do  
4 share -- currently with our network we have 359 agencies  
5 that we currently share with, including all the statewide  
6 auto task forces, and then we have 539 networks that are  
7 shared with us. A lot of those are commercial systems  
8 with Lowe's and Academy and places like that.

9 As far as community engagement goes, we do have  
10 a public information officer who is very active on social  
11 media. She does make a lot of posts about reminding  
12 people not to leave valuables in cars, lock your cars, all  
13 that kind of stuff. We also have an entire unit of five  
14 officers dedicated to community engagement events.

15 We do monthly events like Coffee with a Cop,  
16 Burgers with a Badge, city events or festivals, Big  
17 Blooming Fest, Air Fest, that kind of stuff. Our cops are  
18 out there engaging with the community as well, you know,  
19 kind of informing them about crime trends, that kind of  
20 stuff.

21 Pending your questions, that's my presentation.

22 MR. SLOAN: Thank you. Yeah, I have a  
23 question. On the application you've got a description of  
24 the license plate readers as 102 but you're seeking 60.  
25 Just can you clarify that for me?

1 MR. TREHERNE: So the 102 number was kind of a  
2 shoot for the stars number. And then as the city started  
3 looking at what we could potentially match, we had to  
4 bring our numbers down to be a little bit more reasonable.

5 MR. SLOAN: The other question I have is about  
6 Temple, like the ISD. Can you elaborate a little bit more  
7 on are they going to be using your resources or do you  
8 have your own SROs in the ISDs?

9 MR. TREHERN: We have our own SROs. So there  
10 are four ISDs in our part of the Temple community, so it's  
11 Academy ISD, Temple ISD, Troy ISD and Belton ISD. Our  
12 SROs are at each of those schools except for Troy schools.

13 None of them have their own police forces yet.

14 Belton ISD is looking at that, and of course, we will  
15 absolutely share with them.

16 MS. JONES: Sir, the 60 cameras in lieu of the  
17 102, what is the cost?

18 MR. TREHERN: It comes out to right around  
19 \$247,000 is what our total contract will be.

20 MS. JONES: Okay. Thank you.

21 MR. TREHERN: Yes, ma'am.

22 Thank you, appreciate your time.

23 MR. DIGGS: I'd now like to call up the City of  
24 Terrell.

25 MR. LANCASTER: Good morning. I'm Detective

1 Brian Lancaster with the Terrell Police Department. I  
2 thought for sure we were going to break for lunch, so I  
3 appreciate the opportunity to be here. I've modified my  
4 presentation -- I trust y'all know Flock.

5 Our department is located in northern Kaufman  
6 County, approximately 30 miles east of Dallas. It serves  
7 a jurisdiction of over 35 square miles, including key  
8 highways, Interstate 20, US Highway 80 and State Highway  
9 34. Our catalytic converter theft is not currently a  
10 major issue in Terrell. We anticipate that the crime is  
11 on the rise due to economic conditions and fluctuating  
12 metal prices.

13 So this program is designed to proactively  
14 combat catalytic converter theft through advanced  
15 technology, Flock ALPR. We currently have a contract with  
16 Flock for 21 devices; of those, eleven are installed on  
17 local roads, ten are with the great TxDOT through varying  
18 stages of approval and unapproval now. So we're seeking  
19 25 additional devices that will be targeting high risk  
20 areas such as commercial districts, public parks and major  
21 roadways, and then also 12 PTZ live surveillance cameras  
22 that will also be in the retail areas so that we can  
23 monitor those in real time.

24 Obviously, seeing some of the other ideas that  
25 have been brought up, we have huge support with city

1 council. If there is an opportunity, I would like to  
2 amend it if they would support us for a security trailer.

3 I doubt they're going to go for drone but we would be an  
4 awesome customer for that. Our major retail district is  
5 on the complete opposite end of the city from where our PD  
6 is and that's normally where catalytic converters are  
7 targeted.

8 I'll also add in 2022 we had a pretty high  
9 number of catalytic converter thefts. We actually  
10 identified a suspect in town, apprehended him. He  
11 currently has a home with TDCJ and is set to be released  
12 this year, so he's on our radar.

13 MS. JONES: Member Sloan?

14 (No response.)

15 MS. JONES: Mr. Diggs?

16 MR. DIGGS: Good afternoon -- or actually still  
17 good morning for just a minute.

18 So I did want to say in negotiations we can  
19 work with you to make some adjustments.

20 MS. JONES: So ask if you need to. You have  
21 approval, ask for the security trailer, who knows.

22 MR. LANCASTER; And we do have a policy, by the  
23 way, because we do have authority. Thank you.

24 MS. JONES: You're welcome. Thank you.

25 MR. DIGGS: If you could also see Lauren or Dan

1 back in the corner. There's a couple of things that we  
2 still need from you.

3 MR. LANCASTER: It was done this morning.

4 MR. DIGGS: Thank you.

5 So I'd now like to call up the City of  
6 Universal City.

7 MS. OLINEK: Good morning. My name is Jennifer  
8 Olinek. I am the technical services manager and training  
9 coordinator for Universal City Police Department. This is  
10 my first time, sorry.

11 With obvious interdepartmental competition for  
12 budgetary resources, coupled with tax freezes and other  
13 budgetary constraints, we often seek funding from  
14 available grants to purchase equipment, training, staffing  
15 and so much more.

16 Including Chief Siemens and Assistant Chief  
17 Mihelski, our department currently has 36 sworn officers  
18 and 14 civilian employees. Further, we field over 30,000  
19 calls for service annually, consistently one of the  
20 busiest suburbs of San Antonio. Our jurisdiction covers  
21 just over six and a half square miles, and we service a  
22 community of just under 20,000 with an additional 15,000  
23 going on and off the military base Randolph.

24 Additionally, due to easy access to both Loop  
25 1604 and IH-35, as well as having a large shopping



1 district, Universal City sees more visitors annually than  
2 most suburbs. As a result, we typically see higher  
3 property crime rates, coupled with difficulty with  
4 immediately apprehending them.

5 Our department actually saw our highest  
6 catalytic converter thefts in 2021 with 47 thefts, so we  
7 increased patrol efforts and worked with neighboring  
8 agencies to go ahead and combat those thefts. In doing  
9 so, we did see a decrease in the number of reported  
10 catalytic thefts. It dropped to just eleven in the last  
11 two years, and our vehicle thefts are holding at 75 a  
12 year.

13 Although the catalytic converter thefts  
14 dropped, these property crimes usually occur in cycles  
15 with groups targeting specific areas at different times to  
16 avoid detection, so we feel it's just a matter of time  
17 before Universal City reemerges as a focal point.

18 With your approval of this grant, we would  
19 utilize these cameras along all the major arteries in and  
20 around the city, as well as strategic places in the city.  
21 We're going to use them to locate stolen or suspect  
22 vehicles, apprehend offenders, as well as recover stolen  
23 property. We will further assist neighboring agencies and  
24 participating agencies with the same.

25 We've already begun an aggressive public

1 education campaign which includes but is not limited to  
2 in-person by officers, our CPA as well as other employees  
3 of the city. We've done a media release already. We have  
4 information, including our policy, on our city web page,  
5 as well as social media, both the PD Facebook, city  
6 Facebook and community Facebook. We are educating on the  
7 cameras' capabilities, their purpose and locations, our  
8 policy and control mechanisms preventing nefarious use,  
9 audit trails and much more.

10 Thank you for your time, and any questions?

11 MS. JONES: Thank you.

12 MS. OLINEK: Thank you so much.

13 MR. DIGGS: I'd like to go ahead and call up  
14 the City of Waller.

15 MR. SANTELLANA: Hello. I'm Thomas Santellana,  
16 lieutenant, Waller Police Department. Thank you for the  
17 opportunity to speak with you today about public safety in  
18 our community.

19 The City of Waller has applied for the grant  
20 funds for the catalytic converter theft and crime  
21 prevention initiative. It will make a lasting impression  
22 in the lives of our residents and local businesses.

23 The City of Waller is 3.7 square miles and sits  
24 44 miles west of Houston on US 290, spanning both parts of  
25 Harris County and Waller County, and provides a local home

1 to a Buc-ee's. US 290 has approximately 70,000 vehicles  
2 daily and upwards of 100,000 on game days for Texas A&M or  
3 Prairie View A&M. The Waller Police Department currently  
4 employs 13 sworn officers and serves a resident population  
5 of approximately 3,600, however, the city's daytime  
6 population swells to approximately 10,000 due to its  
7 thriving industrial businesses.

8 The Waller Police Department is active on  
9 social media and has a Facebook following of approximately  
10 6,600. We also participate in several city events, such  
11 as the Christmas parade, trunk or treat car show, National  
12 Night Out, and the Relay for Life Cancer Walk.

13 Waller is experiencing rapid growth. Several  
14 large subdivisions are being developed which is expected  
15 to bring approximately 7,000 homes in the near future.  
16 The city also features four hotels that have been hit by  
17 motor vehicle thefts on average of about once a month, six  
18 apartment complexes, and we'll be the new home to Blinn  
19 College.

20 Crime prevention is not just about addressing  
21 incidents after the occur, it's about building an  
22 environment where crime is less likely to happen in the  
23 first place. Like many small communities, we face  
24 challenges such as vehicle thefts, vandalism, burglary,  
25 juggings and catalytic converter thefts, which have not

1     only caused financial losses but have taken a sense of  
2     security from our residents and businesses.

3             Unfortunately, like many law enforcement  
4     agencies in small communities, we face financial  
5     limitations. This means resources of implementing robust  
6     crime prevention strategies, such as LPR cameras, are  
7     beyond where our current budget allows. To address this,  
8     we're seeking your support to fund the purchase and  
9     strategic installation of 27 LPR cameras which would  
10    encompass ingress and egress points into the city,  
11    essentially forming a digital barrier to protect our  
12    community.

13            The total cost of the project is \$118,750, and  
14    these cameras will integrate with our current patrol  
15    mounted Axon dash cams with LPR. All data will be  
16    collected and be shared with authorized entities and all  
17    law enforcement agencies to assist in identifying suspects  
18    and/or vehicle information.

19            By funding this project, you're not only  
20    investing in cutting edge technology but also in the  
21    safety and well-being and the future of the City of  
22    Waller.

23            Any questions?

24            MS. JONES: No, sir. Thank you.

25            MR. SANTELLANA: Thank you.

1 MS. JONES: It is 11:56. We're going to break  
2 for a 20-minute lunch break, grab what you can to eat. So  
3 be back at 12:20 and then we can work through for the rest  
4 of the day.

5 That's a fair deal? Perfect. Thank you.

6 (Whereupon, at 11:56 a.m., a brief lunch recess  
7 was taken.)

8 MS. JONES: It is now 12:37, and we will resume.  
9 Sharon Jones, for the record.

10 MR. DIGGS: I would now like to call up Waller  
11 County.

12 MR. CANTREL: Good afternoon. My name is Brian  
13 Cantrel. I'm the chief of emergency services for the  
14 Couthy of Waller.

15 My nexus is I also have the grant division. My  
16 apologies she could not make it today. She's a brand new  
17 mother, so I'm glad she's at home.

18 I do want to introduce the good chief deputy of  
19 the sheriff's office over law enforcement command, Mr.  
20 Bobby Shields.

21 Next slide, please. So you guys are almost  
22 there so I don't want to be in your way so we'll go through  
23 this kind of quickly.

24 Waller County is situated in northwest Houston.  
25 We've got Katy, Brookshire, Prairie View, Hockley and

1 Hempstead, so we border Harris, Montgomery and Fort Bend,  
2 which you add the population of those counties up, you're  
3 looking at probably about 8 million people that we border.

4 I've heard a lot of talk about I think Texas is just  
5 growing in general, and I've heard everyone is the fourth  
6 largest growing county somehow.

7 So we have 45,000 lots that have been platted.

8 So 77493 is a Katy zip code, and if you believe what you  
9 read, it's the fastest growing zip code with new  
10 construction in the United States.

11 So we do have areas of I-10 and US 290. I've  
12 learned a lot about -- I've been in law enforcement for 21  
13 years but I've never been in a place where so many people  
14 decided to do a similar project, which to me that's very  
15 interesting. And it's great because it shows that it's  
16 working, right, and it's that sharing component.

17 So our goal is to share, really. So we've got  
18 I-10 which runs about 12 miles through Waller County,  
19 we've also got 290 that runs through Waller County. So  
20 we've got a lot of vehicular traffic and it's just going  
21 to be a great program for us to share with our local  
22 partners and also get to share the information that our  
23 local partners possess as well.

24 So we're brand new with this project. I'll be  
25 real honest, we put this together probably two weeks prior

1 to the deadline application. I didn't know how great it  
2 was and I didn't know about all these different projects,  
3 and I really didn't know the funding.

4 So our pilot program or our start is we're  
5 asking for 13 license plate readers at the cost of  
6 \$49,400. The county has agreed to match with \$9,980 and  
7 also cover the maintenance costs, so that's the county's  
8 share.

9 And I can tell you that the county judge,  
10 unfortunately, lost his catalytic converter probably four  
11 months ago. And luckily it was in an adjoining county and  
12 not ours, but the support that we got from the courts when  
13 we explained LPR, we explained the process, we explained  
14 intelligence-led policing -- I'm glad to hear that, I've  
15 heard that a lot today, but we've got our own definitions  
16 of it. But all this sharing from all these different  
17 departments, I think it's amazing.

18 I won't bore you with the rest of this. We do  
19 have an LPR policy. We do have social media. We have a  
20 public information officer that she loves Facebook, she  
21 loves Twitter.

22 We have this great app that the sheriff's  
23 office has that can do push notifications. We're  
24 constantly in the community, even a lot of times we're at  
25 county fairs, we're holding town hall meetings, joining

1 with the sheriff's office and emergency services. I think  
2 this is a great time to where we can promote this to our  
3 community.

4 So that's all I have, and Chief Shields has all  
5 the right answers and he's a very smart man, so if there's  
6 any questions, I'll defer to him.

7 MR. SHIELDS: I'll take the question in a  
8 moment. I want to let you know, everyone is referring to  
9 Senate Bill 224. Y'all know of Deputy Almendarez's death  
10 from trying to prevent catalytic converter theft.

11 Darren worked for me. He worked for me on the  
12 FBI gang task force and I watched him die in the emergency  
13 room, and this isn't a sympathetic thing. I'm very  
14 passionate about this.

15 And what's unique about that is the Flock  
16 camera system and all the sharing and the intel. And I've  
17 worked with numerous task forces from the Texas Anti-Gang  
18 Center. I helped open it up, ran it six years, supervised  
19 the CR-3 with FBI, worked real close with CR-1, 2 and 3  
20 for DPS CID, I could go into hundreds of success stories.

21 One of the success stories is catching the  
22 crooks that shot Darren by utilizing Flock. We got into a  
23 deal and you see the downfall and the peaks at 2022 and  
24 just our deal, you can see everyone going downward from  
25 2022, and that was a unified effort from everyone after



1 the death of Darren. I mean, everyone put their foot  
2 down, and with the assistance of y'all and programs like  
3 this, it helps.

4 I'm proud to say that I personally think that  
5 no one can hide whenever you get the joint efforts from  
6 agencies and from the assistance of programs like this.  
7 It's unbelievable.

8 I'll entertain questions. Just to let you know  
9 where I stand on that.

10 MS. JONES: Thank you for speaking of Darren  
11 and remembering him.

12 MR. SHIELDS: Yes. He was an excellent deputy.

13 MS. JONES: No questions from me.

14 MR. SLOAN: No questions from me. Thank you  
15 for sharing. I know that's hard as a leader.

16 MR. SHIELDS: Thank y'all.

17 MR. CANTREL: And thank y'all for your time and  
18 efforts. I know it's been a long two days for y'all as  
19 well.

20 MS. JONES: I just needed to run out and grab  
21 something and get back so we can get going.

22 MR. SHIELDS: Thank y'all for your hard work as  
23 well.

24 MR. DIGGS: Thank you.

25 I'd now like to call up the City of Weslaco.

1 MR. LOPEZ: Good afternoon. Captain Robert  
2 Lopez for the Weslaco Police Department.

3 The City of Weslaco is located in the southmost  
4 region of Texas, population of 43,000, about approximately  
5 14 square miles. We're five miles away from the border.  
6 One of the main points of entry is the City of Progreso,  
7 which FM 1015 runs through. It's our main corridor into  
8 Mexico.

9 So here's some stats that I have for '21, '22  
10 and '23. As you can see, larceny of motor vehicle,  
11 larceny of motor vehicle parts, theft of catalytic  
12 converters, and motor vehicle theft. The theft of  
13 catalytic converters has gone down, and I'll explain to  
14 you some of the reasons that most of the stats went down.  
15

16 The only thing that did go up is the thefts of  
17 motor vehicle. Since we're so close to the border and  
18 instead of stealing the catalytic converter, they just  
19 take the whole car.

20 We do have some arrests. Of course, they kind  
21 of mirror the enforcement actions. We have been getting  
22 arrests on theft of motor vehicles and the larcenies.  
23 They are going down, which is great.

24 The current practice that we have now -- to  
25 name a few, we are part of the Texas Anti-Gang initiative

1 where we share information with the gangs and it deals  
2 from any type of crime down there in the Valley from  
3 cartels, thefts of motor vehicles. Right now in the  
4 Valley, one of the biggest things is the theft of motor  
5 vehicles. They're stealing vehicles and taking them into  
6 Mexico.

7 In 2021, we ended up joining the TAG grant  
8 where they ended up giving us 33 Motorola MF800s for our  
9 cars. We ended up swapping out the WatchGuard system and  
10 they already have LPRs build into the cameras. So with  
11 that, we also got 22 Motorola L6Q portable cameras we  
12 strategically placed throughout the city.

13 And that is one of the reasons that I believe  
14 that based on the stats and talking to the investigators,  
15 we've been getting a lot of arrests, because they've been  
16 following up with the LPR systems. So we still have two  
17 more years on that grant.

18 We just signed up with the Hidalgo County  
19 Sheriff's Department Task Force that they got granted  
20 through your agency. We have dedicated two investigators  
21 to that task force, and it's in the process of kicking  
22 off.

23 The purpose for the request is: we're  
24 proposing 28 additional cameras, they're giving us two  
25 free of charge, for a total of 30; paid overtime for

1 officers to prevent and investigate crimes related to  
2 theft of catalytic converters, theft of motor vehicles,  
3 burglary of motor vehicles and thefts from motor vehicles,  
4 using LPR placements as a tool; and then overtime for our  
5 crime analyst to operate the LPR dashboard. We have a  
6 crime analyst and a couple of investigators that man the  
7 dashboard and are continuously just looking for updates or  
8 any hits that we get throughout the city.

9 And that is the budget that we have put in.  
10 It's the same thing on the application. As I mentioned,  
11 for the budget for the investigators, those two task force  
12 officers that are assigned -- upon talking to the Hidalgo  
13 County Sheriff's Department -- they were here today. They  
14 didn't allocate any funding, so that's why we allocated  
15 some overtime funding for them, and if allowed, for any of  
16 the investigators that are working in conjunction with  
17 them on those cases specifically, and of course, the crime  
18 analyst that mans the dashboard.

19 The total budget is \$190,000. \$31,000 will be  
20 the cash match. And we also included on there the  
21 warranty and the LPR installation and configuration  
22 services, and then some of the direct operating expenses  
23 related to the purchase of the cameras.

24 The last slide, I indicated just some of the  
25 outreach that we've been doing for the past years since we

1 became part of the TAG. Whatever the crime trend is, we  
2 do push a lot the lock it up and explain to people a lot  
3 of the burglars that we have in our neighborhoods, even  
4 the ones that steal cars, they don't even go around  
5 breaking windows, all they do is check the cars. And we  
6 have a large population of people that leave their cars  
7 unlocked, so we get a lot of burglaries simply because the  
8 cars are unlocked. So we do push that on social media.

9 We also push some of the successes where we end  
10 up doing raids on people that are involved in theft of  
11 motor vehicles. We blast them on Facebook, that way  
12 people know that we're actively out there doing something  
13 for the community, and of course, for them to help us out  
14 by taking preventative measures and not giving temptation  
15 by leaving valuables in the cars and making sure they lock  
16 their motor vehicles.

17 So with the request that we put here on this  
18 grant, getting with the crime analyst, the patrol guys and  
19 investigators, we found that in several locations there is  
20 gaps where we want additional cameras and this is what  
21 we're requesting. With this request, that should prevent  
22 us from asking for any more cameras, that should basically  
23 cover the whole city for now, unless it grows or expands.

24 And then from there from that point on, all we have to  
25 worry about is the maintenance cost of the cameras.

1                   And that's basically it. Do you have any  
2 questions for me?

3                   MS. JONES: Captain, can you recite again where  
4 the overtime is going, who is it for?

5                   MR. LOPEZ: So it's going to be allocated for  
6 the two task force officers that are part of the Hidalgo  
7 County Sheriff's Department. On the conversation that I  
8 had with them, they only put in money for the salaries.  
9 They didn't put any overtime money in there.

10                  So my original was just to be overtime for any  
11 investigator that was going to be working in conjunction  
12 with the auto task force or involved in any of the cases  
13 that are working on these cases, but that's kind of what  
14 the purpose was for that specifically for anything related  
15 to this grant.

16                  MS. JONES: So I'm a bit confused. Is it for  
17 the two? I thought you mentioned that it was also for  
18 others who may work overtime.

19                  MR. LOPEZ: So primarily it's going to be for  
20 them, but if allowed, if anybody from our department needs  
21 to tag on because they have a search warrant, we could  
22 probably draw from there, if it's allowed. If it's not,  
23 then it will be specifically just for them. This is the  
24 first time that I was applying so I wasn't sure how the  
25 money could be moved around or not. But yeah,

1 specifically for those purposes.

2 MR. DIGGS: Mr. Diggs and his team will work on  
3 it. There will be some negotiations.

4 MR. LOPEZ: Okay, no problem. Thank you.

5 MS. JONES: You're welcome, sir.

6 MR. LOPEZ: Awesome. Thank you.

7 MR. DIGGS: I would now like to call up the  
8 City of West.

9 MR. WHITE: You made a point. Thank you, Madam  
10 Chair, Director Diggs and Director Sloan for letting me  
11 present this grant. I didn't have that written into my  
12 presentation.

13 City of West Police Department, a little bit  
14 about us. The City of West is a small rural town, about  
15 2,800 people. We're situated in the heart of Central  
16 Texas. Police department composed of a team of about  
17 eight dedicated public servants who work on and around a  
18 busy portion of IH-35, and you already know it goes from  
19 Mexico almost to Canada.

20 Now, I did mess up the stat there. We've seen  
21 between 74,080 vehicles. It's actually double that. I  
22 was only reading one side of the highway, so I was only  
23 looking at northbound.

24 We also have southbound traffic that goes  
25 through the city, so double it. In the TxDOT vehicle

1 monitoring, it does appear that about 8,200 vehicles do go  
2 into the city on our main thoroughfare, which is Oak  
3 Street, each day.

4 We do seek to create and maintain an atmosphere  
5 of safety and security for all of our citizens and  
6 visitors. We strive to prevent crime as well as bring  
7 justice those who have been victimized, as everybody has  
8 here. Additionally, we want to assist our neighboring law  
9 enforcement agencies in their goals of reducing crime  
10 through the collection of evidence, identification of  
11 criminals and exchange of information.

12 We started an LPR program last year under a  
13 grant and we're confident that it can continue to be a  
14 force multiplier in the collection of evidence,  
15 identification of criminals, recovery of stolen property,  
16 including the theft of catalytic converters. If approved,  
17 the grant would allow us to operate 12. We only have  
18 nine, so we're seeking more cameras as well as refinancing  
19 the nine that we currently have.

20 They will be and are strategically positioned  
21 within the City of West and we would add along the IH-35  
22 access roads. Additionally, we would be able to fund a  
23 trailer-mounted LPR camera.

24 Now, the way we do things in West is we see how  
25 much it costs and we figure out how we can make it better



1 or cut the cost. So we were just going to take one of  
2 their cameras and put it on one of our lease trailers, but  
3 since it's possible, we might be able to renegotiate,  
4 which we would love to do. We might just actually get  
5 them to do the work for us and just buy a trailer  
6 outright.

7 We do need this grant. Our city budget  
8 experienced some city revenue adjustments and transfers  
9 due to our growth and structure needs, mainly sewer  
10 plants. It didn't allow us to fund the LPR program that  
11 we had started. But the city is committed, the citizens  
12 and the city administration have been very supportive  
13 through our social media and things of that nature.

14 Obviously there are the naysayers but I think  
15 if we click on them, they don't even live in the city.  
16 They're just the ones that don't like LPR. But they are  
17 very appreciative of the benefits to our community, as  
18 well as the surrounding communities.

19 Right now the program cost is projected to be  
20 \$40,500; our match is \$8,100. We set it at minimum  
21 because we weren't sure about our funding. We knew that  
22 we could cover \$8,100 but I'm actually pretty confident we  
23 could cover more, which is why we would approach y'all  
24 again.

25 We do estimate that the cameras will read

1 approximately 20,000 plates each day with some overlap,  
2 the same vehicle going past cameras. And the benefits:  
3 we'd be able to locate and recover stolen property, theft  
4 of catalytic converters, identify criminals and their  
5 movements, collect evidence crucial in the recovery of  
6 stolen property, and the prosecution of criminals.

7 Right now just a little bit of data. In about  
8 the ten months we've been operating our LPR system, we've  
9 received about 19 stolen vehicle hits --and again, this is  
10 nothing on I-35, this is just going past our cameras  
11 inside the city along city streets -- and six wanted  
12 person hits. We did collect evidence on two misdemeanor  
13 cases and two felony cases, and we have made four arrests  
14 based on what the cameras have told us.

15 Year two is to be determined, but if this grant  
16 is not funded, it will be zero because we will lose our  
17 LPR.

18 And then there's a thank you and we'll take any  
19 questions.

20 We do have a policy and we will take advantage  
21 of your social media campaign. That might have been  
22 another question which is absolutely or we will look into  
23 it and positively do that, yes.

24 MS. JONES: You mentioned community so you're  
25 good.

1 MR. WHITE: Okay. Thank you.

2 MS. JONES: Member Sloan?

3 (No response.)

4 MS. JONES: Nothing, sir.

5 MR. WHITE: Thank y'all very much.

6 MS. JONES: You're welcome, Chief.

7 MR. DIGGS: I'd now like to call up the City of  
8 West Columbia.

9 MR. ODIN: Hello. My name is Chief Odin. I'm  
10 with West Columbia Police Department.

11 We're a small community of 4,200 people just 45  
12 minutes south of Houston. The community is very  
13 supportive of the police department. Even though we only  
14 have 4,200, the subdivision that's just outside of our  
15 community is over 5,000, so when you take into  
16 consideration those two things, I have about 9,000 to  
17 10,000 people that live within a mile of my town.

18 We see about 20- to 30,000 people go through  
19 our town because we're at the intersection of State  
20 Highway 35 and 36. State Highway 35 comes up from Corpus  
21 Christi to Houston, 36 goes from the Port of Freeport back  
22 up into Houston, so we see a lot of traffic coming through  
23 our community.

24 I am asking for ten LPR camera systems to cover  
25 all of the entryways into our town. They will be within

1 our borders. We do have a couple of other communities  
2 that are about 20 to 30 minutes away from us that also  
3 have LPRs that we will be working with. It will be the  
4 Flock system, which is going to work well with our new  
5 Axon camera systems because we do have the license plate  
6 readers in our patrol cars.

7 I have been on social media, both with our  
8 Facebook and our podcast. The community is supportive of  
9 it. And we don't have any automobile lots, so nothing to  
10 work with that, and I do have a policy.

11 Any questions? I tried to hit them all.

12 MS. JONES: Chief Odin, I think you did.

13 MR. ODIN: Drive careful, guys. Thank you.

14 MS. JONES: Thanks. You too.

15 MR. DIGGS: I'd now like to call up the City of  
16 Wharton.

17 MR. GUANAJUATO: Good afternoon. My name is  
18 Ben Guanajuato, and I am a lieutenant with the Wharton  
19 Police Department.

20 The Wharton Police Department is a full service  
21 police department in Wharton County. Our population is  
22 just under 9,000, and our square mileage in the city is  
23 2.7 square miles. We currently have 26 sworn officers,  
24 eight full-time dispatchers, three civilian employees, and  
25 one humane officer.

1 Wharton is located approximately 50 miles  
2 southwest of Houston on Interstate 69. For us, Interstate  
3 69 is what we considered to be a pipeline for criminal  
4 activity between Mexico and Houston. We also have State  
5 Highway 60 that runs from the Gulf Coast through Wharton  
6 and Wharton County and also has access to not only  
7 Interstate 69 but Highway 90 and Interstate 10, so we get  
8 a lot of criminal activity that comes from down there as  
9 well.

10 The Wharton Police Department is requesting the  
11 assistance to purchase five additional cameras for our  
12 current Flock LPR cameras that we currently have. In  
13 October of 2023, we installed four of these LPR cameras in  
14 the city and in November of the same year, we installed a  
15 few more. And on January 29 we installed the rest, which  
16 we currently have nine Flock LPR cameras, and these  
17 cameras aid the apprehension of suspects committing crimes  
18 in our city.

19 These cameras have led to a number of arrests,  
20 assist our criminal investigations unit in investigating  
21 crimes. They arrest suspects, they also locate persons of  
22 interest. Our current Flock LPR cameras have proven to be  
23 a great investigative tool, not only for our agency but  
24 our partners in law enforcement in Wharton County as well,  
25 like the sheriff's department, El Campo, four different

1 constable offices, DPS, as well, and also the task force  
2 that we have that we work with very closely.

3 The police department now is currently seeking  
4 for funding to provide its officers with the new  
5 technology needed to perform their job safely and  
6 effectively. The cost of the new five cameras that we're  
7 looking for with installation comes out to be \$21,250,  
8 which includes our 20 percent match.

9 I would also like to note that in the past  
10 three years, the Wharton Police Department has received  
11 reported incidents of catalytic converter thefts, 26 of  
12 them. But since the installation of these LPR cameras, we  
13 have reduced that number to two, and we like to think it's  
14 because of the LPR cameras.

15 And we do have a policy that's in place, that's  
16 been in place as we first installed our first four  
17 cameras. And we also have an agreement with our  
18 prosecutor, our DA's office that they will prosecute any  
19 cases that comes from these LPRs.

20 MS. JONES: Well covered.

21 MR. GUANAJUATO: Thank you.

22 MS. JONES: You're welcome. Thank you.

23 MR. DIGGS: I would now like to call up the  
24 City of Wichita Falls.

25 Ms. JONES: Those of you who are going last

1 have the benefit of knowing from two days what needs to be  
2 said and done. Great job. That's a benefit.

3 MR. SAENZ: Zavala is here so we're not dead  
4 last.

5 Good afternoon, board. My name is Officer  
6 Henry Saenz. I'm with the Wichita Falls Police Department  
7 located in Wichita Falls, Texas. I'm joined by Officer  
8 Jesse Bartow, who is our canine, drone and our Flock  
9 specialist.

10 We do have an LPR policy. We do not have a  
11 task force.

12 A little bit about Wichita Falls. It's located  
13 in North Central Texas, right in the middle between the  
14 Panhandle and East Texas, so it lies directly two hours  
15 northwest of Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, and then we're  
16 two hours southwest of Oklahoma City Metro. It's also  
17 located right on the border with Oklahoma. Whenever you  
18 hear the word the border, most people associate with the  
19 Mexican border but for us it's the Texas-Oklahoma border.

20 We do have different traffic requirements from  
21 Oklahoma to the State of Texas that separates the two  
22 states. It does create a unique opportunity for criminals  
23 to commit crimes and quickly return to Oklahoma before  
24 crimes are even reported. We also have casinos in  
25 Oklahoma that we believe fuel some of that criminal

1 activity that we see.

2 The city is considered a rural city with a  
3 population of a little over 100,000. We have a police  
4 department, with 200 sworn officers.

5 The city was able to secure funding from the  
6 catalytic converter grant from 2024. I believe the first  
7 solicitation, the department was able to obtain 30 LPR  
8 cameras, in conjunction with we had grant funding from a  
9 previous solicitation from the state where we had 12. So  
10 with the 14 cameras, plus the 30 from the 2024  
11 solicitation, that would bring us up to 49 cameras. We're  
12 not requesting for any more money as far as to buy any new  
13 equipment, it's just to fund the project for another year.

14 What would be doing with that money? The  
15 Wichita Falls Police Department would utilize automatic  
16 license plate recognition technology to enhance its crime  
17 fighting and investigative capabilities. The LPR systems  
18 capture metadata on vehicular traffic, including license  
19 plate numbers, times and locations which can be cross-  
20 referenced with reports of crimes such as catalytic  
21 converter thefts, stolen vehicles, burglaries, and other  
22 ongoing investigations.

23 By integrating LPR data with crime reports, the  
24 department is able to gather valuable information that  
25 would not have been available otherwise. In particular,



1 the real-time alerts generated by the LPR system allows  
2 the department to track the direction of stolen vehicles  
3 which significantly enhance the ability to respond quickly  
4 to auto thefts and auto-related crimes. This capability  
5 acts as a force multiplier, improving the efficiency and  
6 success of our investigations.

7 Overall, LPR systems have proven to be an  
8 invaluable tool, especially in tracking auto thefts and  
9 other auto-related vehicle crimes by providing critical  
10 real-time intelligence and aiding in the prosecution of  
11 suspects. The metadata information will be shared with  
12 any law enforcement agency requesting assistance on any  
13 ongoing investigations.

14 I know some of the other agencies had talked  
15 about the social media. Right now we're not running  
16 secret; it was explained that we did get the grant funding  
17 for the cameras. But as far as where those cameras are  
18 located at, that's still unknown to the citizens.

19 We have not received any kind of bad publicity  
20 about the cameras, so we're not really, I guess, dealing  
21 with that issue as of yet. But if it does arise, we would  
22 be willing to put that out on our social media that we  
23 have for the department.

24 Do y'all have any questions for us?

25 MR. SLOAN: Just a comment. Thank you, LT. I

1 just see success here from '23 to '24 with a drop of  
2 multiple cutting the cat thefts in half.

3 And you hear me say it over and over, I think  
4 those are always positive things to share with the  
5 community to continue to engage them and get that buy-in.  
6 Thank you.

7 MR. SAENZ: Yes, sir. Thank you.

8 MS. JONES: Thank you, sir.

9 MR. SAENZ: Thank y'all. Y'all have a good  
10 afternoon.

11 MR. DIGGS: I would now like to call up Zavala  
12 County.

13 MR. JIMENEZ: Good afternoon. My name is  
14 Captain Jesse Jimenez, Sergeant Frank Picazo with Zavala  
15 County.

16 A little bit on Zavala County. We're a total  
17 of a little over 1,300 square miles in Zavala County. We  
18 have three cities, Crystal City, La Pryor and Batesville,  
19 Crystal City being the county seat, that's where our main  
20 office is at.

21 Adjacent to Maverick County, which has a port  
22 of entry from Piedras Negras, Coahuila, Mexico to Eagle  
23 Pass is where it's located. Our county's closest point is  
24 less than 17 miles away from the border.

25 Major highways, US 57 is a direct route to

1     Piedras Negras, Mexico and intersects with IH-35. US  
2     Highway 83 intersects with IH-10 traveling north and IH-35  
3     traveling south. Both are corridors for smuggling  
4     persons, narcotics, money, weapons and stolen vehicles.

5             That's a little map of our three cities.

6             Our staff, currently we're 24 total. Eighteen  
7     patrol deputies, and we have actually six Operation Lone  
8     Star funded deputies who has actually helped out a lot.

9             Our mission is to educate our citizens who have  
10    been victims of their vehicle's catalytic converters being  
11    stolen. They need to know that this is a crime that needs  
12    to be reported. We've had issues that our people are not  
13    reporting anything. It is a crime, but I guess they don't  
14    want to pursue any reports and just take care of the issue  
15    themselves.

16            At one point we had a male individual who would  
17    target our local elderly people. He would asks them if  
18    they're willing to sell their vehicles. If they said no,  
19    he'd come back at a later date and try to steal the  
20    converters off the vehicles, which we did approach, they  
21    didn't want to report it, just give us a heads-up of what  
22    was going on.

23            We would like to work closely with our salvage  
24    yards by educating them on how to properly document  
25    identification on whoever is selling or attempting to sell

1 any catalytic converters or stolen vehicle parts.

2 For deterrence, our department has one mobile  
3 LPR, one LPR trailer, and 20 drawbridge cameras that were  
4 provided by DPS CID, which assists us in placing these  
5 cameras in several locations and try to deter thefts from  
6 our ranches and stuff like that.

7 The crime rate has increased with these  
8 vehicles being utilized in human smuggling, and they are  
9 often stolen from larger cities like San Antonio, Austin  
10 and Houston, which are seen on a daily basis. The number  
11 of stolen vehicles recovered as follows: for the year of  
12 2023, Zavala County recovered 89 stolen vehicles, in 2024  
13 it was 35 stolen vehicles, and so far this year, we've  
14 recovered two.

15 We work closely with Eagle Pass Auto Theft Task  
16 Force and share information regarding new trends that are  
17 being used in our area and to take a proactive approach on  
18 these thefts. A large percentage of crimes in our area  
19 have some type of border nexus to Eagle Pass/Piedras  
20 Negras, Coahuila, Mexico.

21 Here are some pictures of what these stolen  
22 vehicles are being utilized for, which is human smuggling  
23 which is a big issue in our area. Our deputies and  
24 investigators were swamped with over 500 cases of human  
25 smuggling between these last two years, which we were

1 asking for assistance in regards to getting two positions  
2 for investigators so they can assist with monitoring these  
3 cameras and doing more community outreach in regards to  
4 how to educate our people in reporting catalytic converter  
5 thefts or any vehicle parts.

6 These are just examples of the stuff that's  
7 going on. And it's overwhelming, but we do what we've got  
8 to do.

9 Any questions?

10 MS. JONES: Sir, you mentioned there's a patrol  
11 unit. Is that an unmarked unit?

12 MR. JIMENEZ: On the application?

13 MS. JONES: Yes, sir.

14 MR. JIMENEZ: That would be for the two  
15 investigators that we're asking for. That unit -- it  
16 would be a marked unit.

17 MS. JONES: Unmarked? What kind is it?

18 MR. JIMENEZ: I believe a Tahoe.

19 MS. JONES: Okay. That was my question.

20 MR. JIMENEZ: Any other questions?

21 (No response.)

22 MR. JIMENEZ: Thank you so much.

23 MS. JONES: You're welcome, sir.

24 MR. WHITE: I apologize. May I approach?

25 Again, I apologize. As I was sitting here, I remembered

1       there were a couple of things I left out.

2               MR. DIGGS: You need to go ahead and identify  
3       yourself and where you work.

4               MR. WHITE: I'm Chief Chris White with the West  
5       Police Department.

6               In our grant we didn't put any statistics; I  
7       notice a lot of agencies had statistics. Our RMS system  
8       is horrible, double reports, things like that. So I was  
9       hoping that if y'all had any issue with lack of  
10      statistics, that was the reason why.

11              We do have a Plan B on camera placement along  
12      our access roads if the TxDOT thing is not going to work,  
13      but we will be trying to do it in the TxDOT right of way.

14      If it's not acceptable, we do have right of ways that the  
15      cameras will reach.

16              And then the other thing was the etching  
17      equipment. We learned about etching equipment; we'd love  
18      to try to add that to our grant as well in negotiations.

19              MS. JONES: Okay. You just said the magic word  
20      at the end, negotiations.

21              MR. WHITE: Yes. I apologize. It's super  
22      important. I wanted to make sure I covered it.

23              MS. JONES: So the only thing that you're  
24      negotiating is the etching.

25              MR. WHITE: No. We would also ask for a few

1 more cameras as well.

2 MS. JONES: Understood.

3 MR. WHITE: As well as that trailer, instead of  
4 putting it our own trailer together.

5 MS. JONES: Yes, sir, understood. Thank you.

6 MR. WHITE: Thank y'all so much.

7 MS. JONES: You're welcome.

8 (Pause; off the record discussion.)

9 MS. JONES: We will now move on to agenda item  
10 number 6, FY25 Senate Bill 224 Catalytic Converter Grants,  
11 Second Solicitation application review and recommendations  
12 by William Diggs.

13 MR. DIGGS: William Diggs, MVCPA director, for  
14 the record. Thank you, Madam Chair and Member Sloan.

15 For the last two days of hard work, as it  
16 relates to agenda item number 6, I have the following  
17 recommendations.

18 The City of Round Rock is recommended for  
19 approval. Member Tom Sloan should recuse himself from  
20 this approval.

21 The second part is, I recommend the GBR  
22 Committee approve those remaining agencies who have  
23 presented over the past two days. These agencies are the  
24 City of Round Rock, the City of Arcola, the City of  
25 Bertram, the City of Bulverde, the City of Caddo Mills,

1 the City of Castle Hills, City of Cedar Hill, City of  
2 Cibolo, Cooke County, City of Cuero, City of Cumby, City  
3 of Elgin, City of Farmers Branch, City of Fort Stockton,  
4 City of Frisco, City of Galveston, City of Gun Barrel  
5 City, City of Holland, City of Hearne, City of Hondo, Hood  
6 County, City of Jacinto City, City of Jasper, City of  
7 Jersey Village, City of Kaufman, Killeen Police  
8 Department, City of La Marque, City of Live Oak, City of  
9 Mabank, City of Marble Falls, Marlin Police Department,  
10 Maverick County, City of Meadows Place, City of Mexia,  
11 City of Monahans, City of Mont Belvieu, City of Murphy,  
12 City of Navasota, City of New Braunfels, Oak Ridge North  
13 Police Department, City of Palestine, City of Palmer, City  
14 of Pasadena, Rains County Sheriff's Office, Robinson  
15 County, Rusk County, San Patricio County, City of Sealy,  
16 City of Sour Lake, City of Splendora, City of Sulphur  
17 Springs, City of Temple, City of Terrell, City of  
18 Universal City, City of Waller, Waller County, City of  
19 Weslaco, City of West Columbia, City of West, City of  
20 Wharton, City of Wichita Falls, and Zavala County.

21 With the following exceptions and adjustments:  
22 the City of Falfurrias will not be approved; the City of  
23 La Marque handheld radios will not be recommended for  
24 approval; the City of Pasadena BLTN BOLO software will not  
25 be approved. And with that, Madam Chair, I will close,



1 and this should be an action item for the Grants, Budget  
2 and Reporting Committee to consider.

3 MS. JONES: I approve Major Diggs's  
4 recommendation that Round Rock Police Department's  
5 application for approval to the full board will be  
6 presented to the full board on January 22, and that Member  
7 Sloan recused himself from this action.

8 Member Sloan, do you concur with Major Diggs's  
9 other recommendations related to approval and adjustments  
10 or denial of these agencies who presented over the past  
11 two days?

12 MR. SLOAN: Tom Sloan, Board Member, MVCPA, for  
13 the record. I approve of Mr. Diggs's recommendation.

14 MS. JONES: I, Sharon Jones, concur with  
15 Director Diggs's recommendation.

16 We will now move on to agenda item number 10, a  
17 motion for adjournment. Do I hear a motion for  
18 adjournment, Member Sloan?

19 MR. SLOAN: Member Sloan, for the record. I  
20 motion that we adjourn.

21 MS. JONES: I, Sharon Jones, vote aye. Let the  
22 record reflect that the vote is unanimous.

23 The meeting is adjourned at 1:21 p.m.

24 (Whereupon, at 1:21 p.m., the meeting was  
25 adjourned.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

MEETING OF: MVCPA Grants, Budget and Reporting  
Committee

LOCATION: Via Microsoft Teams

DATE: January 17, 2025

I do hereby certify that the foregoing pages,  
numbers 1 through 122, inclusive, are the true, accurate,  
and complete transcript prepared from the verbal recording  
made by electronic recording by Nancy King before the  
Texas Department of Motor Vehicles.

DATE: January 31, 2025

/s/ Nancy H. King  
(Transcriber)

On the Record Reporting  
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