Tyshar Turner

From:	CityClerk
Sent:	Monday, September 18, 2023 8:14 AM
To:	Tyshar Turner
Subject:	FW: INTELLIGENT TRANSPOTATION - THINK TWICE BEFORE APPROVING IT!

Follow Up Flag:	Follow up
Flag Status:	Flagged

Cynthia

From: ███████████████████████████

Sent: Sunday, September 17, 2023 1:42 PM

To: John McCann <jmccann@chulavistaca.gov>

Cc: Carolina Chavez <cchavez@chulavistaca.gov>; Jose Preciado <jpreciado@chulavistaca.gov>; Alonso Gonzalez <agonzalez@chulavistaca.gov>; Andrea Cardenas <acardenas@chulavistaca.gov>; CityClerk <CityClerk@chulavistaca.gov>

Subject: INTELLIGENT TRANSPOTATION - THINK TWICE BEFORE APPROVING IT!

WARNING - This email originated from outside the City of Chula Vista. Do not click any links and do not open attachments unless you can confirm the sender.
PLEASE REPORT SUSPICIOUS EMAILS BY USING THE **PHISH ALERT REPORT BUTTON** or to
reportphishing@chulavistaca.gov

Hello Mayor, Councilmembers,

I see that you have several items that relate to information tech and artificial intelligence on the agenda for the next Council meeting - items 5.12 (Agreements with Arcadis a California Partnership, HNTB Corporation, Iteris, Inc., and STC Traffic, Inc., to Provide On-Call Traffic Engineering & Intelligent Transportation Systems Consulting Services); and it looks like 5.10 (Agreement with ThirdWave Corporation for the Development of an Information Technology Master Plan for the City of Chula Vista.) While you don't seem to be putting in smart streetlights, the use of artificial intelligence is essentially the same kind of technology. I think you should go slow on these and read the below article:

Regards,

Paul Henkin

████████████

San Diego Union Tribune
Opinion: 'Smart Streetlights' are not a tool. They lay the groundwork for dystopian surveillance.
Opinion by Lilly Irani • 3h ago

Irani is an associate professor at UC San Diego and an organizer with Tech Workers Coalition who lives in San Diego.

"Smart streetlights" — a network of pole-mounted artificial intelligence-powered cameras and microphones — are not just a tool. They do not even provide light. They comprise an infrastructure that, once in place, makes pervasive and dystopian surveillance just a system upgrade away. A recently proposed $4 million deployment would place the system all over San Diego, and The San Diego Union-Tribune found the planned placements would fall disproportionately in Black and Brown communities. At community meetings, San Diego Police Department staff pitched the public on its vision of video and automated license plate reader surveillance. But if you want to know what data technology can really do, go where the companies and public agencies are not trying to convince the community but are selling the future to clients.

A webinar by Ubicquia, the company selling San Diego this system, tells a much more expansive story about the capabilities of the camera system than the story city staff told residents at community meetings in March.

24/7 video recording in public space that scan every car that goes by? Check. Automated license plate readers? Check. These technologies alone are expensive ways to exact "justice" after harm has already been done while investing nothing in violence prevention or repair.

Automated license plate readers would turn San Diego streets into automated law enforcement checkpoints, profiling us as we move throughout the city. For undocumented friends and neighbors, this intensifies the terror of reaching school, work or the doctor as automated eyes search for plates. The California Values Act (Senate Bill 54) — which took effect in 2018 and was intended to limit local and state law enforcement collaboration with federal immigration agencies — offers little comfort when San Diego Police Department policies and insufficient officer discipline have failed to prevent police collaboration with federal immigration enforcement.

But the city's proposed video and automated license plate reader deployment pales in comparison to other capabilities these "smart streetlights" would smuggle in.

Ubicquia's system — the one city leaders want — comes with artificial intelligence that promises to learn and "detect" what is unusual under its automated gaze. This feature is advertised on the company website and in its webinar, though not mentioned in the city's surveillance impact report. In the webinar, one partner pitched the feature at detecting new crowds or cars doing donuts (ignoring that people can simply call the police, no automation needed, should they feel threatened by such happenings).

[They seem to prefer a subcontractor now, but Ubicquia's stilll involved.]

However, as a computer scientist, I fear that UbiHub's AI has the pitfalls of much artificial intelligence in producing glitchy results and racism at turns. What could possibly trigger an alert for looking atypical to the camera? A kid walking down the street wearing a weird costume. A bicyclist braving a road dominated by cars. A Black family entering a park in a predominantly White neighborhood.

Being atypical should not make someone a target. AI really just makes **statistical guesses** based on what it has already seen. "Unusual object" detection seems confused at best and racist at worst.

[And you'd still need extra infrastructure to verify the data, testify in court, and possibly pay out millions in damages or settlements.]

The UbiHub system also lays the groundwork for widespread facial recognition. The proposed system does not come with facial recognition out of the box, but once the nodes are in place, the city can add the functionality. Facial recognition is already used in cities in Britain and beyond. SANDAG also provided facial recognition devices to regional law enforcement agencies before a California moratorium on the technology forced them to stop in 2019.

If San Diego officials want to track our cars using automated license plate readers, why would they stop short of tracking our faces in the future as well? Though 17 U.S. cities in the country have some sort of face recognition ban in place, San Diego is not one of them.

In addition, the proposed UbiHub deployment puts our data and our fate into the hands of a private company. In 2020, the city of San Diego learned that it could not turn off our old Ubicquia-owned streetlights. The company told the city that it would have to write new code to turn the surveillance off, and it would only do so if the city paid up. As Ubicquia looks for ways to grow investors' profits, it faces pressure to monetize our data in new ways — whether by selling the city new creepy features like those described above, or finding ways to make our data valuable to other clients.

UbiHub is not simply a crime-fighting tool. It is a full-blown infrastructure that comes with a worldview of automating and expanding surveillance with every system upgrade. Worse, the system is designed and controlled by a private company with every incentive to stoke civic fear so it can sell high-tech promises. The Privacy Advisory Board meets to question the city about this technology at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, April 27, in San Diego City Hall, 202 C St. Members should consider not only the technology uses proposed but also the futures it brings alarmingly near. San Diego needs to invest in infrastructures, but not ones that lay the train tracks to dystopia.

This story originally appeared in San Diego Union-Tribune.