



Date: September 6, 2019

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Patrick H. West, City Manager 

Subject: **Update on Security Camera Device Rebate Program**

At its meeting on July 16, 2019, the City Council directed the City Manager to explore opportunities to partner with Ring, LLC (Ring), and similar vendors, to participate in a rebate incentive program toward the purchase of a household security camera doorbell device. The rebate incentive program is intended to provide residents with access to enhanced household security devices at a reduced cost. Use of the devices is optimized when subscribing to the Neighbors by Ring application, which was recently implemented by the Long Beach Police Department (LBPD) through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) approved by the City Council on July 2, 2019.

As described in the July 16th item, Ring security camera doorbell devices can deliver real-time notifications to a resident's smart phone or tablet remotely when someone is at the door. The devices alert users when someone presses the button on the doorbell or when motion is detected.

Residents may also enhance their device experience by signing up for the Neighbors Portal (Portal) through the Neighbors by Ring application. The Portal is a platform where users can share video, comment on real time crime, receive alerts pertaining to a user-defined neighborhood, and voluntarily enable police personnel to view subscriber-approved, uploaded videos. Users of the Portal include Neighbors by Ring subscribers, law enforcement, and Ring.

City staff contacted Ring to research their popular device rebate incentive program. Staff learned the rebate program provides residents with discounted pricing on a variety of their devices, which retail from \$180 to \$250. The discount is up to \$100 in savings for the resident toward the purchase of a device, made possible through a discount not to exceed \$50 per device paid for by the City, and matched by Ring.

To participate in the rebate incentive program, the City would need to enter into an agreement with Ring for each round of the program, committing a funding amount toward the discount of residential devices. The City may participate in as many rounds of the rebate incentive program, but each round may not exceed 45 days. The City would be billed at the end of each round based on the number of devices sold. For example, if the City agreed to fund rebates for up to 200 devices, residents would receive a \$100 rebate (\$50 from City/\$50 match from Ring) for their device, costing the City \$10,000, and Ring an additional \$10,000 through their match. The program would expire after 45 days, or until the 200 devices are sold. The City may offer the discount to as many households during each round, which will increase the City's funding commitment. The standard rebate amount is \$100 per device.

As part of the agreement, Ring would partner with the City to host in-person and online sale events to promote the rebate incentive program. In-person and online sales are conducted by manually verifying eligibility based on the customer's shipping address. Customers are then issued randomly-generated promotion codes to use for their online purchase of a Ring device. Ring expressed that the privacy of their customers is important, and sharing of any personal information, including addresses of households with the devices, is not allowed. Any information shared by customers and program participants is voluntary through the Ring Neighbors Portal and by working with law enforcement.

Other cities in the region that have participated in the Ring rebate incentive program include the Cities of Arcadia (58,799 population), Palmdale (157,519 population), and Santa Clarita (210,888). Each of these cities partnered with Ring to deliver two rounds of the rebate incentive program at a level of \$25,000 for 500 households each round.

Staff also contacted other video doorbell security providers Nest (google), Wisenet, and August Doorbell regarding potential incentive rebate programs. A representative from Wisenet indicated that the company did not offer an incentive program, and Nest (google) and August Doorbell did not respond to staff's inquiry.

Next Steps

Funding is not currently appropriated in the Adopted FY 20 Budget to participate in the Ring rebate incentive program. Should the City Council desire to host individual District-sponsored events through a City agreement, the City Council may, through an item brought to the City Council for approval, authorize the City Manager to execute an agreement with Ring, appropriating District Priority Funds for each round of rebate incentive programs. This will also require that the Office of Special Events and Filming assist each Council District with coordinating in-person sale events. Due to significant staff resources involved with verifying household addresses, it is recommended that participating City Council Districts provide Legislative Department staff to augment any events planned with Ring.

If you have any questions, please contact Assistant City Manager Tom Modica at (562) 570-5091.

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