

NEWS



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MAYOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

John F. Street, Mayor
Joe Grace, Acting Director of Communications
www.phila.gov

City Hall - Room 216
Philadelphia, PA 19107
Phone: 215-686-6210
Fax: 215-686-2170

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Mayor unveils City's first Surveillance Camera

Philadelphia, PA - This morning Mayor John F. Street, Councilman Darrell Clarke, Councilwoman Donna Reed Miller, Councilman Juan Ramos, Councilman Frank Rizzo, and representatives from the Philadelphia Police Department unveiled the City's first surveillance camera, located at the intersection of 7th Street and Girard Avenue.

"Nearly everywhere you go these days, you are on camera," said Mayor Street. "Whether it is to the local store or an ATM to withdraw money, security cameras are watching and enhancing public safety. These cameras are not a cure-all, but they are another important part of our overall strategy to prevent and reduce crime."

On May 16, 2006, the voters of Philadelphia approved an amendment to the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, paving the way for the installation of video surveillance cameras to deter and fight crime. For operational and technical reasons, and in consultation with the sponsors of the bill, it was determined that the intersection of 7th Street and Girard Avenue was the best location for the first pilot camera.

"These cameras are another tool in our arsenal to prevent and fight crime," said Police Commissioner Johnson.

A Surveillance Camera Interdepartmental Committee has been created to identify locations of future surveillance cameras. The committee consists of representatives from the Managing Director's Office, Law, Finance and Budget, MOIS, Public Property, Procurement, Streets and Education. The next surveillance camera to be installed during the initial phase will be placed at Barrett Middle School in South Philadelphia, followed by two other neighborhood sites.

"Video cameras have helped reduce crime in Baltimore, Wilmington and other cities," said Councilman Clarke. "We want to bring proven crime and violence prevention strategies to our City as well."

“We share Mayor Street’s commitment to making Philadelphia safer,” said Councilwoman Reed Miller. “People in the community tell us that they want video surveillance cameras. It makes them feel safer.”

Last night Mayor Street launched a public service announcement campaign featuring a host of people from all walks of life, including Bernard Hopkins, Philadelphia’s Ambassador for Peace, Pennsylvania Governor Edward G. Rendell, Police Commissioner Sylvester Johnson, Philadelphia Phillie Ryan Howard, Philadelphia School District CEO Paul Vallas, community activists and children. The campaign urges viewers to stop the violence, to lay down their guns and to get involved.

As part of Operation Safer Streets, the City’s comprehensive long-term commitment to more focused policing, engaged communities, intensive social and City services, along with a commitment to stronger gun laws, the City is asking all local electronic media outlets to air the public service announcement during their regular programming.

“We all love our city,” continued Street. “Together, the community, the government and the police will prevail in this fight against gun violence.”

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